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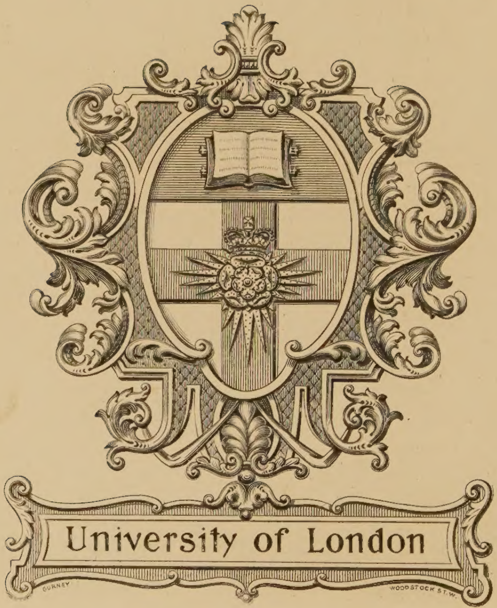

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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

45° & 46° VICTORIÆ, 1882.

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COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

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TO

THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF NOVEMBER 1882.

NINTH VOLUME OF THE SESSION.

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"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

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LORDS, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26.

Egyptian Expedition—Vote of Thanks to Her Majesty's Naval and Military Forces—Resolutions—

Moved to resolve,

"1. That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal which aided materially in the suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive:

"2. That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the military operations in Egypt, which resulted in the victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive:

"3. That the Thanks of this House be given to
General Sir John Miller Adye, K.C.B.;
Vice-Admiral William Montagu Dowell, C.B.;
Lieutenant-General George Harry Smith Willis, C.B.;
Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.;
Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B.;
Rear-Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, V.C., K.C.B.;
Rear-Admiral Sir Francis William Sullivan, K.C.B., C.M.G.;
Rear-Admiral Anthony Hiley Hoskins, C.B.;
Major-General His Royal Highness Arthur, Duke of Connaught, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.;
Major-General William Earle, C.S.I.;
Major-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.;
Major-General Gerald Graham, V.C., C.B.;
Major-General George Byng Harman, C.B.;
Major-General Drury Curzon Drury-Lowe, C.B.;
Major-General Sir Herbert Taylor Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B.;
and to the other Officers and Warrant Officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including Her Majesty's Indian Forces, both European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services they have been called upon to perform:

"4. That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the gallantry, discipline, and good conduct displayed by the Petty Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, and of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native; and, also, the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force,"—(*The Earl Granville*) 133

After short debate, the said Resolutions severally *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

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Moved, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson:*) —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 354, Noes 17; Majority 337.—(Div. List, No. 345.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

1. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B. for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria, and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal, which aided materially in the suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive.

Moved, "That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the Military operations in Egypt which resulted in the Victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 206

Amendment proposed,

To leave out the words "and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive,"—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 230, Noes 25; Majority 205.—(Div. List, No. 346.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

2. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—VOTE OF THANKS TO HER MAJESTY'S NAVAL AND MILITARY FORCES—*continued.*

ability with which he planned and conducted the Military operations in Egypt which resulted in the Victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive.

3. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of the House be given to,—
   General Sir John Miller Adye, K.C.B.;
   Vice-Admiral William Montagu Dowell, C.B.;
   Lieutenant-General George Harry Smith Willis, C.B.;
   Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.;
   Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B.;
   Rear-Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, V.C., K.C.B.;
   Rear-Admiral Sir Francis William Sullivan, K.C.B., C.M.G.;
   Rear-Admiral Anthony Hiley Hoskins, C.B.;
   Major-General His Royal Highness Arthur, Duke of Connaught, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.;
   Major-General William Earle, C.S.I.;
   Major-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.;
   Major-General Gerald Graham, V.C., C.B.;
   Major-General George Byng Harman, C.B.;
   Major-General Drury Curzon Drury-Lowe, C.B.;
   Major-General Sir Herbert Taylor Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B.;
   and to the other Officers and Warrant Officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including Her Majesty's Indian Forces, both European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services they have been called upon to perform:
4. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the gallantry, discipline, and good conduct displayed by the Petty Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, and of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native, and also the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force.
5. *Ordered,* That the said Resolutions be transmitted by Mr. Speaker to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, and General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley; and that they be requested to communicate the same to the several officers and to the men referred to therein.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—[Adjourned Debate.] [Eighth Night]—

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 35, Noes 93; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 350.)

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Original Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

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MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—ADDITION TO SELECT COMMITTEE—

Ordered, That the Select Committee do consist of Seventeen Members:—That Admiral Sir JOHN HAY and Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE be added to the Committee,—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell*) 385

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—[Adjourned Debate.] [Tenth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 386

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, to leave out the words "so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,'" in order to insert the words "upon the request of a Minister of the Crown, or of the Member in charge, either of any original Motion then under discussion, or of any Amendment thereto, give leave to such Minister or Member to move 'That the Question be now put,' and if such Member shall so move,"—(*Mr. Bryce*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'so inform the House or the Committee; and, if' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 152, Noes 100; Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 353.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "if," to insert the words "such information of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall be confirmed by not less than twenty Members rising in their places and,"—(*Mr. Hinde Palmer*) 411

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short debate, Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "forty,"—(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett:*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the proposed Amendment:"—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

Question, "That the word 'forty' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'such information of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall be confirmed by not less than forty Members rising in their places and,' be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the word "Question," in order to insert the word "Debate,"—(*Captain Aylmer,*)—instead thereof 420

Question proposed, "That the word 'Question' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, after the word "shall," to insert the words "after such reasonable notice as, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, he shall consider to be just,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) 424

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 88, Noes 149; Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 354.)

Amendment proposed, in line 6, after the word "affirmative," to insert the words "in a Committee of the whole House,"—(*Captain Aylmer*) 434

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 89, Noes 145; Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 355.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "forthwith," to insert the words "Provided, That when the subject-matter of Debate shall be the Second Reading of a Bill introduced by a Member of the Government, a Motion 'That the Question be now put' shall not be put until Twelve of the Clock on the fourth night of the Debate, the Second Reading having been put down as first Order of the Day on each of the four days,"—(*Mr. Hicks*) 451

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question again proposed:—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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—:o:—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION) — [Adjourned Debate.] [Eleventh Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 472

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "Question," in line 7, the words "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) .. 473

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. O'Donnell*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure — First Rule (Putting the Question) — [Adjourned Debate.] [Twelfth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [20th February], as amended.

And which Amendment was,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and,"—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Debate *resumed* 564

After long debate, Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," —(*Mr. A. J. Balfour,*)—put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [20th February], as amended:—And which Amendment was,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and,"—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Debate *resumed* 674

After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 238, Noes 322: Majority 84.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 749

Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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QUESTIONS.

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ORDER OF THE DAY.

——:o:——

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure — First Rule (Putting the Question) — [Adjourned Debate] [Fourteenth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 768

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by five-eighths of those present, and,"—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 70; Noes 146; Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 357.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 9, to leave out the words "to have been supported by more than two hundred Members," and insert "that the number of Members voting in the affirmative exceeds two hundred,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane,*)—instead thereof 790

Question proposed, "That the words 'to have been supported by more than' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn,*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 9, to leave out from the word "than," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "one hundred and fifty Members,"—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke,*)—instead thereof 791

Question proposed, "That the words 'two hundred' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 9, to leave out the word "two," in order to insert the word "three,"—(*Mr. Salt,*)—instead thereof .. 792

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 72, Noes 35; Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 358.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 9, after the word "Members," to insert the words "and to have been opposed by less than one hundred and fifty Members,"—(*Mr. Brodrick*) 797

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 45, Noes 84; Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 359.)

Amendment proposed, in line 10, to leave out the word "less," in order to insert the word "fewer,"—(*Mr. Warton*) 807

Question, "That the word 'less' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 10, to leave out from the word "Members" to the end of the Question,—(*Mr. Chaplin*) 808

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding ten who shall be dissatisfied with such decision shall be entitled at the next sitting of the House to make a protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 808

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

After debate, Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "exceeding ten,"—(*Mr. O'Connor Power*) .. 819

Question proposed, "That the words 'exceeding ten' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After further debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment further amended, by inserting, before the word "protest," the word "collective."

Question put, "That the words—

"Provided also, That any number of Members who shall be dissatisfied with such decision shall be entitled at the next sitting of the House to make a collective protest in writing which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House"

be there added:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 67, Noes 98; Majority 31.—(Div. List, No. 360.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

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NOTICE OF MOTION.

—:o:—

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—:0:—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—[Adjourned Debate]—[Fifteenth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 867

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That in any such Division the Votes shall be taken by secret Ballot,"—(*Lord John Manners.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 55, Noes 139; Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 361.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed 892

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That this Resolution does not come into operation during this Session of Parliament,"—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour*) 900

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 52, Noes 97; Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 362.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed 912

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Viscount Lymington*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*,

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ORDER OF THE DAY.

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 958

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett*:)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Debate be adjourned till To-morrow,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," and insert "Friday,"—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson*:)—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—First Rule (Putting the Question)—[Adjourned Debate] [Seventeenth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1028

After long debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1130

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. O'Shea*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.* ..

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1206

After long debate, Main Question, as amended, put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 304, Noes 260; Majority 44.

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Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

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Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure.

Moved, "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by forty Members rising in their places, nor until after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1329

Amendment proposed,

After the word "That," to insert the words "on days when Government Orders have precedence,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to insert the words "while the Committee of Supply is open,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) .. 1350

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 50, Noes 87; Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 364.)

Amendment proposed,

After the word "That," to insert the words "unless, as it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, in conformity with the evident sense of the House,"—(*Sir Henry Tyler*) .. 1358

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to insert the words "when Public Business has been declared urgent,"—(*Mr. O'Donnell*) .. 1361

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

After the word "made," to insert the words "until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of; and, if such Motion be decided in the negative, no other such Motion shall be made until the Orders of the Day have been entered upon,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1362

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After debate, Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, by leaving out all the words after the word "and," to the end of the proposed Amendment, in order to add the words "no such Motion shall be made,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof 1392

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 79, Noes 113; Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 365.)

Question proposed, "That the words 'no such Motion shall be made' be there added:"—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words 'no such Motion shall be made' be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made,'—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, proposed:—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gladstone:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

LORDS, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14.

QUESTIONS.

Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland)—Convict Labour—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1395

Egypt—Religious Ceremonies—The Mecca Carpet—Memorandum of Sir Garnet Wolseley—Questions, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Mr. Childers 1396

Army—Assistant Paymasters—Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1396

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Army—5th Battalion Royal Irish—Vacant Majorities — Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Childers 1398

Army—The Royal Engineers—Promotion—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, Mr. Childers 1398

Egypt (Military Expedition) — H Battery, 4th Brigade, Royal Artillery—Question, Lord Algernon Percy; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1398

Egypt (Army Re-organization)—The Police—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1399

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South Africa—The Transvaal — Hostilities between the Boers and Montsioa—Question, Mr. Guy Dawnay; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1401

Government Annuities and Assurance Bill, 1882—The New Tables—Question, Mr. Brand; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1402

Egypt—Despatch of English Officers to the Soudan — Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Childers 1402

Egypt—Action of Italy—Question, Sir Arthur Otway; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1403

India—Lighthouse on Minikoi—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1403

Egypt—Surrender of Arabi Pasha—Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, Mr. Childers 1403

Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act—The Hanging Gale—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1404

Egypt (The Expeditionary Force)—The Review in St. James's Park—Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1405

Egypt (Employment of Her Majesty's Forces)—Ministerial Statement, Mr. Gladstone:—Short debate thereon 1406

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Mr. Parnell, M.P., &c. (Release from Kilmainham)—Notice of Motion, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Captain Aylmer, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Bourke, Colonel Stanley, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Salt; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1411

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—Question, Viscount Sandon; Answer, Mr. Labouchere 1418

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—Second Rule (Motions for Adjournment before Public Business)—[Adjourned Debate] [Twenty-first Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [13th November], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1418

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "upon," to insert the words "unless any Member shall, by leave of the House, have made any statement other than an answer to a Question,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 85, Noes 123; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 366.)

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, to leave out after the word "upon," to the word "unless," in line 5,—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) 1441

Question proposed, "That the word 'except' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "by a Member who is also a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council,"—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton*) .. 1462

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "in accordance with the evident sense of the House, or,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1462

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'by leave of the House' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon' stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, before the word "unless," to insert the words "unless a Member rising in his place shall request leave to move the Adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1463

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "request leave to move," in order to insert the words "announce his intention of moving,"—(*Lord George Hamilton*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'request leave to move,' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After short debate, Amendment to the said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment amended, by leaving out the words "request leave," and inserting the word "propose,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*,)—instead thereof.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1464

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 146, Noes 86; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 367.)

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out "forty," in order to insert "fifteen,"—(*Mr. Sheil*,)—instead thereof .. 1464

Question proposed, "That 'forty' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 109, Noes 43; Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 368.)

Question,

"That the words 'unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion,'"—(*Mr. Gladstone*,)

—put, and *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words from the word "unless," in line 5, inclusive, to the end of the Question,—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1484

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, again proposed:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—

Report from the Select Committee on Privilege (Mr. Gray), with Minutes of Evidence, *brought up*, and read 1485

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Report do lie upon the Table,"—(*Mr. Attorney General:*)—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Parnell:*)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15.

QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE —THE PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEES—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1486

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE —SECOND RULE (MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT BEFORE PUBLIC BUSINESS) —[Adjourned Debate] [Twenty-second Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [14th November], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed: —Debate *resumed* 1487

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall on a Division upon Question put forthwith determine whether such Motion shall be made,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

(2.) *Resolved,* That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion; or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall, on a Division, upon Question put forthwith, determine whether such Motion shall be made,

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—*continued.*

The New Rules of Procedure—Third Rule (Debates on Motions for Adjournment)—

Moved, "That when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be strictly confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having spoken to any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate, or during the same sitting of the Committee,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1491

Amendment proposed,
In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except on a Motion for going into a Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or when the House is in Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or on any of the stages of Appropriation Bill,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out from the word "made" to the word "that," in line 2,—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1500

Question proposed, "That the words 'for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate,' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 103, Noes 34: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 369.)

Amendment proposed,
In line 2, to leave out all the words after the word "Debate," to the word "Chair," in line 3, inclusive,—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1504

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 3, to leave out the word "strictly,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill:*)—Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,
In line 4, to leave out the words "the matter of such Motion," in order to insert the words "matters arising out of the subject then under discussion,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof 1519

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out from the word "Motion," to the end of the Question,—(*Mr. Salt*) 1519

Question proposed, "That the words 'and no Member having' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out "spoken to," and insert "moved or seconded,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*) 1523

Amendment *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed, in line 6, omit "or during the same sitting of the Committee,"—(*Mr. Gladstone:*)—Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 5, after the words "similar Motion," to insert the words "if it has been negatived,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) .. 1524

After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,
At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided always, That this Resolution shall not apply to Debates which begin after half-past Twelve of the clock,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1524

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 62, Noes 145; Majority 83.—(Div. List, No. 370.)

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, Further Proceeding on Main Question, as amended, stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

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Mr. Parnell, M.P., &c. (Release from Kilmainham)—Notice, Observations, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Reply, Mr. Gladstone 1557

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ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—Third Rule (Debates on Motions for Adjournment)—[Adjourned Debate.] [Twenty-third Night]

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [15th November], as amended:—Main Question, as amended, again proposed: —Debate *resumed* 1559

Main Question, as amended, put.

(3.) *Resolved,* That, when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having moved or seconded any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FOURTH RULE (DIVISIONS)—

Moved, "That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the 'Ayes' or 'Noes' have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and, if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1559

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except in Committee of Supply,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except on a Motion 'That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks*) 1562

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 69, Noes 121; Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 371.)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 35, Noes 100; Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 372.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions,"—(*Mr. C. S. Parker*) .. 1579

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 85, Noes 15; Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 373.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "before a Division," and insert the words "after the House has been cleared for a Division,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)—instead thereof .. 1583

Question proposed, "That the words 'before a Division' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *inserted.*

Amendments made, by adding, at the end of the foregoing Amendments, the words—

"Upon a Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of the Committee do report Progress, or do leave the Chair."

And also in line 3, by inserting after the word "may," the words "after the lapse of two minutes, as indicated by the sand glass."

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "ten,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1593

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the Question:" —Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment made, in line 4, by leaving out the words "do not exceed," and inserting the words "be less than,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "twenty," to insert the words "in a House of forty Members,"—(*Mr. Warton*) 1595

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment made, by inserting, at the end of the foregoing Amendment, the words "or upwards,"—(*Mr. Reginald Yorke.*)

Main Question, as amended, put.

(4.) *Resolved,* That, after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, when, after the House has been cleared for a Division, upon a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the Ayes or Noes have it is challenged, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman may, after the lapse of two minutes, as indicated by the sand glass, call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places, and, if they be less than twenty in a House of forty Members or upwards, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House or of the Committee.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIFTH RULE (IRRELEVANCE OR REPETITION)—

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his Speech,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1596

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "when it shall appear that the Member addressing the House or the Committee is using expressions which are offensive to the general sense of the House, or is speaking with continued irrelevance or tedious repetition, or for the purpose of obstruction, or that it is the evident sense of the House or of the Committee that he should discontinue his Speech, Mr. Speaker may so inform the House or the Committee, and, if a Motion is made, 'That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do direct the Member to discontinue his Speech,' Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall forthwith put that Question, and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall direct the Member accordingly: Provided, That such Motion shall not be carried in the affirmative if a Quorum of the House be opposed to it,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Mr. Speaker' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the words "or the Chairman of a Committee,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1597

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate,

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the words "a Committee," and insert the words "Ways and Means,"—(*Mr. J. G. Talbot,*)—instead thereof 1602

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment (*Lord Randolph Churchill*), by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment (*Mr. J. G. Talbot*) *agreed to:*—Words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, to leave out the word "continued," in order to insert the words "wilful and persistent,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)—instead thereof 1603

Question proposed, "That the word 'continued' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 143, Noes 68; Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 374.)

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in line 2, to leave out the words "or tedious repetition,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1604

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, to leave out from the word "Member" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "and, if a Motion be made that such Member do discontinue his speech, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Motion; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Member shall discontinue his speech accordingly,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1606

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "and," to insert the words "if the warning be unheeded,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) 1615

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 52, Noes 120; Majority 68. —(Div. List, No. 375.)

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out the words "his Speech," in order to insert the words "such irrelevance or repetition,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) 1626

Question proposed, "That the words 'his speech' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

(5.) *Resolved,* That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Ways and Means, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his speech.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

LORDS, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17.

QUESTIONS.

* * *

Poor Law (Ireland)—Belfast Union—Mr. Robert Humphrey—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1629

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South Africa—Zululand—Restoration of Cetewayo—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1631

England and Peru—The Peruvian Bondholders—Correspondence—Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1631

Commissioners of Irish Lights—Tory Island Lighthouse—Questions, Mr. Lea, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. J. Holms .. 1632

Metropolitan Police Force (Dublin)—Extra Pay—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1632

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CRIMINAL LAW—INFLICTION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON ADULTS UNDER THE VAGRANT ACTS—SUBSTITUTION OF BIRCHING FOR FLOGGING—Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, The Attorney General .. 1633

CRIMINAL LAW—SEIZURE OF THE "FREIHEIT"—RESTORATION OF MATERIAL SEIZED—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt .. 1634

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND)—STATE OF LODGING HOUSES IN LONDONDERRY—Question, Mr. Moore; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1634

EGYPT (EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1635

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—CARRICK—Questions, Mr. Lea, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1635

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—CESSION OF A PORT ON THE RED SEA TO ABYSSINIA—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1636

CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN—OFFICES OF FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1636

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE EXPENSES—THE VOTE OF CREDIT—Notice of Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, Mr. Childers 1637

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM)—Questions, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. Labouchere, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Lowther, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1637

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1641

EGYPT AND TUNIS—SLAVERY—Questions, Mr. W. E. Forster; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1642

EGYPT—THE DUAL CONTROL—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1643

EGYPT (EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES)—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Childers 1643

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1643

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GRAVES OF THE SLAIN AT TEL-EL-KEBIR—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1644

EGYPT (EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK—Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1644

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE EXPENSES—THE VOTE OF CREDIT—Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1645

THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE—Questions, Mr. George Russell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1645

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SIXTH RULE (POSTPONEMENT OF PREAMBLE)—[Adjourned Debate.] [Twenty-fourth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure.

Moved, "That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1646

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words "except by leave of the Committee,"—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the word "do," and insert the words "may, by leave of the Committee,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof 1647

Question proposed, "That the word 'do' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "unless on the application of the Member in charge of the Bill the Committee should otherwise order,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1648

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put.

(6.) *Resolved,* That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SEVENTH RULE (CHAIRMAN TO LEAVE THE CHAIR WITHOUT QUESTION)—

Moved, "That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1648

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 137, Noes 69; Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 376.)

(7.) *Resolved,* That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—EIGHTH RULE (HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE)—

Standing Order 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, read as followeth:—

"That, except for a Money Bill, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion be taken after half-past Twelve of the clock at night, with respect to which Order or Notice of Motion a Notice of Opposition or Amendment shall have been printed on the Notice Paper, or if such Notice of Motion shall only have been given the next previous day of sitting, and objection shall be taken when such Notice is called.

"That Motions for the appointment or nomination of Standing Committees and Proceedings made in accordance with the provisions of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order be excepted from the operation of this Order" 1651

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the said Standing Order be repealed,"—(*Admiral Sir John Hay,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'except for a Money Bill' stand part of the said Standing Order:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 129, Noes 26; Majority 103.—(Div. List, No. 377.)

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the words "Money Bill," to insert the words "or for a Bill which has passed the Second Reading,"—(*Mr. Monk*) 1663

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 21, Noes 76; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 378.)

Amendment proposed, in line 2, to leave out the words "half past,"—(*Lord George Hamilton*) 1667

Question proposed, "That the words 'half past' stand part of the said Standing Order:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 101, Noes 58; Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 379.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "Amendment," to insert the words "signed in the House by twenty Members at the least,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*) 1678

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "six,"—(*Sir Henry Holland,*)—instead thereof.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, "That 'six' be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to said Amendment to Amendment, to leave out the word "six" in order to substitute the word "ten,"—(*Mr. Parnell.*) 1681

After short debate, Amendment of Amendment to said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Amendment to Amendment, and Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "Amendment," to insert the words "including an Amendment in Committee unless standing in the name of the Member in charge of the Bill,"—(*Mr. James Lowther*) 1682

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, to leave out the words "been given the next previous day of sitting," and insert the words "appeared for the first time on the Notice Paper,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof 1683

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said Standing Order:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "called," to insert the words "and the Member giving such Notice shall rise in his place and object to such Order or Notice of Motion being taken,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*) 1683

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 10, after the words "Standing Order," to insert the words "Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1684

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the word "and," in order to add, at the end thereof, the words "and Motions for Returns unopposed by the Government,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After short debate, Amendment to said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House,"—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot*) 1686

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 122, Noes 62; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 380.)

Question, "That the words 'Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule) 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, *deferred* till *Monday* next.

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PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—[Adjourned Debate]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [14th November], "That the Report from the Select Committee do lie upon the Table:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1700

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Report and Minutes of the Proceedings be re-committed to the Select Committee, so far as they relate to a paragraph referring to the Law of Contempt proposed to be added to the Report by Mr. Sexton,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.* Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

EGYPT (EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre .. 1703

LORDS, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20.

QUESTIONS.

—:o:—

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1703
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST ASYLUM—R. NELSON—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1704
AFRICA (WEST COAST)—CONGO—Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1706
LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS—Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1706
THE CATHEDRAL COMMISSION—THE FINAL REPORT—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1707
JURY LAWS (IRELAND)—DUBLIN JURIES—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1707
POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—WHITECHAPEL UNION—BOARDED-OUT CHILDREN—Questions, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Bryce; Answers, Mr. Dodson 1708
LICENSING ACT, 1874—UNAUTHORIZED VISITS BY CONSTABULARY—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1709
NAVY—AERATED FRESH WATER—Question, Mr. H. S. Northcote; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1710
STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—WEST OF IRELAND—Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. O'Shea, Lord John Manners, Mr. Sexton, Colonel Colthurst; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1710
THE LAND ACTS (IRELAND) 1870-1881—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1713
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—CAPTAIN WYNNE—Questions, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1714
THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE—THE CONSTABULARY—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1715
LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MARTIN, CROWN SOLICITOR, CO. DONEGAL—Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1715

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ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1716

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF THE IRISH MAILS—Question, Mr. Moore; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1716

ARMY—IRISH RECRUITS—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1716

ARMY HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS—LORD MORLEY'S COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Childers 1717

MADAGASCAR—NUMBER OF BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDENT IN, INCLUDING CREOLES FROM THE MAURITIUS—Question, Mr. J. N. Richardson; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1717

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1718

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE HANGING GALE—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1719

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (COURT VALUERS)—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1720

MADAGASCAR—RELATIONS WITH FRANCE—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1720

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ULSTER TENANT FARMERS' ASSOCIATION—Question, Mr. J. N. Richardson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1721

EGYPT—SLAVERY CONVENTION OF 1877—Question, Mr. Pease; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1721

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—EXTENSION OF TIME, &C.—Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1722

POST OFFICE—POSTING IN MAIL TRAINS—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1724

INDIA (BRITISH BURMAH)—MRA THA DOON—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1724

INDIA (BOMBAY)—LOCAL ADMINISTRATION—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1725

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—NOTICES—Observations, Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker; Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; [No answer] 1726

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &C. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM)—Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1727

ORDER OF THE DAY.

* * *

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—EIGHTH RULE (THE HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE)—[Adjourned Debate]—[Twenty-fifth Night]—

Standing Order (Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule) 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, *further considered* 1728

Amendment proposed,

After the word "House," at the end of the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words "or have been settled by a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. Hinde Palmer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, to add the words "Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by six Members at the least, and six names be kept on the Order Book to make such Notice valid; and that such Notice shall lapse at the end of the week following that in which it was given unless renewed by the Friday in that week,"—(*Sir Henry Holland*) 1733

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Page

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "six," and insert the word "three,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'six' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 39, Noes 147; Majority 108.—(Div. List, No. 381.)

Question put, "That the word 'three' be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 52, Noes 126; Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 382.)

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to insert, after the word "Member," the words "and dated,"—(*Captain Aylmer:*)—Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment amended, by leaving out the word "Members," and inserting the words "a Member, and dated, and," instead thereof; and by leaving out the words "at the least, and six names be kept on the Order Book to make such Notice valid, and that such Notice;" and also by leaving out the words "unless renewed by the Friday in that week,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question,

"That the words 'Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by a Member, and dated, and shall lapse at the end of the week following that in which it was given,' be there inserted,"

put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, to add the words "Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees; and if objection be taken by any Member of the House to the name of any Member nominated on a Select Committee, the vote of the House on such a nomination shall be taken without Debate,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*) 1745

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, the words "Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1745

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 78, Noes 20; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 383.)

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, the words "Provided also, That, when such business as may be taken has been disposed of, or at Half-past One of the Clock precisely, notwithstanding there may be business under discussion, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House, without putting any Question: Provided always, That when the Division on an Amendment has not been concluded until after Half-past One, the Original or Main Question may, if no Debate arise thereupon, be put by Mr. Speaker, and a Division taken after Half-past One,"—(*Mr. Edward Clarke*) 1747

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 33, Noes 76; Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 384.)

Question proposed, "That the said Standing Order, as amended, be agreed to:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 100, Noes 12; Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 385.)

Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule.

[Standing Order of 18 February 1879, amended 9 May and 20 November 1882.]

(8.) *Resolved,* That, except for a Money Bill, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion be taken after half-past Twelve of the clock at night, with respect to which Order

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

or Notice of Motion a Notice of Opposition or Amendment shall have been printed on the Notice Paper, or if such Notice of Motion shall only have been given the next previous day of sitting, and objection shall be taken when such Notice is called.

That Motions for the appointment or nomination of Standing Committees and Proceedings made in accordance with the provisions of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House, be excepted from the operation of this Order.

Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by a Member, and dated, and shall lapse at the end of the week following that on which it was given.

Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees 1752

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—NINTH RULE (ORDER IN DEBATE)—

Moved, "That the Standing Order of 28 February 1880 be read,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1753

Standing Order read as followeth:—

"That, whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding the authority of the Chair, or abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate, being allowed, 'That such Member be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of that day's sitting;' and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and if the Motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee and report the circumstance to the House; and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended three times in one Session, under this Order, his suspension on the third occasion shall continue for one week, and, until a Motion has been made, upon which it shall be decided at one sitting, by the House, whether the suspension shall then cease, or for what longer period it shall continue; and, on the occasion of such Motion, the Member may, if he desires it, be heard in his place: Provided always, That nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages."

Amendment proposed, in line 1 of said Standing Order, after the word "any," to insert the word "individual,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) .. 1756

Question proposed, "That the word 'individual' be there inserted:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gladstone:*)—*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Labouchere:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

LORDS, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21.

QUESTIONS.

* * *

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE REGENT'S PARK—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1789

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1789

Public Health—Temporary Abodes—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1790

Education Department—Gipsy and Nomadic Children—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1790

Spain—International Law—Surrender of Cuban Refugees—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1790

Africa (South) — Natal — The Chief Langalibalele—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1792

State of Ireland—Extra Force of Constabulary—Loughmore, Co. Tipperary—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1792

Africa (West Coast)—The Congo—Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1793

Parliament—Order—Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—Notices of Motion — Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Labouchere 1793

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill—Legislation—Question, Mr. Brinton; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1794

State of Ireland (Apprehended Distress)—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1794

Explosives Act, 1875—Dynamite Explosion at Pembery Burrows—Question, Sir John Jenkins; Answer, Sir William Harcourt .. 1795

Agriculture—Ensilage—Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1795

Parliament—Business of the House (Mr. Bradlaugh)—Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1796

Mr. Parnell, M.P., &c. (Release from Kilmainham)—Questions, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1796

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—Ninth Rule (Order in Debate)—[Adjourned Debate]—[Twenty-sixth Night]—

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *further considered* .. 1798

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "Member," to insert the words "present in the House at the time,"—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "Member," to insert the words "after a full and reasonable notice,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1804

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 53, Noes 184; Majority 131.—(Div. List, No. 386.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding," and insert the word "disregarded,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof 1808

Question proposed, "That the words 'been named by the Speaker' stand part of the said Standing Order:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, after the word "House," to insert the words "immediately after the commission of the offence,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1808

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

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PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to add, at the end thereof, the words "by such Member,"—(*Mr. Parnell.*)
Question proposed, "That those words be added to the said proposed Amendment:"—Amendment to proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Words *inserted.*

Amendment made, in line 3, by leaving out the word "as," and inserting the word "of,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof.

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the foregoing Amendment, to insert the word "wilfully,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*) 1809
Question proposed, "That the word 'wilfully' be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, in line 3, by inserting after the word "or," the word "of,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) .. 1810
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said Standing Order, as amended:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the words "or otherwise,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1811
Question proposed, "That the words 'or otherwise' stand part of the said Standing Order, as amended:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 90; Noes 48; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 387.)

Amendment proposed, in line 5, after the word "otherwise," to insert the words "in like manner,"—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley*) 1814
Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,
In line 5, after the word "then," to insert the words "after the nature of the offence and the grounds upon which such Member has been named shall have been stated and entered upon the Journals of the House,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) .. 1817
Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, in line 5, by inserting, after the word "committed," the words "by such Member,"—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Amendment proposed,
In line 7, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "except a statement from a Member so named,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1819
Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,
In line 7, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "except a statement from the Member named, strictly confined to explanation or apology,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*) 1823
Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,
In line 8, after the word "House," to insert the words "if such Question, thus put by Mr. Speaker, shall be decided by the House in the affirmative, the suspension of such Member shall continue until the House has further considered it; and Mr. Speaker shall, immediately after such Question has been decided in the affirmative, cause a Notice to be placed on the Notice Paper, to the effect, that at the next Sitting of the House but one, before any other business is taken, Mr. Speaker will put a Question to the House, as to whether such Member be relieved from such suspension, or whether such suspension shall be continued for a further time, or

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—*continued.*

whether any other judgment of the House with respect to such Member shall be pronounced,"—(*Mr. Newdegate*) 1824

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "House," to insert the words "Provided, That, if more than one Member is named in such Resolution, Amendments to omit the name of any of such Members shall be allowed,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1834

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Baron Henry de Worms:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 24, Noes 132; Majority 108.—(Div. List, No. 388.)

Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 55, Noes 103; Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 389.)

Amendment proposed, in line 8, to leave out the words "during the remainder of that days' sitting,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1855

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *omitted.*

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, as amended, *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22.

QUESTIONS.

Navy—The Naval Reserves—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1858

The Egyptian War Fund—Committee—Questions, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1858

NOTICE.

Egypt (Military Expedition)—Special Grants to Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Beauchamp Seymour—Notice, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1859

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—The Chairman of Committees—Personal Explanation, Mr. Lyon Playfair:—Short debate thereon 1859

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—Ninth Rule (Order in Debate)—[Adjourned Debate] [Twenty-seventh Night]—

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *further considered* .. 1864

Amendment proposed, in line 16, to leave out the words "three times in one Session,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1865

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *omitted.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in line 17, to leave out the word "third," and insert the word "first,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1865

Question, "That the word 'third' stand part of the Resolution," put, and *negatived*:—Word *inserted.*

Amendment proposed, in line 18, to leave out the words "for one week," and insert the words "during that sitting of the House,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill,*)—instead thereof 1866

Question proposed, "That the words 'for one week' stand part of the said Standing Order:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 101, Noes 24; Majority 77.—(Div. List, No. 390.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 18, to leave out the words after the word "week" to the word "place," in line 22, inclusive, in order to insert the words "on the second occasion for a fortnight, and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, for a month,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof 1876

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided always, That the words 'service of the House' in this Resolution shall not be construed as excluding any such Member from voting in any Division,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1879

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 17, Noes 138; Majority 121.—(Div. List, No. 391.)

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided always, That discharge from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so discharged from serving on any Committee for the Consideration of a Private Bill, to which he may have been appointed before his suspension,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1881

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, by adding, at the end of the foregoing Amendment, the words—

"Provided always, That suspension from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so suspended from serving on any Committee for the Consideration of a Private Bill, to which he may have been appointed before his suspension,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided, That if the Session closes before the term of such suspension has expired, the Member so suspended shall not be re-admitted to the House unless by a Vote of the House in the following Session,"—(*Mr. Peel*) 1882

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless for disregarding the authority of the Chair, nor unless several Members, present together, have jointly committed the act for which they are named,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1884

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out all the words after the word "time," in line 2, to the end of the proposed Amendment,—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) 1887

Question proposed, "That the word 'unless' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 127, Noes 73; Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 392.)

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 2 of the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "for disregarding the authority of the Chair, nor unless,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) .. 1894

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 2 of the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "committed the act for which they are named," in order to insert the words "disregarded the authority of the Chair,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment," put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, to add, at the end of the proposed Amendment, the words "disregarded the authority of the Chair,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to insert after the word "disregarded," the words "during that sitting,"—(*Mr. Onslow.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'during that sitting' be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment to the said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words 'disregarded the authority of the Chair,' be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Question,

"That the words 'Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair' be added at the end of the foregoing Amendment,"

put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, to add, at the end of the Standing Order, the words "or of revoking any such suspension by a Resolution,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 1895

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed to add to the Resolution,

"Provided, That if any Member so suspended should thereafter vacate his seat and be re-elected a Member of the House, such order of suspension should not be deemed to be in force against him,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 1896

After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, "That the Standing Order, as amended, be agreed to:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 161, Noes 19; Majority 142.—(Div. List, No. 393.)

(9.) *Resolved,* That, whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair, or of abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed by such Member in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate, being allowed, "That such Member be suspended from the service of the House;" and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and if the Motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee and report the circumstance to the House; and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended under this Order, his suspension on the first occasion shall continue for one week, on the second occasion for a fortnight, and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, for a month: Provided always, That suspension from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so suspended from serving on any Committee for the consideration of a Private Bill to which he may have been appointed before his suspension: Provided also, That not more than one Member

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair: Provided always, That nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *Tomorrow.*

LORDS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

COMMONS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—WIGAN NEW WRIT—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void,"—(*Mr. Winn*) .. 1897

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

QUESTIONS.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE—Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. M'Laren; Answers, The Lord Advocate 1905

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RETIRED RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1906

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS—Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1906

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACTS — THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION, BIRMINGHAM—Question, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answer, Mr. Mundella .. 1907

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—WEST OF IRELAND—Question, Colonel Colthurst; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1908

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—QUETTA AND CANDAHAR—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1908

TURKEY—SHEIKH OBEIDULLAH—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1909

INDIA (FINANCE, &C.)—REMITTANCES FROM INDIA, 1882-3—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1909

ARMY ORGANIZATION — MOUNTED INFANTRY — Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1909

CRIMINAL LAW—JUVENILE OFFENDERS—Question, Mr. Carbutt; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1910

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF CROWN WITNESSES—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1910

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS COURTS—Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan, The Attorney General for Ireland 1912

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE DROMOD PETTY SESSIONS CLERK—Question, Colonel O'Beirne; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1914

STREET REGULATIONS (METROPOLIS)—CABMEN'S SHELTER IN THE HARROW ROAD—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Sir William Harcourt .. 1914

PERU—TREATMENT OF CHINESE COOLIES—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1915

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TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE X.—THE VARNA RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Alderman Cotton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1915

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE CENTRAL HALL—Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1916

NAVY—THE "LONDON" HULK, ZANZIBAR—Question, Mr. Cropper; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1916

INDIA (MADRAS)—GOLD MINING COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1917

INDIA—CRIMINAL PROCEDURE COURT—SALEM RIOTERS—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1917

INDIA (BENGAL)—THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF CALCUTTA—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1918

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Sir William Harcourt .. 1919

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—TORY ISLAND—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Callan; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1920

NAVY—H.M.S. "POLYPHEMUS"—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1922

PENAL SERVITUDE COMMISSION, 1879—IRISH CONVICT LABOUR—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1922

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—ROSCOMMON—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1922

INDIA — CONSULS AT THE NATIVE STATES — THE CASE OF MR. SILBIGER—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1923

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1924

IRELAND — SCIENCE AND ART MUSUEM, DUBLIN — Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1924

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF CROWN WITNESSES—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1925

IRELAND—GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS—PRINTING—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1926

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE—Questions, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Sir William Harcourt, The Lord Advocate 1926

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—CO. CLARE—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1928

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—ENNIS AND WEST CLARE RAILWAY—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1929

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1872—SCHOOL BOARD ACCOUNTS—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1929

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—CASE OF ANTHONY GALEAGHER—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1930

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1931

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER AND PARTY—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1931

CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN—LOCAL APPOINTMENTS—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1932

IRELAND—SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM, DUBLIN—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1932

INCOME TAX—INSOLVENT FIRMS—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1933

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ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Colonel Colthurst, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1934

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—Observations, Mr. Parnell; Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1936

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Parnell:*)—After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM)—Questions, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1990

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—:o:—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—TENTH RULE (DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT)—[Adjourned Debate]—[Twenty-eighth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure 1991

Moved, "That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, after the word "opinion," to insert the words "that it is the evident sense of the House at large,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 992

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short debate, Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "at large," and insert the words "or of the Committee, as the case may be,"—(*Mr. Gregory,*)— instead thereof.. 2005

Question proposed, "That the words 'at large' stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *added.*

Question proposed, "That the words 'that it is the evident sense of the House and the Committee, as the case may be," be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 37, Noes 103; Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 394.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, to leave out the words "made for the purpose of obstruction," and insert the words "an abuse of the Rules of the House,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) 2007

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words "he may so inform the House, and if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' he shall forthwith put such Question, and if the same be decided in the affirmative,"—(*Mr. Gorst*) .. 2008

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided, That this Rule shall not apply to any Motion of Adjournment which may be made after half-past Twelve at night,"—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*) 2009

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *negatived.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Main Question, as amended, again proposed :—After short debate, Main Question, as amended, put :—The House *divided ;* Ayes 82, Noes 26 ; Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 395.)

(10.) *Resolved*, That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

COMMONS.

—:o:—

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27.

For *Edinburgh City*, *v.* James Cowan, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2.

For *the Borough of Ennis*, *v.* James Lysaght Finigan, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13.

For *the City of New Sarum*, *v.* William Henry Grenfell, esquire, one of the Grooms in Waiting on Her Majesty.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16.

For *University of Cambridge*, *v.* Right Hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole, Manor of Northstead.
For *Preston*, *v.* Right Hon. Cecil Raikes, Chiltern Hundreds.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23.

For *the Borough of Wigan*, *v.* Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24.

Halifax—Thomas Shaw, esquire.
Haddington District of Burghs—Alexander Craig Sellar, esquire.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6.

City of Edinburgh—Samuel Danks Waddy, esquire.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17.

For *Ennis Borough*—Matthew Joseph Kenny, esquire.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21.

For *City of New Sarum*—Coleridge John Kennard, esquire.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1882.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 24*th October*, 1882.

JUDICIAL BUSINESS.

Ordered, That for the purposes of the Judicial Business of the House, *Friday* the 10*th day of November* next be deemed the "first sitting day after the Recess."

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—VOTE OF THANKS TO HER MAJESTY'S NAVAL AND MILITARY FORCES.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, before I move the Adjournment of the House to Thursday next, at a quarter past 4 o'clock, I beg to give Notice that on that day I shall have the honour to move a Vote of Thanks to the Commander, officers, and men of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt. It will, I think, be convenient to your Lordships that I should add that, after the proceedings have concluded with respect to the Vote of Thanks, I propose to move that the House do adjourn to 11 o'clock of the 10th of November, when the Judicial Business of the House will be taken. I have also to state that Her Majesty's Government have no Business to lay before the House.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I do not propose to take any objection to the course proposed. I had, indeed, rather hoped that the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) would, in the course of his Notice, have intimated an intention on his part to give the House some information with respect to the intentions of the Government on the policy they propose to pursue in Egypt. As the noble Earl, however, has not done so, I give Notice that after the Vote of Thanks on Thursday I will ask the noble Earl a Question on the subject.

LORD DENMAN said, he would remind their Lordships that it was just possible that the House of Commons might pass some measures which would require the consent of their Lordships' House; and, therefore, it was desirable that some little time should be given for their consideration between the Adjournment and the Prorogation. There was no doubt that each House of Parliament had the power of voting for the duration of each Adjournment; and Bills ought not to be hurried through, as the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Bill was through all its last stages, by the suspension of the Standing Orders.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 24th October, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Members Sworn—Thomas Shaw, esquire, *for* Halifax; Alexander Craig Sellar, esquire, *for* Haddington District of Burghs.

PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT — THE APPROPRIATION ACT — CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE.

OBSERVATIONS.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I rise, Sir, at this early period of the Sitting to move that the House do now adjourn. I wish, with great respect, to call the attention of the House to a grave departure from the Constitutional immemorial practice of the House of Commons which is occurring at the present moment, by the fact of this House being still in Session for the purpose of deliberating on proposals of Ministers at a time long subsequent to the Royal Assent having been given to the annual Appropriation Act, and the Business of the Session having been thereby absolutely closed, and in order to prevent the continuance of so dangerous an irregularity; and to suggest to the House as a remedy, as a safeguard, and as a grave protest against the recurrence of such an attempt on the part of the present Ministry, or of any future Ministry, to disregard well-established and vital principles of Parliamentary government, I propose to move that this House do now adjourn. Had I been able to be in my place before the House adjourned in August I should have called attention to this matter at that time; but the House is, perhaps, aware that it was not in my power so to do, or to pursue any close inquiries as to the propriety of the prolonged Adjournment proposed to the House by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister stated on August 15th, when he moved the Adjournment, that there were precedents for the course he recommended. Such a statement from so high an authority no doubt prevented either debate or question at the time. I join issue on this point, and state that there are no precedents to authorize or justify the course taken by the Government. It has been hitherto the invariable practice of the House of Commons never to part with the Appropriation Bill until all the Business of the Session was to all intents and purposes absolutely concluded; at which time you, Sir, are accustomed to carry it up to the House of Lords in order that it may receive the Royal Assent; and by that act of yours you relinquish the supervision over the expenditure of public moneys with which you are intrusted during the Session of Parliament by virtue of your high Office. I quote, in support of this positive assertion, from Sir Erskine May's well-known work, at page 633, 8th edition—

> "The Resolutions of the Committee of Supply are reserved until all the Supplies for the Service of the year have been granted, when they are embraced in the Appropriation Act at the end of the Session; and it is irregular to introduce any clause of appropriation into a Bill passing through Parliament at an earlier period."

And, again, on page 639, Sir Erskine May lays down—

> "When the Appropriation Bill has passed both Houses, and is about to receive the Royal Assent, it is returned into the charge of the House of Commons until that House is summoned to attend Her Majesty, or the Lords' Commissioners, in the House of Peers for the Prorogation of Parliament; when it is carried by the Speaker to the Bar of the House of Peers, and there received by the Clerk of the Parliaments for the Royal Assent."

The same is again positively stated by, if possible, a higher authority even than that of Sir Erskine May—I mean Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who, in an Appendix to a Report of a Committee appointed by the House in 1857 to investigate the whole subject of public moneys, and put in by him in his official capacity as Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day, writes—

> "The final grant of Ways and Means to cover the whole of the Supplies voted during the Session is always reserved for the Appropriation Act: thus, although the House of Commons at an early period of the Session might have voted the whole of the Supplies of the year, they could still hold their constitutional check upon the Minister by limiting the grant of Ways and Means to an amount sufficient only to last such time as they might think proper to give him the means of carrying on the public service, and they are by such limited grants at all times enabled to prevent the Minister from either dissolving or proroguing Parliament."

I have searched through the records of the House as far as it has been in my power so to do, and I can find no precedent for the House of Commons ever parting with its power to withhold Supplies from the Crown so long as it continues its deliberations. From the days of the Plantagenets the Commons have always jealously insisted that all aids to the Crown, after receiving the assent of the other House, shall be left in their keeping, and be submitted by their Speaker, and by their Speaker only, when and only when all grievances have been heard, and, in their opinion, redressed. If the House will allow me, I will show, by two or three very singular examples, how extremely consistent has been the course of the House of Commons in this matter. In the ninth year of Henry IV., the King being in want of money, and the Commons being greatly disturbed at certain proceedings of the Lords, the King declared, in order to conciliate the Commons, that the grant should be made—

> "In manner and form as has been hitherto accustomed; that is to say, by the mouth of the Speaker of the House of Commons for the time being."

Again, in the year 1580, in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Lords declared that the return of the Bill of Subsidy to the House of Commons for presentation to the Crown by the Speaker—

> "Was that the use was indifferent either to take it there or send it hither."

The Commons, on hearing of this, at once resolved—

> "That the use thereof is not indifferent, but always hath been and is that it be sent down into this House and not left there."

Again, in 1642, a Commission was sent to give the Royal Assent to a Money Bill, and the Commission was fixed to the Bill, so that the Lords could not return it to the Commons to be brought up by the Speaker. The Commons appointed a Committee to consider the question, and the House resolved on their Report—

> "That Mr. Speaker shall go up, and if the Bill be delivered to Mr. Speaker before the Commission be read, then he shall have leave to present it to be passed: but if the Lords do not deliver the Bill into Mr. Speaker's hands accordingly, then he shall immediately return."

All these instances simply prove the extraordinary anxiety and determination on the part of the Commons never to part with their only shield of defence against Monarchical or Ministerial tyranny until the last moment. In the Reign of Charles II., the appropriation of Supplies by Statute to particular services grew into an occasional practice to guard against Royal extravagance; but after the Revolution this occasional practice, to use the words of Mr. Hatsell—

> "Was made part of that system of government which was then established for the better securing the rights, liberties, and privileges of the people of this country."

The present practice of withholding the Appropriation Bill till the end of the Session is merely a development of the practice of earlier times. Sir George Cornewall Lewis states, in the same document from which I have already quoted—

> "It may be well here to advert to the Parliamentary check which the Constitution has provided over the acts of the Government while these proceedings are taking place during the Session. The Speaker of the House of Commons is considered to represent the House in all matters of finance brought before him, and to control all proceedings in reference thereto. As the Session proceeds he takes care that any Bill for giving Ways and Means to the Treasury is kept within the amount of the Votes in Supply previously granted, and at the close of the Session he checks the final balance between the full amount of the Votes in Supply, including the sum required to pay the interest of Exchequer Supply Bills and the Ways and Means already granted, and he limits the final grant of Ways and Means in the Appropriation Act to that amount. In short, the Speaker exercises a direct control over all the financial forms of the House of Commons."

This power or check was positively exercised by the House in 1784 against Mr. Pitt, a Tory Minister in a minority—an event which has happened since, and which may happen again—to prevent his dissolving Parliament—Mr. Pitt, as a matter of fact, did dissolve Parliament; indeed, his whole proceedings at that time are now admitted by all to have been utterly unconstitutional; but he was most careful to spend none of the money voted during the Session except a very small sum—so small, that the succeeding Parliament did not consider that the Resolutions of their Predecessors against an expenditure of money voted before the Appropriation Act had passed into law had been practically violated. But in much more modern times the House has jealously insisted on the principle that no money should be finally appropriated until the close of the Session. In 1841 the Government of the day—of which, I believe, the Prime Minister was a Member—curiously enough tried to appropriate a sum of money to a particular purpose in the middle of the Session by inserting an Appropriation Clause in the ordinary Ways and Means Bill. On this occasion Mr. Speaker (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) interposed when the House came to the clause, and said—

> "Before the Question was put he was anxious to call the attention of the House to what appeared to him to be an irregularity in its proceedings. The clause now before them was a clause of appropriation introduced into a Bill to provide for the ordinary Ways and Means of the year. Now, it was quite unusual and unprecedented to introduce a clause of appropriation into a Bill of this description at this period of the Session. He believed the object the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in view in proposing this clause was to mark the sense of the House on an excess of expenditure in the Departments of the Navy above the amount voted for that Service in the past year, that it might not be drawn into a precedent in future. Such clauses had been frequently introduced into the ordinary Appropriation Bill at the close of the Session; but since the year 1762 there was not a single instance of a clause of appropriation being inserted in any other Bill. Indeed, there was a very remarkable instance to the contrary."—[3 *Hansard*, lvii. 462.]

Mr. Speaker then referred to an incident which had occurred in the time of Mr. Pitt; and then went on to use these most remarkable and impressive words—

> "I mention this with the view of preventing the adoption of what may afterwards be found to be a most inconvenient precedent, and because I think that in matters of this description the House ought to exercise more than ordinary caution."

Well, the Government and the House, in accordance with Mr. Speaker's advice, withdrew the clause. The conduct of Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre on this occasion illustrates remarkably how thoroughly that eminent man understood the nature of his Office, and how fully aware he was that the Speaker is not only the servant and mouthpiece of the House, but something far higher—the chosen guardian and trustee of all its Privileges — anxious, unremitting, Argus-eyed in their defence, whether against an individual, whether against a Minister, whether against the Crown itself. And, therefore, when a Speaker is chosen by the House of Commons, it always selects a Member of long standing, and, like the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, intimately acquainted, not only with its Forms, but its rights. He is assisted, moreover, by able advisers — the ablest whose talents high salaries can secure — so that error or oversight would seem to be almost impossible. The last quotation with which I have troubled the House brings me to the point on which I am most anxious to rivet the attention of the House. The motive of the Government of 1841 in the trifling matter to which I have alluded was an excellent one, intended to prevent a Department exceeding the Estimate of the year; but, even with this excellent motive, the House refused, on the advice of Mr. Speaker, to allow this vital principle to be tampered with — namely, that no appropriation of moneys shall be passed before the absolute close of the Session. But what are we to say of the motives of the present Government in having entrapped the House into the first recorded instance of a departure from this principle? It is extremely difficult, and for the most part unprofitable and unsatisfactory, to attempt to divine motives. But, whatever their motives, this I will say—that the Constitutional practice might have been easily adhered to had the Government been content to prorogue Parliament at the usual time, and to summon it again by Royal Proclamation in the Autumn. But this course would have entailed a Speech from the Throne, an Address in reply, and, possibly, a long debate on that Address that might have been, I admit, inconvenient to the Government. But, after all, what is a debate on the Address? It is merely the first available occasion on which the Representatives of the people formally recite popular grievances against the Executive Government; so that the position is this—that the Government, in order to evade a statement of popular grievances, and to confine the discussions of the House to the consideration of certain proposals for the benefit of their own Business, have violated the Privileges of this House in a manner often before attempted, but never before effected, by any despotic Monarch, and, literally, at the present moment, have the House of Commons at their mercy. I may be told that the present majority in the House of Commons have such implicit confidence in the present Government that they have no objection to be placed in that position. But if anybody should suggest to me such a consideration I would repudiate it as utterly slanderous and calumnious. To put it as strongly as I can, I do not believe that if the Angel Gabriel was to take his place on the Treasury Bench as Prime Minister of this country, that even under such fortunate auspices the House of Commons would consent to relinquish one jot or tittle of its Constitutional rights, much less with the present Ministry, of whom not even its most enthusiastic admirers would assert that it was angelic. The Royal Assent to the Appropriation Bill and the Prorogation of Parliament are, by the fundamental principles of our Constitution, inseparably connected, and cannot be divorced one from another, and, practically, have never been hitherto. The House is now deliberating, and will be deliberating, if it continues in Session, with a rope round its neck, paralyzed and emasculated by the deprivation of its only weapons of defence against the Minister of the day. To put it more clearly, suppose a Motion is brought forward on the present state of affairs in Egypt, which is very probable, and it appears in the course of the debate that such a Motion might be carried against the Government, which is not so probable, the Prime Minister has nothing whatever to do, if he wishes to evade a decision of the House, or avoid the stigma of defeat, than to prorogue or even dissolve Parliament—a course he could not possibly adopt had the Appropriation Bill remained in the possession of the House of Commons. But more than that. The Government might await the decision of the House, and be placed in a minority, but, owing to the absence of all Parliamentary control, they need neither resign nor appeal to the country for six months, but remain in Office all that time, after a Vote of Want of Confidence — a monstrosity which could not occur had we not parted with the Appropriation Bill; and in the interim thus gained the country might be committed irrevocably to courses which would never have obtained the consent of a majority of this House. But, again, still more strong is my point. Since the Adjournment the British Forces have been engaged in war. Before the Adjournment money was voted for the support of that war. The British Army is now occupying a foreign country. Is it possible—is it credible—that under this Constitution of ours, owing to the acts of the Government in extracting the Appropriation Bill from an unwary and thinly-attended House, no Member can now call in question, although the House is in Session, either the conduct of the war, the expenditure of the money, or the occupation of a foreign country, except by the permission and by the grace and condescension of the Advisers of the Crown? Such a state of things could not have come about if the House had not been entrapped into parting with the Appropriation Bill. I may be told that the present Prime Minister is not likely to act in such a manner. Quite so; but future Ministers may—indeed, they would be perfect fools if they did not, for now they have a precedent set before them which otherwise they would not have had, and which, with a subservient majority, depend upon it they will be sure to use. The Constitution of this country has not been constructed by considerations of what the Minister of the day might or might not do at any particular moment. Its apparently most antiquated and *rococo* forms are found, on a very slight examination, to possess the highest value for the safety of public liberty, and I refuse to believe that the present House of Commons, in which the great Liberal Party possess a large majority, a Party to whom we owe so much of our freedom, presided over by a Prime Minister whose name has always been connected hitherto with the cause of popular freedom, will allow so dangerous a precedent to pass unnoticed, or suffer the rights and privileges of Parliament, with regard to public moneys, to be so seriously and so fatally infringed. I earnestly urge upon the House to remember the words of Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre, that in dealing with these matters the House should exercise more than ordinary caution to give to them their most serious consideration; and, laying aside for the moment all thoughts of Party discipline or convenience, to remember that they are here, pledged as solemnly as men can be, to see and to take care that the historic freedom of this country shall not suffer at their hands the slightest, smallest, or minutest injury.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I have to express my own satisfaction, and I am sure the satisfaction of the House, on seeing the noble Lord again in his place, after what I am afraid has been a tedious, if not a severe illness, and I have to thank the noble Lord for having kindly given me, a few hours ago, Notice of the Motion that he was about to make. With regard to the speech of the noble Lord, I will say that there are certain parts of it which might with perfect propriety have been as warmly cheered on this side of the House as in his own immediate neighbourhood. I am ready, were it the question, to defend to all extremities the conduct of Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre in the matter to which the noble Lord referred; but that matter has no connection whatever with the subject now before the House. The question touched by the conduct of Mr. Shaw Lefevre is whether the whole finance of the year should or should not, as a matter of regular practice, be associated together in one and the same Appropriation Bill; and I will venture to say that there is no man who has oftener pressed upon the House, or, I may say, who has oftener wearied the House with laying before them the essential importance of dealing with the financial affairs of the year as one concern, as one comprehensive whole, than the humble person who now has the honour of addressing you. Let us, therefore, altogether dismiss from our memories—in order that we may fairly contemplate the matters before us—these words of Mr. Shaw Lefevre, which have nothing to do with the question before us, but which relate to an exceedingly important question, with regard to which I have often witnessed with regret that it does not attract very great notice among Gentlemen not sitting upon this side of the House, but with respect to which I am very glad to see that upon the present occasion the minds of those Gentlemen are fully alive to its momentous character. Now, the censure of the noble Lord, which I think to be groundless, is a censure, not upon the Government, but upon the House itself. The course taken by the House in August last was not a course taken unawares by a thin and empty House, but a course approved by a very considerable Party before the Adjournment, unless my memory deceives me. I announced to the House on the part of the Government the course we intended to pursue; that we thought that the subject of Procedure should not be handed over till next Session, and that having examined what would be the most convenient method of approaching it, we were disposed to think that the best way would be to wind up Business in the ordinary way, to adjourn the House for a considerable period in order to enable Members to refresh themselves after the severe labours which they had undergone, and then to meet again to consider Procedure. Well, Sir, is this censure deserved, or is it not? If it is deserved the Motion of the noble Lord still appears to me to be wholly out of place and unequal to the purpose which he contemplates. The doctrine of the noble Lord is that the passing of the Appropriation Act and the Prorogation are inseparably connected, and he therefore intervenes with a Motion at this particular moment in order to prevent the House from transacting other Business, and to maintain this inseparable connection. But the inseparable connection is not maintained by moving the Adjournment of the House. It is quite evident that if there be anything in the principle of the noble Lord, the Motion which he should have made is not a Motion for the Adjournment of the House, which leaves the matter just as open as it was before the former Adjournment, and in no respect affirms any part of the doctrine of the noble Lord. The Motion should have been a Motion praying for the Prorogation of the House in order to maintain that inseparable connection which the noble Lord thinks to be so necessary.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I will make that Motion if you wish it.

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord has approached this subject with immense consideration and with a Parliamentary research going back to the 10th year of Henry IV.; and if a review of so many centuries, conducted with the care for which we must, of course, give the noble Lord credit, has not enabled him to make up his mind, it appears to me that he becomes the first person to throw some doubt upon his qualifications both as an adviser of the House for the future, and as censor of its proceedings now. I will deal with two points upon which the noble Lord has touched. First of all, as to the terrible consequences that will arise out of this fearful error into which the House has been led owing to the absence of the noble Lord from its precincts; and, secondly, as to the soundness of the assertion on which the noble Lord has entirely built his argument—that there is an inseparable connection shown by an invariable practice between the passing of the Appropriation Act and the Prorogation of Parliament. I wish the noble Lord had not gone out of his way to introduce elements of contention into a debate which ought to be strictly based upon questions of principle and usage by his reference to the motives of the Government—with which it appears that he is better acquainted than they themselves. He says that their motive was to avoid a debate upon the Address. I am, perhaps, almost as well acquainted with the motives of the Government as the noble Lord himself, and I humbly state to the House as the motive of the Government that our present Business is Business with which the House has made considerable progress; that after a debate of five nights, occupying the whole of the Government time for between two and three weeks, the House arrived at a most important decision, and affirmed a most important part of one of the most important Resolutions of the Government, and that it appeared to us convenient and desirable that our labour should not be lost, and that the House should resume the consideration of the Business of Procedure at the point where it was dropped. Now, there is nothing irrational in that representation of the case, and something which may tend to set aside the forced and far-fetched view ascribed to us by the noble Lord. But I am not at all afraid to meet the noble Lord upon his own ascriptions. According to him, the natural course would have been to have prorogued Parliament, and to have commenced by a Speech from the Throne and an Address the Session which would virtually have been the Session of next year. Still, I do not hesitate to say that if there is to be an Address and a statement of popular grievances against the tyranny, either of the present Ministry, or of the Archangel Gabriel—I could not make out which—it is far more convenient to the House that the complaint should be made at the usual time than that it should be anticipated by three or four months, and the opportunity lost until the beginning of 1884. This was a very small matter. It was a question simply whether the House, having performed heavy labours, should take an adjournment. The course which was taken was taken with the full knowledge of the House. All parties had ample notice, and, as far as I understand, there was no objection from any quarter. It was recognized, undoubtedly, by those who became the organs of a widespread feeling of the House, in entering into a consideration with us on the footing on which we were to meet in the month of October, and obtaining from us the assurance that we did not intend to ask the House to go on with other Business, but that we should, so far as we were able, confine the proceedings to the question of Procedure. Consequently, I may say that the entire House has been a party to this arrangement. I am not going to throw any responsibility upon the House; but I am going to contend that it was a good arrangement, and that the noble Lord's argument does not apply. What says the noble Lord? He says that now, if a Motion of Want of Confidence is made, or any proceeding initiated inconvenient to the Government, the House will have lost the opportunity of displacing the Government. The noble Lord has a very inadequate measure of the strength of this House, if he thinks its power to displace the Government by a Vote of Want of Confidence depends in the 19th century upon the Appropriation Act. Let the noble Lord show me a case where the House has laboured under any disability in that respect, Appropriation Bill or no Appropriation Bill. At all times the powers of the House are ample for such a purpose. But what has the House lost? Because the doctrine of the noble Lord appears to be that the House has lost a good deal by being called together at this time. Now, suppose we had proposed the ordinary course. Suppose we had prorogued in August and then met again in February, with our six months' rest, in which we might perform any of the atrocities of which the noble Lord spoke. It would have been in the power of the House to displace us. Whatever this meeting of the House is, it is an enlargement, and not a contraction, of the opportunities possessed by the House of Commons for watching, correcting, and controlling the proceedings of the Government; and, therefore, all these terrible consequences which the noble Lord brought upon us in climax—"First of all," said he, "I will show you what will happen, and then something worse than that, and then something still worse than any of them"—what would have been still worse than the whole of them would have been that the House should have been dispersed for six months over the country, leaving the Government to work its wicked will without the slightest restraint. But what is it that has happened? What is this tremendous affair? It is, Sir, that a vital principle of the Constitution has been infringed—an invariable practice has been broken. These were the announcements at the commencement of the noble Lord's speech, and then he made some reference to the Tory Minister, Mr. Pitt, of 1784—the Tory Minister who, three years after 1784, boasted of his Whiggism, and boasted, when Mr. Fox had produced his doctrine about the Regency, that by virtue of that doctrine, "he would un-Whig the gentleman." Such is the accuracy of the noble Lord as to historical facts, though he will recollect that I have given him friendly warning on other occasions that these allegations of fact are most dangerous. If you happen to trip in them your whole ground is cut away from under your feet, and that is just what has happened to the noble Lord, not only in regard to the Tory Minister, but in his statement that this is an invariable practice of Parliament, and that it is one of the essential principles of the Constitution. Now, Sir, I beg the House to observe that there are a great many practices of this House which are either almost or quite, perhaps, invariable, and which are not principles of the Constitution at all, but simply subsidiary arrangements, for the sake of convenience, with regard to which it has been advantageous to all parties that they should be clearly known and understood, and from which a gratuitous departure is not permitted. But my answer is, that this is not an invariable practice of the House of Commons; it is a convenient practice of the House of Commons. It is a convenient practice of the House of Commons when the Business of the House of Commons has run in its ordinary channel that the whole needs of the State should be met, and that an opportunity of meeting the needs of the State should be kept open till as nearly as possible the close of the Session, because new needs may arise at any time. For that reason the Appropriation Act is reserved to the end of the Session, that the House may, on the one hand, keep the whole of the financial transactions of the country together; and, on the other hand, give itself the largest and the longest opportunity for meeting the wants of the State. But, Sir, upon remarkable occasions that practice has been departed from. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear!] Then, why did the noble Lord say it was invariable?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said that, practically, they were inseparably connected.

MR. GLADSTONE: But I say they are not practically inseparably connected, if in practice they have been departed from. The noble Lord said again and again that this was an invariable, vital, and Constitutional principle. I am sorry to say that we have arrived at an experience that has been of a most exceptional character. The state of the Business of the House of Commons is something deplorable, in a degree that I have at other times endeavoured to describe, and I need not greatly dwell upon it now. It is not in any common state of Business that we should have thought of asking the House of Commons to meet in this way in the month of October. It is a terrible burden to lay upon the shoulders of men who have already discharged labours of the greatest gravity and of the most arduous character from the month of February to the month of August. But, Sir, if it be quite true that there is something novel in meeting in October by adjournment, to consider our Procedure, it would have been still more novel to have prorogued and to have summoned Parliament again for the simple purpose of considering our Procedure, for it was to that simple purpose we were tied, and justly tied, by the House. You cannot, in times of extraordinary pressure, help varying from usages in some particulars. We varied in the smallest degree we could; and I say it would have been a greater innovation to call together the two Houses of Parliament for no other purpose than to consider Procedure in the House of Commons than it was to ask the House of Commons to adjourn from August till October. But it is not an invariable practice. I do not want to undervalue the present practice. It is a convenient and advantageous practice, and ought not to be departed from without grave cause. We have, I am sorry to say, grave cause on this occasion. Now, I have challenged the assertion of the noble Lord, and I will not go back with him to the 10th year of the Reign of Henry IV. I do not recollect, in the range of my own memory, which extends, I am sorry to say, back to the Reform Bill, that the House has made any adjournment after the winding-up of its regular Business. The reason has been that there never has been occasion for its so doing. The House has never been placed in anything like the condition it has been placed in lately. The House has always had, until quite of late years, a fair capacity of dealing with the Business with which it has had to deal. It has now reached a state of things in which it is in danger of losing, not only its efficiency, but its character and honour; and I say that far more special circumstances are before us than were before the House at the time which I am now going to quote. The time is not so very long before my own Parliamentary recollection. It is within the range of my memory as a living man. On the 26th of July, 1820——

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord knows this?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes.

MR. GLADSTONE: I would not have taken that from the mouth of any man but the noble Lord. The noble Lord, knowing that the practice was not invariable, says that he was aware of this, and then he rises and tells us that it is an invariable practice, as well as a vital principle of the Constitution.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I look upon that case as the strongest precedent in favour of my argument.

MR. GLADSTONE: I observed that the noble Lord quoted a number of cases that appeared to me to be irrelevant; and, therefore, it was a wonderful act of self-denial to have refrained from quoting this. Now, what is the argument, and what is the proposition? That there is an essential and invariable connection beteween the passing of the Appropriation Act and the Prorogation. I am now going to pursue a generous course towards the noble Lord, by quoting fully that which is the strongest argument in his favour. Here are the facts. On the 26th of July, 1820, the Appropriation Act having received the Royal Assent, the House was adjourned till the 21st of August.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Which House?

MR. GLADSTONE: The House of Commons. On the 21st of August, 1820, the Appropriation Act having been passed, the House, having prorogued its Session by adjournment, met after its adjournment and proceeded to transact Business of various kinds. Now, what I submit is, that that entirely smashes, destroys—and, as the noble Lord, being fond of variety of expression, said he would not have the smallest, the least, the minutest change in the Constitution, so I say that it smashes, destroys, and pulverizes the statement of the noble Lord, that there was this invariable union between the Appropriation Bill and the Prorogation. The general union of the two things I admit, and appreciate the value of.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: What Business was transacted?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord can refer to the Votes for himself. My affirmation is that the Business of the House was transacted. The noble Lord wishes that no Business should be transacted at all. Now, it is rather remarkable that at that period they were raising this question. The Adjournment of the 21st of August only sufficed for the transaction of Business of various kinds, and then another Motion was made to the 18th of September, and on that Motion a Member rose to make, not the Motion the noble Lord has made, but the Motion he ought to have made from his own point of view, and to give effect to his views—namely, the Motion for Prorogation. That Motion was actually made on the 21st of August, 1820, as an Amendment, and took the form of a Motion for an Address praying for a Prorogation. But the Mover of that Resolution did not found himself upon the invariable connection between the Prorogation and the Act of Appropriation, which connection he had himself allowed to be ruthlessly broken and trampled under foot that very day; but he founded himself upon an entirely different doctrine—on the ground of the strong objections which he entertained to a Bill of Pains and Penalties affecting the Queen, and which the Prorogation of the Session enabled the House of Lords to carry forward. This Motion for Prorogation—this grand Constitutional Motion—would have given an opportunity, in those great days when eminent authorities sat in this House—such as Mr. Wynn and others—of raising all the ennobling doctrines of the noble Lord; yet not one man uttered a single syllable upon the subject, and the Motion for an Address for Prorogation was negatived without a division. They adjourned again till the 18th of September, and then a Motion of great importance was made—namely, for the appointment of a Committee to search the Lords' Journals for references in regard to the Queen's Attainder Bill. Then a Motion was made for an Address praying for a Prorogation on the same ground, and on that occasion there was a division, 12 Gentlemen voting for the Address, though not upon the ground now brought forward by the noble Lord, but on grounds having relation to the Queen, while 66 voted against it. And then, again—I am almost overcome in the endeavour to read records so dishonouring to the country—on the 18th of September that infatuated House of Commons proceeded to do the same scandalous thing it had done on the 21st of August—it received Petitions, and, in fact, transacted various Business which the noble Lord will find regularly recorded. It again further adjourned itself until the 17th of October. Thus the same thing was done three times over by deliberate acts without one single word of objection being raised. I grant that this is a thing which ought not to be lightly done. By all means, under all circumstances, let us adhere to the regular course of precedent and usage; but extraordinary circumstances had then arisen, which, as they thought, justified the separation which the noble Lord objects to between the Appropriation Act and the Prorogation. On the 17th of October, for the third time, did that House of Commons, in its blindness, proceed to contradict the doctrine of the noble Lord and to transact various Business, and then further adjourned until the 23rd of November. On the 25th of November it was prorogued. I wish it may be prorogued again at that time, Sir. Dismissing, therefore, all the great personages introduced by the noble Lord, what I contend is this—that the practice which prevails is a good, sound, and convenient practice—namely, that of uniting in all ordinary years the Appropriation Bill and the Prorogation for the reasons I have already stated, but not for any such reason as that if the House wants to kill a Ministry which it has no means of doing otherwise it should do by this means. I think that under circumstances of a special character a departure has been distinctly recorded as a precedent for us, and completely and absolutely warrants our taking the freedom of considering what course is the most practical and the most convenient. That was the course which we invited the House of Commons to take, and the House took it without objection, and I believe the House was right in taking it. If we had begun the Session of 1883 in October, 1882, I believe we should have been adopting a proceeding much more inconvenient than the present; if we had called a special Session with a double Prorogation, I believe we should have been taking a course far more inconvenient to the House, and not only so, but it would have been far more inconsistent with precedent and usage to have called together a special Session of Parliament to consider the question of Procedure than to ask the House to adjourn for a period, and then to proceed with the question of Procedure. I hope, Sir, I have now met the objections of the noble Lord. I believe the course we have taken will be found to have the strongest precedent in its favour, and I leave the House to judge whether, upon the whole, the course we have taken is not one perfectly consistent with the principles of the Constitution, and one recommended by strong and urgent considerations.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not intend to enter into the question that has been raised between my noble Friend and the Prime Minister as to the precise course which my noble Friend ought to have taken in consequence of the view he takes of our present situation. I should rather be disposed to assume that my noble Friend desires to put his views before the House clearly and distinctly, and, at the same time, in such a form as to cause the smallest embarrassment to the House, and that for those reasons he chose the course of moving the Adjournment of the House rather than that of raising the question on an Address for the Prorogation. However that may be, I think the House is greatly indebted to my noble Friend for having, even at this late period, called attention to the serious character of the step taken by the Government, with, as I admit, the assent of those Members of the House who were present at the time. My noble Friend speaks as one of those who were not present when this course was adopted, and many hon. Members were, no doubt, absent. The Prime Minister says that some considerable time before the Adjournment he publicly announced in a full House that it was his intention to move the Adjournment of the House, on its rising in August, for the purpose of discussing this question of Procedure in the month of October. No doubt that was so; but the point which my noble Friend, as I understand him, raises, is not whether it was right that the House should meet in October for the purpose of considering the Resolutions on Procedure, but whether it was right to get the Appropriation Act for the year disposed of and reported before that meeting; and whether the Appropriation Act, having been disposed of, ought not to have been construed as the close of the Session of 1882, and we ought not on the present occasion to have the beginning of a new Session—that of 1882-3. There was another course which might have been adopted; the House, instead of parting with the Appropriation Act in August, might have voted the money that was necessary for present services and passed a Ways and Means Bill, and we might have still had the Appropriation Bill in our hands ready to be passed at the usual time—namely, at the Prorogation. I venture to say that either of these courses would have been more in accordance with the practice of the House—the almost invariable, practically invariable, course, founded upon experience, and pursued by the House. I do not propose to enter into a discussion of all the precedents that have been quoted. It seems to me that the precedents cited by my noble Friend were exceedingly strong, exceedingly well argued, and founded upon Constitutional practice and reasonable usage. I am bound to say, with regard to the last case mentioned by the Prime Minister, though I have not been able at this moment to get the volume which contains the proceedings of the day to which he referred, if I understand rightly what took place at the time, the House completed its own Business at the time when it passed the Appropriation Act for the year, and, though kept in nominal Session during the Queen's Trial, never took up any new Business. I am not surprised that my noble Friend interjected the observation that this case made for him, and not against him.

MR. GLADSTONE: The House transacted Business repeatedly.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No, no; not Government Business.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not know the case fully, and I do not wish to enter into it; but I understand that, as a general rule, the House of Commons did not transact any of the ordinary Business of the Government. But here you have a very different case. You have a case in which no emergency has arisen. This is Business to which the House had addressed itself at the very beginning of the Session, with which it had made certain progress, and which the Government found itself unable to carry through at the ordinary time. What did the Prime Minister do? He proposed to put aside that Business for the present, that we should close the usual Business of the Session with the Appropriation Act, and then that we should meet for the discussion of Procedure. The Prime Minister says that he entirely agrees with the doctrine laid down by Sir George Cornewall Lewis and with your Predecessor, Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre, that there should be one Appropriation Act passed for the year. Now, I want to know what is the real position that the Government and the Prime Minister take with regard to our financial arrangements at the present time? Does he mean that we are to have no Votes or Estimates with regard to the war that has just been carried on? Does he so adhere to the doctrine, that the finance of the year should all be included in one Appropriation Bill, that he is not going to give us any of the finance of the war until we come to the year 1883? If he takes that course it is a very serious thing; but if, on the other hand, he does intend, now that Parliament is sitting, and expects to be informed on this question, to produce an Estimate and ask for any Supply, he will be obliged, himself, to have two Appropriation Acts in the same Session. Let me point out that, however we may be disposed to adapt our proceedings to the convenience of the Government and the convenience of the House, we are bound to take all possible care that we do not introduce precedents which may be enlarged, and enlarged to a very dangerous extent. If you do not take care what enlargements you make, you will come to this—that it will be perfectly possible to dispense with the close of the Session altogether. You may make one Session with repeated adjournments throughout the whole of a Parliament. I do not see what there is to prevent that if we have no natural close of the Session, such as an Appropriation Bill gives us. When many of us have left town, it will be in the power of a Minister commanding a majority to adjourn for any purpose whatever, and the House may be called upon to adjourn and take up Business in the Autumn so long as it is convenient to the Ministry. The practice is one that ought to be very narrowly scrutinized and carefully watched; and I do not think that my noble Friend is to be set aside by a sort of good-humoured or contemptuous treatment on the part of the Prime Minister, which, no doubt, he will be supported by his Party in administering to anyone on the Benches opposite. I certainly think the question which has been raised is one which the House ought seriously to consider and discuss. The authorities that have been cited are of the very highest character; and, if only out of respect to them, and to those eminent persons whose names have been mentioned, I think the matter has been very properly brought forward. But when we consider the real meaning and the real importance of the practice which has so far prevailed, we cannot regard it simply as a practice of convenience, or as one which does not form a principle. It seems to me that the course which my noble Friend has taken in moving the Adjournment of the House is one well suited to the purpose of marking the peculiarity of the occasion. Whether it would be right to follow it up by moving that an Address should be presented to Her Majesty in favour of Prorogation, or for a Committee to search for precedents, or in any other way to take steps for establishing the real rule and principle of the House for the future, is a question upon which I do not just now enter; but I hope that the matter will receive further consideration and elucidation from those who are so well able to throw light on it.

Mr. GORST said, it was difficult to say what was the precise attitude the Government took up with regard to this Autumn Sitting. He would remind the House that the Prime Minister had stated that a considerable time before the end of the Sittings in August last he gave Notice that it was intended to take the course which had now been adopted. His (Mr. Gorst's) memory on that subject was not in accord with that statement. As far as he understood the Prime Minister, he had entirely changed the attitude he took up on the 15th of August last. He then understood the Prime Minister to say that there would be an Adjournment for an Autumn Sitting. He remembered that, up to the very last, the Prime Minister was in doubt whether there should be an Autumn Sitting or a Prorogation; and it was not until the 15th of August, only three days before the House adjourned, and when the majority of hon. Members had excused themselves from further Parliamentary duty, that the Prime Minister finally made up his mind to recommend an Adjournment and not a Prorogation, and when he did so he gave as a reason that there were precedents for an Adjournment; but now, however, in answer to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the right hon. Gentleman took up an entirely different position, for he said that the reason for the Adjournment was to enable the House to provide a remedy for the present unsatisfactory and unprecedented state of things in Parliament. [MR. GLADSTONE: I made no such admission.] He (Mr. Gorst) asked whether they were sitting now in accordance with precedent, or in opposition to all precedent? If the House were sitting in accordance with precedent, he denied that the right hon. Gentleman had answered the objections of the noble Lord. What did the Prime Minister mean by his declaration, on the 15th of August, that Parliament would be adjourned because there were precedents for doing so? It was the invariable practice to close the Session with the passing of the Appropriation Bill. Sir Erskine May laid it down that it was the practice and duty of the Speaker to retain the Appropriation Bill in his possession until he had been summoned to attend the House of Lords to hear Parliament prorogued; and he should like to ask whether the Government passed by that Constitutional usage on the 15th of August, and whether it was by their direction that the Appropriation Bill was taken up to the House of Lords? Because, if so, it was quite clear that the Government had themselves caused a violation of the Constitutional practice without giving any Notice to or receiving any order from the House. The circumstances of the year 1820 had been quoted by the Prime Minister; but was Parliament to be asked to hold an Autumn Sitting in accordance with the precedent in the case of Queen Caroline in 1820? He (Mr. Gorst) denied, in the first place, that that was a precedent, for there was then a continuous Sitting until the Appropriation Bill was passed; whereas, in the present case, there had been an Adjournment for two months. On looking over the records of the House of Commons in the case of Queen Caroline, he found that during that Sitting no Business whatever was transacted, with one exception—namely, that, on one occasion, Mr. Hume insisted on bringing before the House the case of a Mr. Franklin, who had been imprisoned for sedition; but the Government of the day never, in fact, ventured to ask or invite the House of Commons to transact any Business during that Sitting. No one he (Mr. Gorst) was sure, saw the distinction between the two cases more clearly than the Prime Minister himself. It was true that in 1820 the House of Commons continued to sit formally, because the trial of Queen Caroline in the House of Lords was then proceeding, a Bill of Pains and Penalties was passing through the House of Lords, and the House of Commons was kept together that it might pass it, if it came down from the Lords. The Bill was, however, carried by so small a majority of that House that it was ultimately abandoned by the Government; but though the House of Commons was sitting, with three adjournments, from month to month, the Government never dared to ask it to transact any Business. It showed what regard the right hon. Gentleman must have for the fidelity and intelligence of his followers, that the only precedent he could give for the present Adjournment of the House was this one, which, in point of fact, was really no precedent at all. In 1820 they were under a Tory Government and an unreformed House of Commons. In 1832 the reformed House of Commons was brought into existence, and from that date to the present—50 years of a reformed House of Commons, 50 years of a Constitutional Government — no example could be found of the House of Commons having sat for the transaction of Business in such a case as the present. But now, for the first time in 50 years, and for the first time in the history of the reformed House of Commons, the Prime Minister, without giving the House Notice or warning that it was acting without precedent, invited the House to act contrary to all precedent, except that of the case of Queen Caroline in 1820! The right hon. Gentleman had taunted his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) with not moving an Address for Prorogation; but he knew full well that a Motion for Adjournment was the only Motion that could be brought forward before the Motion of which the right hon. Gentleman had given Notice, the discussion of which would occupy the whole time of the House. Would the right hon. Gentleman afford an opportunity for a discussion upon an Address to Her Majesty praying for the Prorogation of Parliament? If an opportunity were given to any Member of the House to introduce a Motion of that character, he (Mr. Gorst) felt sure that the noble Lord would withdraw his present Motion and substitute one for Prorogation, so as to allow the Constitutional question being brought forward in a proper manner. The act of the Government in thus assembling Parliament was an act contrary to all Constitutional authority and usage, of which the Prime Minister could adduce no precedent except the evil precedent of the case of Queen Caroline.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that the manner in which the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gorst) had dealt with the precedent of 1820, which was the great argument in favour of the noble Lord's (Lord Randolph Churchill's) Motion, but which the noble Lord had unfortunately omitted altogether to introduce, was a singular one. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the invariable Constitutional rule was that, after the passing of the Appropriation Act, the House could transact no Business. Then he had gone on to say that the precedent of 1820 was no argument against that, because the House, in fact, transacted no Business, and never contemplated transacting any Government Business, after the passing of the Act in that year. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman said that the House was adjourned three times, for a month each time. But for what purpose did the House adjourn? Why, for the purpose of transacting what he (Sir William Harcourt) ventured to say was the most tremendous Business that a Government ever brought under the consideration of the Crown—a Bill of Pains and Penalties against the Queen Consort. The noble Lord had lost his opportunity of explaining that great precedent, because he had deliberately omitted it from his speech. The fact was that the Adjournments of that Parliament, in August, September, and October, were made in order that the House might receive from the House of Lords a Bill inflicting Pains and Penalties upon the Queen Consort, brought forward by the Ministers of the Crown. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in fact, had said that it was impossible to transact Government Business after the passing of the Appropriation Act; but had not amended the case of the noble Lord, because he showed that the House of Commons had actually transacted Business after the passing of the Appropriation Act. The matter, however, stood, as a general rule, that the Government entirely admitted that it was right and proper that the Appropriation Act and the Prorogation should go together; they did not dispute it for a moment, and admitted that that rule ought not to be departed from, except in very grave and serious circumstances. So far the Government and the Opposition were agreed. In 1820 the rule was departed from, because the Government deemed the impeachment of the Queen a circumstance justifying Parliament in going on by successive Adjournments after the Prorogation, in order to consider what the House of Lords might do with that Bill. If that Bill had come down from the House of Lords, and had not been abandoned by the Government, it would have been taken into consideration by the House of Commons. He forgot whether Brougham was then sitting in the House of Commons. ["Yes!"] He was under the impression that he was not—that he had lost his seat. But what were the friends of Queen Caroline doing in the House of Commons, if such an objection was capable of being supported? They knew perfectly well that there was no foundation for the Constitutional doctrine of the noble Lord, and therefore that doctrine was not advanced. The course taken now was not at variance with Constitutional usage, and the only question was whether the Government were right or wrong in thinking that the present was such a case as justified a departure from the usual rule. What his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had meant by saying that the circumstances were unprecedented was, that the circumstances were of such a character as to justify an exceptional procedure. He (Sir William Harcourt) remembered that hon. Gentlemen opposite were far from adopting the course recommended by the noble Lord, which they might have done if they had thought fit. He forgot whether it was the Leader of the Opposition or his (Sir William Harcourt's) Predecessor at the Home Office—but it was some right hon. Gentleman opposite—who had asked him to give a distinct pledge on behalf of the Government that no other Business than that of Procedure should be taken; and he gave that pledge. Could anything be more inconsistent than that with the argument of the noble Lord? The Government then said that they could not control the action of private Members, but that, so far as they were concerned, no other Business should be taken. If the great Constitutional doctrine of the noble Lord was well-founded, why did not hon. Gentlemen opposite bring it forward? The Appropriation Act was in their own hands; they might have raised that doctrine on the third reading. On the third reading it was perfectly well known that the House was going to be adjourned. If hon. Gentlemen accepted the doctrine of the noble Lord, or had even learnt it for the first time from his lips, why was it not advanced? They knew that there was going to be a war in Egypt, and that there would be expenditure in consequence. So far from adopting that doctrine, the Opposition entirely agreed to the course taken by the Government, and even asked for a pledge from the Government that no other Business should be taken. How had the Government ill-treated the House in that matter? There never was a case in which the Government more desired to take the House into its confidence, in which more complete notice was given of an intended step, or in which there was more absolute and entire assent on both sides of the House. Both the contention and the Motion of the noble Lord came altogether too late in the day; and he hoped the House would not spend any more time in discussing the Motion for the Adjournment of the House. He (Sir William Harcourt) had really risen, however, for the purpose of saying that the Government did not desire to be understood as setting aside this Rule of the Prorogation and the Appropriation Bill going together. They attached very high importance to it; and it was only because they, and, he believed, the rest of the House, considered that there were circumstances in reference to the Business of the House which composed an exceptional case, that the Government proposed to deal with it in an exceptional way, the object desired being, in the future, to save public time and to get through Public Business. It was perfectly idle for the noble Lord to impute to the Government a desire to evade a challenge of its policy. The noble Lord had said that no opportunity would be given of moving a Vote of Want of Confidence. It was open to the noble Lord to propose, if he chose, a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government, who were prepared to meet any number of them. He (Sir William Harcourt) hoped the noble Lord might live long enough to move as many Votes of Want of Confidence as he wished. The more he did that, the better would the Government be pleased. They would not succeed. Even if the Angel Gabriel sat on the Treasury Bench, he believed the noble Lord would move a Vote of Want of Confidence in him. The House and the country knew perfectly well the object of the meeting of Parliament at that time—it was to enable the House of Commons to do the Business of the people better than it had hitherto been done. It was to clear the way in order that more effectual Business might be done next year than had been done hitherto. That was a considerable object, upon which it was worth while to expend the time of the present Session. For that reason it was that the Government had proposed to assemble the House, and for that reason the House adopted the course so proposed.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he did not think the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) would commend itself to the judgment of the House. Because the House had made the mistake of passing the Appropriation Act in August, previous to the Adjournment, there was no reason why they should consecrate that mistake and set a Constitutional precedent subversive of the rights of the people. Such a usage would never meet with the approval of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had himself, in 1854, when he was Chairman of Committees, declared that the Appropriation Bill was the last Act of the Session. Hon. Gentlemen would find, according to Sir Erskine May, that the granting of money was the most important duty of the House of Commons, and that, consequently, the Appropriation Bill was the proper termination of the Business of the House of Commons. He thought that some attention at least ought to be paid to the opinion of that distinguished gentleman, whose text-book was laid on the Table of the House. He said in that book—

> "The ancient Constitutional doctrine as to the redress of grievances before granting Supplies is now represented in practice by every description of Amendment on the Question that the Speaker do leave the Chair."

The Crown opened Parliament by recognizing the rights of the Commons to give Supply; and by ancient usage, as laid down by Sir Erskine May, the Speaker took up the Appropriation Act to the House of Lords at the end of the Session, if the Sovereign were there, and addressed him, narrating what had been done in the Session. At that time, he delivered over the Act of Appropriation to what was called by Lord Macaulay a Committee of both Houses, which acted for them during the Vacation. He would merely add one extract from a speech of Lord Palmerston in 1858, when a Conservative Dissolution was threatened. He said—

> "Then it is said they may dissolve. I have no greater faith in their dissolving than I have in their resignation, and I am of that opinion because a Dissolution implies more than the will of the Government. The concurrence of the House is necessary to its own dissolution. They must pass the Appropriation Act and other similar Acts before they can take that step."

Neither the Prime Minister nor the Secretary of State for the Home Department had brought forward the precedents of which they had spoken. The former right hon. Gentleman had certainly referred to the precedent of 1820, which they on that (the Opposition) side of the House said was none at all, inasmuch as since the Reform Bill the Constitution had taken a new departure. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the doctrine of Mr. Shaw Lefevre in 1841; but he had not alluded to the remarks of Sir George Lewis nor of Lord Palmerston in 1859, nor to the Exchequer Amendment Bill of 1866, nor to Sir Erskine May's evidence in 1878. Although the Egyptian Question was a very prominent one and we had an Army of Occupation in that country, still they had no means of discussing it, because there were no days down for Supply, and the Government was supposed to be hatching a policy, while they had no means of finding out what it was. The Government were, in fact, establishing a new precedent, which would deprive the Representatives of the people of the right which they had always enjoyed of not allowing Supply to be given until the grievances were redressed.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 142; Noes 209: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 341.)

NOTICE OF MOTION.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—VOTE OF THANKS TO HER MAJESTY'S NAVAL AND MILITARY FORCES.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg to give Notice that, on Thursday next, I shall move a Vote of Thanks to the Commanders, officers, and men of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I beg to give Notice that, on the Motion of the Prime Minister being made, I shall move the Previous Question.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY—THE GRENADIER GUARDS—CASE OF LIEUTENANT FARRER.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Lieutenant Farrer, of the Grenadier Guards, did, on the 25th day of July last, send a letter to his battalion commanding officer, with a request that it should be forwarded to the Secretary of State for War, and praying that he might be allowed to withdraw his resignation, or that his application to retire might not be acted upon for thirty days, in order to carry through proceedings for the annulment of his bankruptcy, which took place during his leave of absence abroad, and that no notice of the fact had been given to him; whether in that letter he set forth that his bankruptcy was entirely due to the fact that his rents on his Irish property were some years in arrear; whether this letter was approved of, and forwarded to the officer commanding the regiment by his battalion commanding officer; whether, at a subsequent date, on 1st August, he wrote a letter to his battalion commanding officer, and enclosed two documents (a statement of how the bankruptcy occurred, and a petition to be allowed to remain in the Army, on the ground that his bankruptcy did not arise from any fault of his own, and for leave to exchange into another regiment); whether his battalion commanding officer forwarded these documents to the officer commanding the regiment; whether the commanding officer of the regiment refused to forward these documents to the Commander in Chief and Secretary of State for War; whether it is the duty of any commanding officer to forward any petitions to the authorities from his subordinate officers; and, whether, under the circumstances, his case may be brought under reconsideration, and, as a sufficient opportunity has not been given him to clear himself with the Secretary of State for War, that his claim for reinstatement may be considered?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, the answer to the first five paragraphs of the Question of the hon. Member is in the affirmative. The answer to the sixth is, that the commanding officer of the regiment reported the receipt of the documents to the proper authority, and was informed that the resignation had been accepted and was being acted upon. The answer to the seventh is, that it would depend on the circumstances of the case whether a letter should or should not be forwarded. The facts of the case are perfectly clear. Lieutenant Farrer resigned his commission in May last after his bankruptcy; but, in order that his resignation might not be connected with another matter in which he was concerned, he requested that it might not be gazetted for three months. The course proposed was acceded to; the resignation was definitely accepted, and the gazette postponed accordingly; but a few days before the expiration of the three months he asked to withdraw it, and this was refused. I see no reason for my intervention.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE PROCEDURE RESOLUTIONS—AMENDMENTS TO 1ST RESOLUTION.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he rose to ask the Prime Minister a Question in reference to the Procedure Resolutions. If in Order, he would like to know, whether there were any of the Amendments to the 1st Resolution now standing upon the Paper which the Government were disposed to accept?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, it will be my duty, I hope, presently, to make the Motion of which I have given Notice, with regard to the Procedure of this House; and, when I make that Motion, I will take the opportunity, as being a most convenient one, of stating what course the Government intend to adopt with regard to one or two points which were left open when the matter was last under discussion.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. GLADSTONE: It will, Sir, be in the recollection of the House that Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, a Member of this House, was put into confinement for an offence which is termed contempt of Court, in the month of August last, and that his committal to prison was signified to the House in the regular manner through the Speaker by a letter from Mr. Justice Lawson. The discussion of the matter arising out of that communication was approached before the Adjournment under very peculiar circumstances. It was felt that it was not an occasion on which the judgment of the House should be asked—in fact, to have done so would have been quite contrary to usage—on the merits of this particular case of committal for contempt of Court, or with regard to the Law of Committal for Contempt at large; but it was said that we ought to have proceeded to appoint a Committee for the purpose of ascertaining whether the proceedings which had been taken in this case were within the established and customary limits, and were within the terms of the Motion brought forward on a former occasion with regard to the case of Mr. Whalley—"Whether any of the matters referred to therein demanded the further attention of the House." It will be called to mind that, at the time referred to, in August last, it was stated, on the part of the Government, that they proposed to deviate from the ordinary course of proceeding, on the simple and practical ground that if that course were pursued it could not at that period be made effective. A Committee appointed on a question of this kind ought to be a Committee composed, by the best choice that can be made, of those Members who are of great experience and weight, or who are designated by peculiar circumstances as the fittest to undertake an examination of that sort—not an examination of great labour, or of a complicated nature, but an examination requiring great accuracy and knowledge of such subjects, and capacity to deal with them; and the fact was that at that time the dispersion of the House had reached such a point that the Members present in London did not enable us to constitute such a Committee, and it was perfectly hopeless to think of recalling them at short notice for the purpose of proposing it. Well, Sir, I suppose that these considerations weighed with the House. We urged that the re-assembling of the House would be the proper time for considering the matter, and we also pointed out that the investigation of the Committee could have no effect upon the validity, the legal validity, of Mr. Justice Lawson's proceeding, and, therefore, no effect upon the personal liberty of the Member who had been committed. I suppose, Sir, that the House, upon the whole, took that practical view of the matter, and introduced what certainly was, in point of form, an innovation, in accordingly postponing the appointment of the Committee, simply in order that if a Committee were to be appointed at all it might be effective. The House has now met, and this question is, of course, a subject which it is right to deal with. A Member making such a Motion is entitled to deal with it as a question of Privilege, and one which never would be understood to be included within the general declaration of the Government with regard to the subjects of Business to be treated of at these Autumn Sittings of the House. I think it is plain, Sir, when the House has now assembled in large numbers, that we have the means of constituting an efficient Committee. I am glad to know, I believe, by the personal presence of the Gentleman himself in the House, and otherwise from authentic information, that the period of his confinement has been brought to a close, and there is no longer any question, therefore, of his own personal liberty; but it remains just as much a matter of propriety as it was before for the House to make an investigation similar to those which it has instituted on former occasions, in order to ascertain that there has been no excess of power, and that the limits of custom and legality have been observed. As far as the formal matter of the committal for contempt is concerned, I do not think, Sir, it is necessary for me to refer to particular precedents at this moment. They can easily be produced should it be the desire of the House to hear them; but it was so completely admitted in August that precedents pointed to the appointment of such a Committee, that I think, in the absence of any question, I may venture to take the matter for granted. I may venture, also, to state my opinion that it would be an impropriety on my part, and that it would be an error, were we to go beyond these confined limits of debate, which have uniformly, I believe, been maintained on similar occasions—that is to say, were we to deal with the question of the Law of Contempt, which is a question of great general interest; and in regard to which, perhaps, I need not too much disparage what I have just said, if I venture to intimate to the House that it is a subject which has been brought much of late into the popular view both on this side and on the other side of the Channel, and that the Government have it in contemplation, not during the present short Sittings, but at the regular commencement of next Session—they have it in contemplation—they hope at a very early period—to submit a measure dealing with the altering the present law. That being so, Sir, I have only to notice a fact which appertains to the regularity and formality of Procedure in this instance. I am given to understand that the Speaker in the Chair has not yet received a formal communication from Mr. Justice Lawson, announcing the release of Mr. Gray; but, although I cannot, therefore, refer to any such communication in the Motion I am about to make, the absence of it does not in the slightest degree affect the propriety of the Motion, because the Motion is to deal not with the release, but with the committal. I think, therefore, I need do no more at the present moment than read to the House the Motion I am about to make, and place it in your hands. I propose, Sir—

"That the Letter of the 16th August 1882, from the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson to Mr. Speaker, informing the House of the commitment of Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, a Member of this House, for contempt of Court, be referred to a Select Committee for the purpose of considering and reporting whether any of the matters referred to therein demand the further attention of the House."

I ought to say, before sitting down, that I believe I am acting upon established usage in making the present Motion, without waiting to give Notice of Motion, making it at the first moment when it could be made. But I may point out to hon. Members that the making of the Motion does not immediately bring about the sitting of the Committee—that a selection of names must be made to constitute the Committee, and Notice must be given of those names—there will necessarily be a delay of some days, or probably not more than one day, before the Committee can be actually appointed. Such was the case on the last occasion when a Committee was appointed with reference to the case of Mr. Whalley, and such is the case now. I do not intend to propose, together with the Motion I now move, any list of names of Members to compose the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Letter of the 16th August 1882, from the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson to Mr. Speaker, informing the House of the commitment of Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, a Member of this House, for contempt of Court, be referred to a Select Committee for the purpose of considering and reporting whether any of the matters referred to therein demand the further attention of the House."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. PARNELL: I have heard, Sir, with great satisfaction from the Prime Minister that the Government proposes, at some future time, to lay propositions with regard to the Law of Contempt before the notice of Parliament; but I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of that intention which he has just expressed, it would not be desirable to enlarge the scope of the Reference to the Committee, with the view of investigating the general question? While I make the suggestion, I am not at all sure that the terms of the Motion, of which the right hon. Gentleman has just given Notice, do not permit an inquiry by the Committee into the general question of policy apart altogether from the immediate case of the arrest itself; but if the attention of Parliament is to be directed to the matter, it appears to me that the labours of the Committee would be, to a great extent, of a formal character and thrown away if the general question were not to be inquired into. We all admit Mr. Justice Lawson acted within his powers in ordering my hon. Friend (Mr. Gray) into custody, and in releasing him from that custody. We admit that he acted according to the letter of the law as it at present stands; and what we desire to put before the House and the country at large is that it is important to have it declared on the authority of such a Committee as the one now proposed, that this law, giving such a power to a Judge—the power, practically, of sentencing a man to perpetual imprisonment without appeal—is of such an anomalous character that it requires alteration. My hon. Friend has no desire to seek redress regarding the injury which he considers has been done to himself personally; but he is desirous that what he has gone through may serve as a basis for attracting public attention to the very anomalous state of the law as it stands at present, and therefore I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be desirable to make the matter perfectly clear? Has the Committee, under the terms of his Resolution, power to go into the general question; and if it has not that power, is it not desirable that it should be given? Otherwise I fear that the deliberations of the Gentlemen composing the Committee, who are, according to the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman, to be Gentlemen of experience and weight in the House, will be thrown away, and will be so much loss of time; if, on the other hand, the Committee, by the terms of the Reference, have the power, would it not be desirable expressly to say so in order that no doubt should arise afterwards?

MR. LEWIS: Sir, when this matter was before the House on a former occasion, I took leave to say, on the general question of the power of commitment for contempt of Court, that I thought the experience of the last 25 years on the subject was of that character that it undoubtedly required Governmental Parliamentary interference. The sort of contempt which has sometimes been committed is a contempt which the Judges have brought upon their Courts themselves. In point of fact, the power of committing for contempt has sometimes been exercised by Judges in a very remarkable way. We have heard of Judges who put it into force because there was not a sufficient number of javelin men to escort them through the town. There are other cases also in which the Judges have forgotten both themselves and the Courts in which they sat. The case we have now under consideration is one in which the party has been committed for contempt outside of the Court; and, whatever may be the merits of that case, the power held by Judges to sentence persons to imprisonment and the payment of heavy fines, without the power of appeal in any way, in whatever way it may be exercised, is a power which must ever be thoroughly obnoxious to our views of freedom and justice in this 19th century. I do not very often agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. Parnell); but I confess that, inasmuch as we have been drawn away from our pleasures and occupations at this time of the year, we may as well utilize ourselves and endeavour to employ the time of the House and of the Committee for the purpose indicated, not only in the speech we have just heard, but in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The Bill or measure, which has just been suggested by the Prime Minister as likely to be introduced next year, will not be impaired at all by the consideration of what might be the amendments or improvements made in this law by a Committee of Gentlemen of high authority in the House. It is a matter of the gravest possible character. We know that the Judges will endeavour to hold tenaciously the power they now possess; and we know that they look with considerable dissatisfaction upon any infringement on the rights and jurisdictions which they have so promptly and freely exercised hitherto. But I think the House will find that it will be a very good preliminary for legislation on this subject that the Committee should have under their consideration, even for two or three sittings, the very grave public questions which are involved in this matter. The case is enlarged in interest, and the general question is intensified in importance, by the particular circumstances with which this Motion deals. I, for one, ventured to say on a former occasion that I thought Mr. Justice Lawson was right in the punishment with which he visited the offence in this case; but it is the peremptory way in which the punishment was administered that causes public dissatisfaction and brings discredit on our Courts of Justice. What is the case? It is the case of a Member of this House, who has been Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, and who is at this time High Sheriff of that City, who, according to the view of the case generally entertained, did undoubtedly commit himself in a very grave and remarkable way. But what was the punishment accorded to him? It was three-fold—he was fined, imprisoned, and held to bail, under circumstances which might have resulted in a very long term of imprisonment. How was it administered? Was it administered with anything like deliberate notice? Notice was given the night before for next morning. Was that the sort of notice upon which any Member of this House should be dealt with by a Judge, however experienced and able? What was the extent of the punishment? Why, it was of the most severe character. Not too severe, however, if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) will allow me to say so, for the offence he committed; but the greater the offence, the greater the necessity that that offence should be deliberately considered, and all the circumstances duly weighed, in order that justice should be respected throughout the land. It is impossible that this power should be continued to be exercised in our Courts of Justice in the way it has been exercised in this case, with any hope of retaining respect for the administration of the law. This offence was committed, I admit, under circumstances of great aggravation; but the punishment was administered in the worst possible way. It is one thing to commit a person caught *flagrante delicto*, for contempt committed in the presence of the Judge; but this is a case in which the offence was committed out of Court. The trial was actually over, the jurisdiction of the Judge, *ad rem*, was actually finished; and it was then the Judge took upon himself to exercise this power only upon a few hours' notice, depriving a distinguished person of his liberty, of his property, to the extent of £500, and possibly of his future liberty. It seems to me that this is a very grave case, and I am happy to know that there is a prospect of the occurrence of such a case again being prevented by legislation. The great Sidney Smith said that you never could get a railway properly managed until two or three railway directors were killed. So, in the same way, we would never have this matter taken up by Parliament, but for the fact that a distinguished Member of this House, who has been Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, and who is now its High Sheriff, is taken by the collar, on a few hours' notice, and turned into prison, a part of his property stripped from him, and a heavy punishment threatened if he does not give bail. If, therefore, anything is to be done, it appears to me that it would be most desirable to refer the whole question to the Committee. We know that it will have nothing to do under the terms of the Motion of the Prime Minister. Why should it not, however, have something real to do, if it is to take in hand this grave public matter? What should be the restrictions which should be placed on Judges? What are Judges? Who are Judges? The answer might be made, and, no doubt, truly, that they are gentlemen clothed in ermine. Many of them have been appointed—and in Ireland it is said they are always appointed—for political reasons. I will not express any opinion on that. I am afraid that the record, if inspected, would be too serious to look upon. I am afraid we should find that there is hardly a Judge on the Irish Bench who has not ascended the Bench through the greasy ladder of politics. In Ireland undoubtedly it is so; in England, also, it is often unfortunately the case, though, no doubt, Lord Chancellors of late years have broken through this most pernicious custom of making political appointments which we know must affect the administration of justice. Do Judges make no mistakes? Have they no tempers like other men? Have they no prejudices like other men? Have they no bias like other men? In other words, is it to be supposed that the process of swearing in a Judge turns a black-hearted man into the most fair-minded, dispels all his bias and prejudice, and perhaps transforms him into an angel of light? Why, Sir, we have had some wonderful stories of the manner in which Judges have shown their feelings, in which those learned gentlemen do not appear to the greatest advantage; and I think it is high time now that such a change should be brought about as will remove one of the greatest scandals connected with the administration of justice. If the Motion of the Prime Minister is not changed, I certainly shall vote for an enlargement of its terms, so that the Committee should take into consideration what are the restrictions which should in future be placed upon this power of committing for contempt of Court, and to what extent it should be intrusted to Her Majesty's Judges.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, if I understand the suggestion of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), which has been supported by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), who has just addressed the House, it is that the Resolution of my right hon. Friend should be altered in its terms, with a view to extending the inquiry of the Committee to the general law, instead of confining it to the subject of the committal of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray). I must at once remind the House that this is a question of Privilege, affecting one of our own Members. If it was other than a question of Privilege it could not be brought on as it has been at this particular time, for not only would it be against the Rules of the House of Commons to bring it forward, but it would not have been in accordance with the pledge given by the Prime Minister before Parliament separated two months ago. The House will recollect that the question of Privilege is only raised when it affects the law as applied to Members of the House. If, therefore, the Motion was applied to the Law of Contempt with reference to the subject in general, it would at once place the Motion outside the area of this Privilege. I apprehend, therefore, that it would not be in accordance with the Rules of the House to extend this Motion, which has reference to a question of Privilege only, to the consideration of what the general Law of Contempt is, for that subject is not before us. If the measure that has been referred to by my right hon. Friend should be found to be insufficient, then a Motion could be made for the inquiry as to whether that measure be, or be not, sufficient to meet the requirements of the subject. But to mix up these two matters, one of which is a question affecting the Privilege of a Member of this House, and the other the question of the general Law of Contempt, would, in my opinion, not only be out of Order, but would be an unwise course to take, especially after the announcement which has been made by the Prime Minister.

Mr. SEXTON: Sir, we heard with satisfaction the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, because we attached to the terms of the Motion which he submitted a far wider meaning than we are now permitted to attach to them after hearing the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (the Attorney General). When I heard the Prime Minister say that the Select Committee shall be entitled to inquire into all the matters referred to in the letter of Mr. Justice Lawson, I imagined that the chief function of the Committee would be to inquire into the general Law of Contempt. One of the matters referred to by Mr. Justice Lawson is the committal by that Judge of a Gentleman brought before him for contempt of Court; and I understood from the Prime Minister that, among all the matters referred to in that letter to be dealt with by the Committee, the general Law of Contempt would be one. But now the hon. and learned Attorney General raises a point far more ingenious than practical when he says that, because the matter comes before this House in the shape of a Motion concerning Privilege, it cannot go beyond the question of Privilege. We have heard from the Prime Minister that the Government mean, at an early date, to introduce a measure dealing with the general Law of Contempt of Court. Am I not entitled to ask, then, in view of that intention, why should not the Committee to be appointed be enabled to gather evidence which may place this House in a position to say, when the Government measure is produced, whether or not it ought to pass? I consider the hon. and learned Gentleman's view of the case an exceedingly narrow one; and it seems to me an extraordinary thing that, because the question immediately before the House concerns a Member of the House, therefore the action of the Committee should be limited to the consideration of the personal case. I say deliberately that if the Committee to be appointed only inquire into the regularity and legality of Mr. Justice Lawson's proceedings, it may as well not be appointed at all—nay, better not, because it will be an empty formality, and can result in nothing. We all know perfectly well that the warrant of committal was regularly made out, and that there is no Statute Law governing the privileges of Judges in this matter. It is a mere matter of custom, limited by the discretion of the Judge who is acting; and the discretion of the Judge simply means his indiscretion; and if the Committee only inquire whether the Judge acted regularly and legally, and according to custom, it is a foregone conclusion what their finding will be. We all know that the Committee will report that Mr. Justice Lawson acted legally and regularly, and according to custom, and that they had no fault to find with his view. I object to the elaborate farce of appointing a Select Committee on the subject merely for the purpose of telling us that. We know already that if the Committee be limited to this view it will exonerate Mr. Justice Lawson. What we wish to know is, whether the Committee will be allowed to deal with the burning question which is agitating the public mind in Ireland, a question upon which hundreds of Petitions have been received by Irish Members, and which we are precluded by the Rules of the House from presenting? No episode in recent Irish public life has created such excitement and apprehension as the arbitrary conduct of Mr. Justice Lawson in this case; and if the Government intend, at an early date, to introduce to the House of Commons a measure dealing with the general Law of Contempt of Court, we are entitled to claim that the Committee to be appointed should not be limited to the personal question of the imprisonment of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), but that, in the spirit of common sense, the Committee should be empowered to collect evidence which may enable the House to review the whole question, and say whether this arbitrary power should continue to be exercised by the Judges of the land.

Mr. PLUNKET: Sir, I do not intend to say a word now upon the general question as to whether the law ought to be altered on the subject of committals for contempt of Court, because a time will come for discussing it when the Government propose their measure. I only wish to say that, while reserving my opinion on that subject, I cannot be here without entering a short protest against the observations of the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Sexton). I think it would be a great misfortune in the interests of the public, as well as of the Judges, who have been intrusted with such great responsibility lately under the Act passed for the repression of crime in Ireland, and who have been, and will be, exposed to such great danger in the discharge of their duties—I say I think it would be a great misfortune if any idea should go abroad from anything said here that there was a general impression in the country, or in this House, that grave or serious charges could be brought against the learned Judge (Mr. Justice Lawson) in the course he has pursued. I merely wish to express my own belief in an opposite direction to the hon. Member who has just spoken. I hold that Mr. Justice Lawson, who has been referred to, acted in the strictest discharge not only of his legal right, but of his duty, under most difficult circumstances. When the matter was last debated in this House, I ventured very briefly to express my view on the subject, and said that if the matter was again brought up I should be prepared—and I am now prepared—to maintain the views I then held; but I do not think it would be his wish, or for the interest of the House, that I should enter on the subject now. I therefore simply enter my protest against the idea that there is any imputation conveyed on the conduct of the learned Judge by anything that has happened in this House to-day. If the question is raised in a formal way I shall be prepared to maintain and vindicate the action of the Judge on that occasion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.—RESOLUTION.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Motion which I am now about to make has been in the possession of the House during the whole period since we last assembled; and I think that when the plan of the Government was generally glanced at in connection with the question whether it would be best to proceed by Prorogation or by Adjournment, it was felt that if we were to have a meeting in the Autumn at all, that meeting ought, generally speaking and apart from exceptions which might be absolutely necessary and altogether of a peculiar character, to be devoted to the purpose of Procedure alone. The position of the House would be perfectly intolerable if they were to be asked now, at the close of October, to enter upon a general renewal of the Session with the chance of giving two days a-week—the portion of time at the command of the Government—to Procedure, and of debating all other subjects on the other three days of the week. The House, I think, will not expect me to enter on a general argument in support of that proposition. We shall support it if it is contested; but I think it is not too much to say that the House has gathered together to-day with the full understanding and the full intention that this Autumn Session shall be devoted to the consideration of the subject of Procedure, to the exclusion of general Business. That being so, I do not know that it is necessary for me to say more than to remind the House, in the first instance, of the general position in which the Government stand in regard to this subject, and then to state how we propose to proceed on one or two points that were left open at the time when we were last in Session. A complaint has been made that Government Business was going to be proceeded with in the House, and it is quite true that this Business has come to be Government Business. But I think it is not too much to say that it has not come to be Government Business by the arbitrary will and pleasure of the Government, but by the absolute and clear necessity of the case, and with the view simply to the advantage of the House in the discharge of its duties. If even now it were possible for the House to adjust a machinery by which the whole subject and responsibility of Procedure should be taken from the shoulders of the Government and resumed by the House itself, such a proceeding would be in the highest degree advantageous to the Government, and, as far as one at least of the Government is concerned, it would be profoundly acceptable to him who now acts on the part of the Government. But it was generally admitted last year that the efforts of the House to adjust this matter by a conference of Members themselves in a long series of Committees had been futile and ineffectual, and that it remained to be considered whether, by putting into operation that degree of influence which the House is always inclined for the public interest to accord to the Government of the day, it might be possible to put the question into a channel which would be more likely to lead to a successful issue. That is the way in which this has come to be the Business of the Government; but although it is the Business of the Government in this sense, that it is their duty to prosecute it with all their power, it was originally the Business of the House; and it is the House itself, for its own honour and on its own responsibility in the face of the nation, which must finally decide this matter. We shall press our propositions, and, having done what we can to bring them into the best form, we shall press them by every argument we can use upon the House. But we recognize that the authority of the House, and that the responsibility, the honour, and the character of the House are the things which are principally involved in this matter, even more than the responsibility or the honour and character of the Government. That being the position in which we stand in regard to this subject, and with the intention to devote ourselves, to the best of our ability, towards prosecuting it, I will refer now to one or two matters which fall within the scope of the Question put to me a few minutes ago by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen). The House is engaged in the discussion of the 1st Resolution, and to that 1st Resolution in its main proposition we undoubtedly intend to adhere. That was the declaration with which we bade farewell to the subject in the last Sitting, and it is the declaration which I repeat, without dwelling on it any further at the present moment, as the ground of our proceedings. I mention it now simply to give information, and not to recommend this or that mode of proceeding. But there may arise some points of the Resolution as to which we may reserve our liberty. We have considered the whole matter with care; we do not see how it can be improved; and to its main propositions we undoubtedly intend to adhere. With regard to the 2nd Resolution, it is a question of importance, and, in one sense, of delicacy. The Resolution runs thus—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made, except by leave of the House, before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon."

And, speaking generally, I think it is admitted that this is not merely a question of the removal of an evil, but I should not use language too strong for the occasion if I said it was the abatement of a nuisance. However, it is to be borne in mind that there may be particular occasions when such a Motion for Adjournment, in general so unacceptable, would be reasonable and proper; and though it may fairly be said that it is not wise to leave it to every single Member of the House in the exercise of his own discretion, yet it would not be wise to exclude the consideration of those occasions. What, therefore, we are disposed to admit is this—that it may be right on certain occasions to provide a machinery which shall have the effect of referring it to the judgment of the House whether there shall be an Adjournment or not. But we think that it ought to be subject to these several conditions:—It ought not to be done until the Questions have been brought to a close; it ought not to be done excepting upon the desire of an adequate number of Members; it ought not to rest with every Member to give the House the trouble of a division on such a subject. And I am inclined to hope that if the words which we shall propose are found to be adequate to give effect to the ideas that I have just expressed, the matter of this Resolution may be rather readily disposed of. I would just read the words as we intend to propose them in lieu of the words which have until to-day stood on the Notice Paper. Our No. 2 Rule would run thus—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House."

That substantially agrees with the Resolution as it stands at present. Then I go on with these words—

> "The granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no decision shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by forty Members rising in their places, nor until after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of."

One thing I ought to have mentioned at the outset, and that is an Amendment which we propose to introduce into the 1st Resolution. It is substantially the Amendment proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey); but we make an alteration in the terms of that Amendment, the reasons for which I will explain in a moment. The hon. Member proposes to leave out, in line 2, the words "to be," and to insert "until the subject has been fully discussed." It is meant to lay down the principle, to which we entirely accede, that the power given by the Resolution shall never be put into operation till after adequate discussion; but we propose to alter the word "fully" to the word "adequately." Our reason is that a Motion may be made which contains extremely important matter, but which is totally irrelevant to the subject before the House, and ought, therefore, to be put aside without "full" discussion. I remember a case which confirms us in this view. It was in the days of Mr. Feilden, the Member for Oldham. Mr. Feilden, I recollect, had benevolent but somewhat obstinate sentiments with respect to the Poor Laws, and he once made a Motion on that subject, and introduced most important matter; but he made it on a question in which Lord John Russell was concerned, and Lord John Russell vigorously protested against the discussion of Mr. Feilden's Motion; and, indeed, there could be no reason at the time why the matter of that Motion should be fully discussed. With that view, and believing that the word "adequately" is quite capable of conveying the sentiment in which the House will generally concur, we propose, with the alteration I have mentioned, to adopt the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland. It has been felt very generally in the House that, while restrictive Rules are in many cases required for the better regulation of our proceedings, there is a great want of liberal and relaxing Rules, especially in relation to what is known as the Half-past 12 o'clock Rule, which at present operates with extreme stringency, and that at the discretion of every and any Member of the House. Now, there are various questions that may be raised with regard to this Rule. An hon. Baronet on the opposite side of the House has given Notice of important Amendments to our Resolution, some of which may deserve the consideration of the House; but as regards the substance of the Rule itself, we propose to introduce an Amendment which will have the effect of exempting from the operation of the Rule two very important classes of Business — Motions for leave to bring in Bills; and, in the second, Bills that have passed through Committee. Therefore, the 8th Resolution, according to the proposal we make, will stand thus—

> "To amend the Standing Order of the 18th February, 1879, and 9th May, 1882, by inserting, after 'Standing Order,' in line 10, the following words:—'Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee.'"

The House is aware that before the Sittings of August ceased I temporarily withdrew the Resolution relating to Committee of Supply. We have always contended that it was impossible to bring about any great change in the Procedure of the House by penal and restrictive Rules; and that if the House was to bring itself to the level of the demands made upon it, it must be by changes of another character, such as the revival of the Monday Rule about Supply, and the delegation of the powers of the House in Committee to what are called Standing Committees. As regards that delegation of the powers of the House, we think it is impossible at the present time to do more than to make an experiment of it in matters which will be quite safe, but which will enable the House to judge how far the experiment is satisfactory, and what progress can be made in that direction. As regards Supply, I withdrew the Resolution originally on the Paper, and intimated that we would endeavour to devise something of a more effective character. We have considered with much pains various methods by which this end might be gained. There have been plans suggested at times for divesting the House of the whole detail of Supply; but we are anxious that, while our proposal should have the promise of being effective, it should not innovate more than cannot be avoided upon the established usages of the House. Under these established usages, Friday, which was originally a Government night, has become a Members' night. It has become a Members' night with very few and insignificant exceptions; but it is desirable the House should bear in mind that Friday used, in the regular course of the House of Commons, when Business was far less urgent than it is now, and when less Business was initiated by Ministers, to belong to the Government. And when the present Regulation was made that Friday should be a night of Committee of Supply, it was contemplated and expected and intended that a large portion of that night should be available for Government Business. In the year 1866 we had great difficulties, as the Government of that day, in finding time enough for the discussion of the Reform Bill, and by that time Friday was threatening to slip out of the hands of the Government altogether. I was at that time the Leader of the Government in the House, and I argued that the Government was then almost reduced to two nights a-week; and Lord Derby, who replied on the part of the Opposition, pointed out that Friday was intended, subject to deductions in consequence of Motions on going into Committee of Supply, for the Government service; and he protested against my saying that we had only two nights a-week, because then the Government kept a sensible, if not a very large, portion of Friday night, which it has since entirely lost. Now, we do not propose to make any change as regards Friday, or Wednesday, or Tuesday, though we reserve it to ourselves, if necessary, to ask the House to consider whether, at an earlier period than has sometimes been chosen for the purpose, it shall begin 2 o'clock Sittings on Tuesdays specially, and perhaps only, in order to obtain Supply. Subject, then, to the conditions I have stated, we shall ask the House to enlarge the Monday Rule, and to extend it to other days on which Government Orders have precedence, providing, however, that Members shall have power to bring forward relevant Motions upon the three great classes of the Estimates. The enlargement we propose to make in that power of Members is, that it shall apply, not only to the three classes of the Estimates, but likewise to Votes of Credit, specified as such. It is quite plain that there is no description of proposal which a Government can make to the House which more usually involves large questions of policy than those Votes of Credit. In 1860 we proposed a Vote of £3,500,000 for the China War, which involved some considerable questions of policy. In 1870 we proposed a Vote of Credit of £2,000,000, which involved much larger questions of policy with regard to Treaties which Her Majesty had been advised to make with Germany and France for the security of Belgium. In 1878 a Vote of Credit was proposed by the late Government, which likewise involved very large questions of policy; and, undoubtedly, the Vote of Credit we ourselves proposed this year with regard to Egypt was the most natural occasion that could possibly be desired or suggested for raising, not only questions relating to the conduct of the Government in the Egyptian proceedings, but questions vitally affecting them in regard to the measures they might have taken. Therefore, we propose to give Members the power to raise discussions upon Votes of Credit as well as on the three great branches of the ordinary Service. Our proposal will, therefore, stand thus—

> "That, whenever the Committee of Supply stands as the first Order of the Day on any day, except Friday evening, on which Government Orders have precedence, Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, unless on first going into Supply on the Army, Navy, or Civil Service Estimates respectively, or on any Vote of Credit, an Amendment be moved, or Question raised, relating to the Estimates proposed to be taken in Supply."

If we were about to proceed to the discussion of these Resolutions to-night, it would be proper to go into them more fully; but as the House will see them in print to-morrow, and will have ample time for their consideration before coming to a vote, I will not detain the House any longer.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: What about the Rules with regard to General Committees?

MR. GLADSTONE: They stand as at present. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on every day for which they may be set down."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, as far as regards the statement just made to the House, we have to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having placed very clearly before us the view which the Government take, generally speaking, with respect to these Resolutions. But, while I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has not thought it right to propose any modification in the 1st Rule, which is now under discussion, and which is the one upon which there is a great deal of feeling, I take some comfort from what I thought I heard fall from the right hon. Gentleman in the opening part of his observations, when I understood him to say that, although the Government would not make any alteration in the Rule as they proposed it, and were prepared to support it in the form in which it stands on the Paper, yet they considered the matter as one on which the House would have to pronounce its opinion; and I gathered from the right hon. Gentleman that it would be free to all Members, of whatever Party or section of the House, to exercise an independent judgment upon the Amendments which might be brought before them on the Rule. My feeling with regard to *clôture* is, I must honestly confess, the same as it has always been. I object to it on principle as an unnecessary and inconvenient Rule. But if the majority of the House be determined to adopt that principle, at all events it will be a matter for consideration what limitations should be accepted; and I trust we shall be allowed to obtain the free opinion of the House upon the Amendments which shall be submitted, and especially upon the Amendment of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). With regard to some of the other Resolutions, the right hon. Gentleman says very fairly that he cannot expect the House to pronounce an opinion upon them without seeing them in print. I would, therefore, urge upon the House that it is quite necessary that it should not commit itself, in one way or another, until we have had time for considering the Resolutions very carefully. No doubt, the words must be scrutinized, and I quite understand that that is the spirit in which they are proposed. But I must raise a question which I think the House is bound to ask. It is perfectly true that we have been called together on the present occasion for the purpose of considering the Resolutions and doing a particular class of Business. But it is impossible for us not to see, now that we are assembled, and have upon us the general conduct of Parliamentary Business, that it must be our duty to question the Government upon some very important matters which I do not desire to force inconveniently upon the notice of the House, but which I am obliged to mention now, because we are asked to vote upon Resolutions the effect of which would be to give the Government the entire command of the time of the House during the Session —the Government putting down their Resolutions every day they pleased, and, therefore, obtaining the absolute right of shutting out every other question whatever. If that be not done so strictly as to shut out the Government themselves from proposing a Vote of Thanks to the Army for its conduct in Egypt, so much the better. The House will receive with pleasure any Motion which Her Majesty's Government may make on that subject in a few days. But, if what I have said be the case, it is our duty to consider whether there are not other questions which it will be our duty to discuss. Without raising prematurely a discussion on controversial matters, I am now about to ask the Government, and to press them to give us a satisfactory answer to the question, whether they do intend, before the House rises for the Prorogation, to give us an opportunity of discussing the questions connected with the recent Expedition to Egypt? Of course, the Government may say that there are some questions which, of course, we cannot discuss; but we want to know—first, whether there are Papers to be presented, and, if so, to what date they will come down? Next, we are anxious to be informed as to the general character of the policy which Her Majesty's Government are now pursuing, because that is a matter upon which we are very greatly in the dark—we want to know what is the policy which they think this country should adopt with regard to Egypt—whether we are to continue our armed occupation of that country, and, if so, what is to be the nature of that occupation, and what responsibilities we assume with regard to it? We want to know, also, how far these questions have been made a subject of discussion with other Governments, and what, in the judgment of Her Majesty's Government, is likely to be the outcome of the operations into which we have entered. There is another class of questions upon which we have a more intimate right to demand information from the Government, and not only information, but something still more definite—I mean with regard to the expense. There can be no reason for reticence upon such a matter. Whatever questions may arise with regard to foreign relations, there can be no doubt that much expense has been incurred. We want to know whether it is covered by the Vote of Credit taken a few months ago; and, if it is not, whether it is the intention of the Government to submit further Estimates, and, if so, whether that will be done in the course of the present Session? Looking at this matter from the point of view from which we have been taught to look at it by the right hon. Gentleman, we must feel that this is one of those cases in which the expense of the war, so far as it can be estimated, ought to be provided for within the current financial year. We want to know whether that expenditure is to be defrayed by Vote of Parliament, or wholly or in part in any other manner. All sorts of rumours have been spread abroad on that matter. We know that to some extent the cost of the Expedition is to be charged upon the finances of India. But we do not know to what extent. It is now time for us to get some information on that point. A statement was made by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) before we adjourned with regard to the sum which, somewhat to his surprise and dismay, he found was likely to be required. But I am misinformed if the amount then spoken of has not been largely exceeded. I wish to know whether it is intended to increase the charge upon the Indian Exchequer; and, if so, whether the House will be consulted upon the point before it rises? Again, with regard to other rumours which are afloat, I think we ought to have some assurance as to the idea which has been put forward that a portion, perhaps a large portion, of the expenditure is to be thrown upon Egypt itself. That is a matter of a very serious character, as to which we have a right to ask for information. Now, I mention these questions, not in any captious spirit, or with a view of interposing delay in the way of proceeding with the Business; but I put them because we are now asked to give up the whole of our time at the demand of the Government. If we give that to the Government, and if they do not give us an opportunity of discussing these matters, we shall be absolutely powerless, and absolutely at their mercy. I think, therefore, we not only have a right, but it is our duty, to put these questions to them, and press for an answer before we come to vote on the proposals which the right hon. Gentleman has now submitted.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I cannot complain of what has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman, and I will give him the best answers in my power; but one part of the subject to which he alludes involves questions of great delicacy and difficulty. That is the part which refers to the details of the policy to be pursued in Egypt. The first question of the right hon. Gentleman referred to the presentation of Papers. Well, Papers are to be presented tomorrow coming down to the close of the Sitting in August, and in the course of four or five days further Papers will be distributed coming down to a late date in September, so that the information in the possession of the House will be very much enlarged. Even if it were possible to overcome the formal difficulties which attend the presentation of Papers, I am not aware that we could go much further than that, viewing the nature of the subject-matter of the documents. The next question is that of the policy to be pursued in Egypt. Of course, that subject raises a group of most complex and intricate considerations. We have again before us questions relating to all the parties whose number and whose varied positions with regard to one another rendered the earlier stages of this subject so exceedingly difficult. No doubt, the position is now changed in the very important respect that the matter lies more in the hands of this country, and that the Government of the Queen is not fettered in the extreme degree and manner in which it was fettered six months ago by the engagements which it found existing, and by the relations in which the various parties stood to the question in Egypt. Still they are matters of very great delicacy and difficulty, and upon this part of the subject I cannot hold out any expectation that it is likely that we can lay down systematically any scheme for the approval of the House during the few weeks that are likely to fall within the scope of the questions which have brought us together. Our declarations must be very reserved. But the right hon. Gentleman may say—"It is quite possible, from the course which matters appear to be taking, that there may be a disposition to attack the Egyptian policy of the Government." Now, I say at once, should that be the case, that would constitute an exception, and we should think it right to make arrangements which would enable any matter of that kind to be brought to an issue. The time during which these questions have been under consideration is, after all, a very limited time, and the intrinsic difficulty of some of them is extreme. Notwithstanding that, I am not prepared to shut out that view of the case to which I have alluded, if it is taken by the right hon. Gentleman. He may reply to me—"Yes; your declarations must, undoubtedly, be bounded by your sense of public duty; but do not, therefore, require the whole House to be silent." I would reply that that is a contention which we should desire to consider in a spirit of equity. I can give the right hon. Gentleman one assurance, which, perhaps, he may think of more practical value than attaches to anything which I have yet said. The right hon. Gentleman adverted to the shape which matters might assume—that we might apply ourselves resolutely, as I trust we shall, to deal with the question of Procedure, and that after Procedure would come the Prorogation; and the right hon. Gentleman said—"Are you prepared to say that no time is to be allowed before the Prorogation for discussing a subject of this kind?" Now, undoubtedly, nothing that we have said with regard to our general desire to proceed effectively with Procedure, or to confine these Sittings to Procedure, would preclude any reasonable proposal for discussion after we have got through the bulk of our work with Procedure, and before the actual Prorogation. Therefore, I certainly hope that practical inconvenience will not be experienced upon this subject by Gentlemen who take a natural and great interest in it. We must endeavour to proceed in consonance with the general sense of the House. Undoubtedly, we are not disposed to view the expression of opinion on a subject of that kind in the light of Party only, and equity should govern the proceedings to be taken. Another point has been raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and with regard to it my answer is of a quite different kind. That is with regard to the question of expense. There can be no reason whatever for secrecy in this matter. There may be a reason for silence, but the only reason can be want of knowledge. Secrecy with respect to expenditure certainly there shall not be. As soon as we are able to convey any valuable information to the House about the expenditure on the war, we will do so. I will now venture only to say three things. First of all, I by no means desire to convey the opinion that it will be necessary for the House to enter further into the consideration of Votes of money. I do not speak positively, but, as far as we are able to judge, I do not see that it is likely that we shall have to ask the House for any further Vote during the remainder of the present Session. Secondly, with respect to the Indian expenditure. It is quite true that my noble Friend spoke under some sense of dismay—a feeling which, I must say, I most fully shared—of the scale of expenditure connected with the limited contingent that it was proposed that India should furnish to the Expedition. But my noble Friend has had no reason to anticipate that that large estimate will be largely exceeded, no information on the subject of excess of expenditure over the estimates having yet come within our view. That the Vote of Credit will absolutely suffice for all that has been done is more than I will venture to say. But this I will say—that I think, when we look back to the expense of other wars, to the magnitude of the objects in view, and to the mode and time in which they have been accomplished—though I cannot speak of any particular figure—yet I do cherish the hope that the House will be of opinion that the expense that has been incurred on the present occasion has not been out of proportion to the magnitude of the interests involved. The question of contribution from Egypt, either prospectively or otherwise, is a question which I conceive to enter rather into the question of policy than into that of expense; and I would say, in conclusion, that I think there is good hope, with regard to the subject of expense, that before long information will be supplied more worthy of being submitted to the House than any which we now have. I think I have now gone over all the points raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and I trust he will think I have spoken in a spirit not dissimilar to that in which he has brought them forward.

Mr. GREGORY said, he hoped there would be no proposal for Saturday Sittings.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that House had been called together at a most unusual time, and in a most unprecedented manner, to consider the proposed Rules of Procedure. It was not likely that this would be the only question discussed, for other matters had been referred to by his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) which would have to be considered; but at the present moment he did not wish to enter into them. He, however, wished to have an explicit answer with regard to what the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister intended to do with respect to the first of his proposed Rules. The right hon. Gentleman, it would be remembered, had made a proposal earlier in the Session to his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition, consenting to a modification of this 1st Rule; but at the end of the Session the right hon. Gentleman said circumstances had occurred that had altered the whole situation. But there were many of them in the House who could not see how that situation had been in any way altered. [*Laughter.*] Well, if for the convenience and the necessity of the Government it was right that that Rule should in its main provision be altered—namely, that a bare majority should not be able to carry closure, then he, for the life of him, could not see what had occurred since to exclude any alteration in that proposition. He, for one, had been absolutely against closure at all. As a humble individual, he should vote against closure in any of its forms; but it would be a very different thing if the proposition was that there should be a certain majority—and that no inconsiderable majority—which was to carry that closure. If, however, by a bare majority of 1 it was intended that closure was to be carried, he hoped there were many men spirited enough, not only on his side of the House, but also upon the other side, to oppose such a proposition, for he had met men of the other side of the House in other places who stated distinctly that they had been coerced into voting for the Rule as it then stood, and that had they been able they would vote against it, because they believed conscientiously it would be a most mischievous Rule—that it was absolutely fatal to freedom of debate, and that it would tend to lower the constitution of Parliament more than anything else that could be done. He ventured to ask the great Conservative Party sitting on his side of the House at any price not to allow such a Rule as that to pass, but to fight against it to the bitter end. He saw the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary laughing. He was glad when he saw the Home Secretary laugh that peculiar laugh of his, because he then knew that that right hon. and learned Gentleman thought and believed the Conservatives would do what they said. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India had told the House the great object of closure was that men's mouths should be shut on certain occasions, and that irrelevant discussion should be stopped. But he showed by what he said that he was alluding to the Opposition and not to his own Party. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), therefore, ventured to say that if that Resolution were put in the form and shape which the right hon. Gentleman had strongly intimated—and of which intimation he was sorry his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition did not take more notice—for he believed that it was the intention of the Government that that Resolution should be carried as it stood, he ventured to say, standing there in his place, that, so far as he was concerned, he would do everything that he honourably could, so long as the Forms of the House would permit, to prevent the carrying of a Rule which would abolish that freedom of speech which he believed had placed the right hon. Gentleman who was at the head of the Government in that proud position which he occupied, not only in that House, but before the whole of the country.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the Prime Minister had observed that the Egyptian War would compare favourably with other wars; but he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) should like to know to which of the other wars the right hon. Gentleman referred. Did he refer to the Crimean War, which was the work of a Liberal Cabinet, and whose fruits the Liberal Party wholly wasted in after years, or to the Afghan War, which had an infinitely greater object than this Egyptian Campaign in view—namely, to keep 250,000,000 of our fellow-subjects in India free from Russian tyranny and oppression? He thought the House had a right to know what were the ends the Government had in view with regard to Egypt to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. He believed that British influence and orderly government might have been maintained in Egypt without any war at all. But this country was determined that, whether or not those ends might have been obtained without war, this war should not be fruitless—that what had been so gallantly won in the field should not be lost in the Cabinet, and that the predominance of England over Egypt in future should be secured. And he thought it would be the duty of the Government to furnish information with regard to their Egyptian policy before the House rose for its Prorogation. With regard to the 1st Rule of Procedure, he hoped there would be a most determined resistance on the part of Members on both sides of the House to *clôture* by a bare majority. There could be no valid argument for such a *clôture.* No reason had been given why the offer made to the Leader of the Opposition by the Prime Minister last June should not have been recommended by him this Session to the judgment of the House.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked whether the Prime Minister's remarks as to an attack being made on the Government policy applied only to the Opposition, or whether, if that policy were attacked by other Parties in the House, facilities would be given for discussion? It was to secure such an opportunity that he had given Notice that he would move the Previous Question when the Vote of Thanks to the Army was moved on Thursday. He did not intend to go into the whole policy of the Egyptian War. He would take an independent ground. He hoped the Prime Minister would state whether he would give to the House an opportunity, before this Session broke up, of discussing the whole of the Egyptian Question.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he was not insensible to the necessity of some alteration of the Rules of the House. He believed there was a very general desire on the part of Gentlemen sitting on the Conservative Benches to restore the efficiency of the House. That being so, he was sorry to hear the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Chaplin) should have liked a more distinct answer from the Leaders of the Opposition as to whether they intended to oppose the Motion the right hon. Gentleman had submitted. He gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's opening speech that he and his Colleagues, and, he presumed, his Party behind him, saw something to induce them to adhere to the formal and essential proposition of the 1st Resolution. That was what he (Mr. Chaplin) called a declaration of war. And, that being so, all the Conservative Members and all Members who valued liberty and cherished freedom should consider what course they would pursue on this occasion. By accepting that proposition, they put it entirely out of their power to raise any question whatever, however important, except by the permission of the Government. He need not now enter into a variety of questions which were raised before the country which were most important, and to many of which his right hon. Friend referred. In passing, he might say that there was one question before all others which, he thought, demanded the immediate attention of the House, and he was sorry it had not been already raised—namely, the terrible suffering of our wounded soldiers in Egypt, and on their return from Egypt. The second effect of the acceptance of this Motion was that the House would be taking the first step forward in the direction of this *clôture* Resolution. It was perfectly idle for the Prime Minister to expect the Party who were determined to oppose the 1st Rule of Procedure to agree to a course which would do nothing less than entirely suppress debate, Under these circumstances, he would move the adjournment of the debate, and he thought there were good reasons for agreeing to that Motion. The Prime Minister had announced a variety of changes in this Rule; and it was not unreasonable to ask that Members should see those changes on Paper before they were invited to discuss them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Mr. HICKS said, he would support the Motion for Adjournment. He objected to this French *clôture.* Yes; and he objected to other French customs which were being introduced into the government of this country, and regretted that the compromise proposed in May last had not been accepted and held to. If that were again taken up he would vote for it, as he did not wish to see this contest continued. It had, however, been withdrawn without any conceivable reason except the extraordinary power of the Prime Minister. He thought that the House had a right to know what the Amendments to the Resolutions were that they were to be called upon to consider before they gave the Government the great power they asked. They ought to know whether there was to be any concession upon the 1st Rule; and they should have an assurance from the Prime Minister that he would not use the influence of his Government to coerce the votes of those who sat behind him before they proceeded any further.

Mr. RAIKES said, he thought it only right to observe that, in his opinion, the House had been rather taken by surprise by the course which had been adopted by the Prime Minister that evening. Hon. Members came there expecting, no doubt, to be invited to adopt the Resolutions now before them on the Paper. No doubt, they also had every reason to expect that they would have the Resolutions put before them in substantially the same form; but he (Mr. Raikes) did not think that anyone in the House expected that they would have been met with the very considerable modification that had been made in them, coupled, as it was, with a demand for their instant consideration. It seemed to him that the Prime Minister had hardly treated them so fairly as they might have expected in asking them to pass a Resolution, pledging themselves to postpone all other questions that might come before them, in order to consider Resolutions not yet actually upon the Paper. It was one thing to give Notice of important changes in important proposals, and another thing to ask them to pledge themselves to consider those proposals before they could judge what they would be. For his part, he very much regretted that no hint had fallen from the Prime Minister as to his intention to accept any modification in Rule No. 1. The Prime Minister had offered no explanation of the causes which had led him to change his position with regard to these proposals, and hon. Members had certainly not expected to find the right hon. Gentleman so perfectly obdurate upon the subject, for when the House separated they had fair reason to believe that the right hon. Gentleman was of the same opinion as he was in May as to the necessity for a modification in Rule 1. They were now told that there was to be an alteration in Rule 1, conceived in the spirit of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey). He (Mr. Raikes) did not know whether that alteration was likely to tempt the hon. Member into the right Lobby; but it did not seem to him that the proposed Amendment was a substantial alteration, or that it would make much difference in the Resolution. They were also informed that there was to be an alteration in No. 2. So far as he could gather, the change proposed to be made was to make it necessary for 40 Members to express, by rising, their wish that a Motion for the Adjournment of the House should be made, in order to enable it to be entertained. Something of that sort might be advantageous, although he would prefer that the assent of 21, and not 40, Members should be required, as he thought that number would be sufficient, it being practically the majority of a quorum of the House. Then there was an alteration in the phraseology of the Half-past 12 Rule. He did not think that that had any effect upon the Motions on the Paper. But there was one other alteration of the greatest importance, and that was an alteration in dealing with Committee of Supply. They were asked, practically, to enforce and establish the renunciation of the ancient practice of discussing grievance before Supply, and to leave the old practice existing only in certain restricted and circumscribed limits, upon the occasion of the introduction of the three great classes of Estimates. They were asked to give up absolutely, for Government Business, not only Mondays, but every night in the week except Fridays, and also to enable the Government to take Tuesday Morning Sittings throughout the Session for the discussion of Supply. A result of that would be that when Tuesday Morning Sittings were held, it would be very difficult to make a House in the evening; and thus, practically, Fridays would be the only days that hon. Members would have for bringing forward questions distasteful to the Government. It was, however, only possible to take one division on the Motion for Supply; and, therefore, by inducing their followers to put down Motions for the few available open days throughout the Session, the Government could practically prevent the expression of any hostile opinion on their acts. No doubt, the proposal had certain administrative merits, and they must sympathize with a Government in desiring to get its Supply through; but it required a certain amount of courage on the part of a Government to come forward with a proposal of this kind. He ventured to think that he had made out a case for not pressing these proposals upon the House as if they were familiar with them. Hon. Members ought to have an opportunity of familiarizing themselves with the proposals of the Government, which was not possible if their discussion was commenced at 12 o'clock to-morrow. It was also a most important question to consider how far they were to surrender the whole of their liberty of discussion during the present Session by giving priority to these Resolutions. The Prime Minister had, it was true, expressed his willingness to give up some time to the discussion of anything like a formal Vote of Censure or hostility; but he had declined to offer a few days' grace for a discussion of the affairs of Egypt. That discussion might have taken place that day, if the issue of the Papers on the subject had not been so conveniently postponed till the day after the meeting of Parliament. He (Mr. Raikes) hoped that, on that side of the House, consideration would always be shown in circumstances of difficulty; but, at the same time, they owed something to their constituents; and how could Members face them if they had to go back and say they allowed a state of things to exist by which the mouths of Members were absolutely closed on matters of such vital importance as the Egyptian Expedition and Egyptian policy? Personally, with the opportunity of opposing this Resolution, he should have a clear conscience in the matter; but he did not envy hon. Members opposite representing large Northern constituencies if they should have to face them at such a juncture. He trusted the House would pause before passing the Resolution in its present form; and he trusted that, if it was ultimately passed, it would be with a modification which would except Notices of Motions, so that by saving Tuesdays for private Members, they might do something to maintain the credit of Parliament and vindicate the duty they owed to their constituents.

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply to the question put by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), said, there was an established tradition in the House that, whenever a large number of Members desired to raise a question touching the existence or policy of the Government, an opportunity should be given them for that purpose. With regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Raikes), he objected to going forward with this Resolution, upon grounds which appeared to be fatal to one another; he objected to going forward with the 1st Resolution because it was not altered, and he objected to going on with the other Resolutions because they were altered. It was very difficult to meet these objections, so as to make them hang upon the same thread. This was essentially a preliminary Motion, intended to be disposed of at the very commencement of the Sitting; and, therefore, as a matter of course, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) did not require to be told that the Government could not possibly agree to his Motion for Adjournment. So far as there was any reason, or colour of reason, in it, it appeared to turn upon the fact that two Resolutions were proposed to be altered, and that the alterations were not yet upon the Paper. In order to meet that objection, he (Mr. Gladstone) would undertake that those two Resolutions should be laid on the Table that night; and, if the House wished to have the opportunity of seeing the Resolutions as a whole upon the Paper, he was willing to go further, and say that he would postpone the consideration of them until to-morrow. It was quite certain, from the discussion there would be, that no important change could be made until the House had had the most ample opportunity of considering it. That, he thought, was a fair offer; and, under the circumstances, he hoped the hon. Gentleman opposite would not persevere with his Motion for Adjournment.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that, on the understanding just stated by the Prime Minister, that none of the Resolutions should be taken that night, after the preliminary Motion had been disposed of, he could not help thinking it would be well for his hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) to accept that offer, and not to persist with the Motion for the Adjournment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. RAIKES said, he would venture again to ask whether nothing could be done with regard to Tuesdays? If these were excepted from the Resolution, the Business of Parliament might go on in the usual fashion. He would move the omission of the words "and Notices of Motions" from the Resolution — an Amendment which would leave precedence to the Government for the Resolution on every day except Tuesday.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "and Notices of Motions."—(*Mr. Raikes.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and Notices of Motions' stand part of the Question."

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT, in supporting the Amendment, said, that, without much chance of success, he ventured to hope that the right hon Gentleman the Prime Minister would agree to this proposal. There were many reasons why he should so agree. Only that night the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had stated his intention of moving the Previous Question when a Vote of Thanks was to be moved, and which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had hoped would be given unanimously to the Army and Navy of the country, who had so distinguished themselves in the late war in Egypt. But, supposing the proposal which had been put forward by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes) was rejected, then the House might have, on the occasion of the Motion for the Vote of Thanks, all sorts of side questions and side issues raised on a Motion that ought to be unanimously voted. They would most likely be raised then, because it would be the only opportunity afforded for raising a discussion upon the Expedition to Egypt. Probably such subjects as the Transport, the Commissariat, and the Medical Department of the Army would be raised; and, he would ask, with what dignity could the House give a Vote of Thanks after a discussion of questions of such magnitude? The Secretary of State for War would not deny that these were questions deserving immediate attention—questions that ought to be discussed during the present Session of Parliament; but if the House was precluded from bringing such forward in a regular manner, then they would be introduced at inconvenient times and in irregular ways, and in a manner not for the best interests of the country. When, on a Motion for a Vote of Thanks, the Previous Question was raised, no one could foretell how far the discussion would be carried on a Vote that ought to be an unanimous Vote of the House. He ventured to hope that the Prime Minister would take into consideration that these points he had mentioned were questions that ought to be discussed in the interests of the Army, but not on a Vote of Thanks.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, of all ways of relaxing the stringency of the Resolution, that proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Raikes) appeared to be the worst. The hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) spoke as if he could determine what should be discussed on Tuesdays if they were excepted; whereas the fact was, that private Members, like the hon. and gallant Baronet, had no power of determining what should be discussed if they obtained the Tuesday. All a private Member could do was to take his chance at the ballot with 600 other Members of the House. They had determined that a great effort should be made; and, by a great deviation from usage, they had called upon Members, at great sacrifice, to meet the Government for a great purpose. Were they then to renew what was one of the most farcical of the proceedings of the House—namely, the system by which the House met at 4 o'clock, and after two or three hours of work before dinner, nine times out of ten was "counted out?" He hardly thought, in view of those facts, the right hon. Gentleman would persevere with the Amendment.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, the history of Parliamentary Procedure showed that, compared with the former arrangement, the Government had gained one day in the week, which they had taken away from private Members. Formerly Thursday was a private Member's night, and though Supply used not to be set down for Friday, yet the Motion for the Adjournment till Monday, which was then necessary to prevent the House from sitting on Saturday, gave the same opportunity to Members for the miscellaneous discussion of all questions as the present Motion for Supply. Lord Palmerston introduced the present system, and thereby gained a day. Therefore, so benefited as they were, Ministers had no cause to complain.

MR. MAC IVER said, he would remind the House that, when a "count out" had occurred on a Tuesday, it had generally happened after an unusually late Sitting the previous night.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 96; Noes 46: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 342.)

Main Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 98; Noes 47: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 343.)

Ordered, That the Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on every day for which they may be set down.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the time had arrived when, in fulfilment of his engagement to the House, he ought to move that this House do now adjourn. He would move accordingly.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. BROADHURST, rising, said, he opposed the adjournment. ["Oh, oh!"] He wished to move that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair, in order that the Bill which stood next on the Orders of the Day—the Payment of Wages in Public-Houses Prohibition Bill—might be considered.

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion before the House is, "That this House do now adjourn."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he understood that the object of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst), in opposing the adjournment of the House, was that the Bill which stood next on the Orders of the Day might be proceeded with. He did not know whether the Government proposed to stop that Bill, which was a very important one.

MR. ONSLOW said, he would point out that the Prime Minister distinctly stated last August that the Government would not encourage any private Member in pressing forward a Bill when the House re-assembled. He thought it was highly improper on the part of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) or the hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) to press Her Majesty's Government to break the pledges which they had given to the House. That was not the way to carry any Bill, to attempt to force it against the wishes of the House and of the Prime Minister. If they intended to do that, he should oppose them in every possible way. He hoped, however, that hon. Gentlemen opposite would agree to the Motion of their Leader, and not raise a wrangle on the Question of Adjournment.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

House adjourned at Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 25th October, 1882.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)

COMMUNICATION TO THE HOUSE.

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following communication from the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson, which reached him too late to admit of his reporting it to the House during yesterday's sitting:—

Oxford,
Octr. 24, 1882.

Sir,

I have the honour to acquaint you that on Saturday, September 30th, I ordered that, upon payment of the fine of £500, Mr. Gray, M.P. who had been committed by me for contempt of Court, should be discharged, and he was discharged accordingly on that day.

(*Signed*) *J. A. Lawson.*

To the Rt. Hon.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

MR. SEXTON wished to ask the Prime Minister how soon he would be in a position to announce to the House the names of the Members of the Select Committee which was to inquire into Mr. Gray's imprisonment?

MR. JOSEPH COWEN desired to know whether, when the Committee made their Report to the House, there would be an opportunity of discussing the conduct of Mr. Justice Lawson?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the letter that has been read by you, Sir, I think it right that I should move that it be referred to the Select Committee of whose appointment I gave Notice yesterday. As to the Question of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Sexton), on the last occasion of a Committee of this kind, I think there was an interval of six or seven days before its actual appointment. But my noble Friend (Lord Richard Grosvenor) is giving his attention to the matter, and he will lose no time in constructing a list which I hope will be acceptable to the House. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), I think that although, undoubtedly, the subject is an important one, it is not a matter on which I can give any specific answer at the present moment as one to be treated by way of exception, and that it had better be allowed to stand over for some time, until we see what progress we make with the Business in hand, and the House has an opportunity of considering whether any, and, if so, what subjects may be discussed before the Session terminates. I now move that the letter read from the Chair be referred to the Committee appointed to inquire into the imprisonment of Mr. Gray.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the said Communication be referred to the Select Committee to which the letter of the 16th August 1882, from the Right Honourable Mr. Justice Lawson to Mr. Speaker, was referred."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT—REPORTED MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN wished to ask the Government two Questions regarding Egypt which were not of a political character, and which probably could be answered without Notice. He wished to know whether the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could give the House any information as to the action Her Majesty's Government had taken for the discovery of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, and Lieutenant Charrington, and as to the position in which these unfortunate gentlemen had been placed? He desired also to know whether the Government were aware of the treatment to which prisoners were subjected in Egyptian prisons? It was alleged that something like 3,000 prisoners were subjected to very harsh treatment, and even to torture; and in a telegram published this morning in *The Daily News*, a Cairo Correspondent states that—

"Two Members of the National Chamber accused of having furnished Arabi with voluntary contributions are now chained together in an underground dungeon which has only been opened thrice in the last fifteen days. The condition of the prisoners and of the den is foul beyond description. There are scores of such instances, illustrative of the cowardly and ferocious character of the attempts to crush the

National movement, which was genuine so far as it went, by the rotten Government whose existence would not be worth an hour's purchase if the English Army were withdrawn."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I have already received private Notice from my hon. Friends the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) with regard to Questions of the same kind for to-morrow, and I think it will be better that I should leave them all until to-morrow, when I will be able to answer them more fully than I can now. As to the first matter referred to, it is receiving great attention from the Government.

HIGHWAYS—DISTURNPIKED ROADS—THE GRANT IN AID.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH gave Notice that to-morrow he would ask the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he would lay upon the Table of the House any Papers showing the mode in which the grant for turnpike roads would be distributed?

MR. DODSON: A Paper was laid on the Table before the Recess.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that he proposed to ask something much more specific than that.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Prime Minister, If he could state what position the Vote of Thanks to the troops who were engaged in the recent operations in Egypt would take, in view of the fact that the Rules of Procedure were to take precedence of other Business?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I have asked the authorities of the House whether it will be necessary to introduce the Vote of Thanks as an exception to the Motion made last night. I am informed that there will be no such necessity, as by the usage of Parliament it is distinctly understood that Votes of Thanks on occasions of this kind are special matters which are taken in the same manner, although they are not of the same character, as questions of Privilege. No exception, therefore, need be made in order to insure our being able to take the Vote of Thanks to-morrow.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Will the right hon. Gentleman state now, or later, whether there are any other matters which in the same way may be exempted from the operation of the Resolution passed yesterday giving precedence to the Rules of Procedure?

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord, as I understand him, does not ask me to lay down an exhaustive law of Parliamentary Procedure upon this subject. His desire is to know whether the Government have any Motion in contemplation which would escape from the effect of the Resolution of yesterday. The Government have nothing of the kind in contemplation.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.—RESOLUTIONS.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SEVENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February],

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF, in rising to move, as an Amendment, in lines 1 and 2, to leave out the words "or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House," said, he hoped that in moving this Amendment it would not be understood as implying anything derogatory to the right hon. Gentleman who then occupied the Chair, as he merely brought forward this Amendment on public grounds. Nor had he wished, when he called attention to the right hon. Gentleman having voted in a Division on a Bill while presiding in the Chair, to do anything but to mark the incongruity of the position in which the Chairman of Committees would be placed when he presided over the discussion of a Bill in which he was himself personally interested, and to prevent the Chairman from being exposed to any suspicion of partizanship. There had been for many years an increasing desire to pay respect to the authority of the Chair. Of late there had been no contest for the Office of Speaker. In the days when contests for the Office were the rule the decision of the Speaker had on more than one occasion been challenged and overborne by the House. The last instance occurred during the early years of the Speakership of Mr. Shaw Lefevre; but there had been no such occurrence since the time when the Speaker was first elected by the general consent of the House for qualities recognized generally by the House. In former times Speakers occasionally performed acts which called forth remonstrance. In a work written by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, full both of literary interest and political knowledge, they read that Sir Fletcher Norton gave offence in a debate on the Royal Marriages Bill. The writer said of him—

> "In the dearth of oratorical courage which seemed to endanger the Bill, Mr. Speaker Norton was induced to descend into the lists; but he was no sooner back beneath his canopy than he found himself pelted with sarcasms."

The more a Speaker was a partizan the less was the authority which he possessed. The more impartial the Speaker, the more was he respected, and the more was the House inclined to accept his decisions. The Speaker might be placed in a very anomalous position by being made the initiator of the *clôture*. History told them that in the days of Mr. Speaker Lenthall or Finch the occupant of the Chair was an instrument of the Court. They all knew how the Speaker interrupted Sir John Elliot, saying that he had received a command to interrupt anyone intending to throw aspersions on the Ministers of State. In these days such conduct would be impossible, but hereafter might not Speakers be chosen who should resemble the Speakers of the past? If a partizan Speaker were elected, how could they prevent collusion between him and the Government of the day? No future Speaker would act like the Speaker of Charles I., and desire a Member addressing the House to stop; but, in collusion with the Ministers, he might accept their cries of impatience as the evident sense of the House, and then intervene between the House and the Member about to impugn the Ministers. It appeared to him, therefore, that the introduction of the Speaker's name into the Resolution was likely to damage the high position which he held. It should be remembered that high position and character did not always preserve exalted functionaries from imputation. There was not a Member of the House who did not know that imputations had, rightly or wrongly, been levelled against Judges with regard to the trial of Election Petitions. The objections to a trial of an Election Petition by only one Judge had been recognized by the House, which a few years ago passed an Act making it necessary that two Judges should sit together to try an Election Petition. With regard to the relative position of the Speaker and that of the Chairman of Committees, the House had already established a very great difference. In that book of which they had all heard, but the authority of which had been a little shaken by the proceedings of last night—namely, the work of Sir Erskine May, it was stated that there was a distinct difference between the powers of the Chairman in Committee and the powers of the Speaker in the Chair. When a sudden disorder arose, the Speaker, without any Motion, was enabled to resume his place in the Chair and to quell disorder that had arisen in Committee; and when there was a count he had to come and verify the number. Therefore, it was perfectly plain that the Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means had not yet been recognized by the House as the actual substitute of the Speaker. When subjects were argued before the Speaker, all the questions that were dealt with were questions of principle; details were matter of accident. The Speaker had precedents to go upon for the length of a debate. When measures had occupied a certain length of time, the Speaker was able to say when the limit ought not to be exceeded. But by what precedents could the Chairman of Ways and Means decide? Details, which with the Speaker were matters of accident, were the principal part of the discussion in Committee. There were more than 1,000 Amendments on the Land Bill. Suppose the

Chairman of Committees, with the best will in the world, had to declare closure on all those 1,000 Amendments, and not only on them, but on every Motion to report Progress, by what criterion was he to decide that the time had arrived for him to make use of his powers? Would not his declaring closure on many of those matters produce the very Obstruction that the House was trying to avoid? There was a great difference between the position occupied by the Speaker and that occupied by the Chairman of Ways and Means. The Speaker was surrounded by every guarantee of neutrality. He was invested, not only with the Office of Speaker, but with other offices of very great importance—such as Trustee of the British Museum, Controller of the National Debt, and member of very important Boards; and, altogether, his position was perfectly different from that of a mere Member of the House. At one time the Speaker could not be replaced; and in order to replace the Speaker it was necessary to bring in a new Bill, and before that Bill could be brought in, it was necessary to obtain the assent of the Sovereign. When the time came for the retirement of the Speaker from his Office, he was rewarded with the highest dignities by the Crown. Means were given to him to support his new dignity. But what was the case with regard to the Office of Chairman of Committees? He remained in the ranks of combatant politicians. There were now two ex-Chairmen in the House—one his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), another now a Member of the Cabinet (Mr. Dodson). A Chairman of Committees might, perhaps, be proceeded against for bribery; he might make speeches in the House; he might look to the Government for a reward, or he might accept the Chiltern Hundreds. He presumed that the right hon. Gentleman who now acted as Chairman of Committees received the usual Government Whips, and that he was an enthusiastic Member of the meetings in Downing Street to decide whether *clôture* was to be adopted or not; and he would not wonder even if the right hon. Gentleman should vote on this very Motion, which conferred upon him these large powers. He spoke on Bills, he divided on Bills, and sometimes his name was on the back of Bills; and he observed that when the name of the right hon. Gentleman was on the back of a Bill, it was usually in company with that of a Member of Her Majesty's Government. When the Speaker was in the Chair he was removed from the whispers of the Front Benches; but the Chairman of Ways and Means was within ear-shot of any hint which might be given to him by the Government, who were, practically, his Colleagues. He hoped that these powers would not be given to the Speaker; but, if they were, his position formed no analogy for giving them to the Chairman of Committees. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) did not think that the House should confer upon one of its Members, who was really in no much greater position than anybody else, powers so extensive, and which he might use to the detriment of freedom of debate. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In lines 1 and 2, to leave out the words "or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House."—(*Sir Henry Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or to the Chairman of' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the principal part of the speech of the hon. Member was occupied by matters to which this Amendment has no reference whatever. He discussed at great length, with many unquestionable, and perhaps few questionable, propositions the position of the Speaker of the House, and with respect to which there is no matter at present before us, and I will part from that portion of the speech of the hon. Gentleman with this single observation—that while it is quite true that a Member of Parliament does not, by becoming Chairman of Ways and Means, forfeit his title to serve his country in other ways than in his political Office, that is also true, which the hon. Gentleman seems to have forgotten, of the Speaker of this House. A very distinguished man, one of the most distinguished men who attained to the high Office—I mean Mr. Grenville, afterwards Lord Grenville, and Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth—in one instance became Secretary of State, and in the other case became first Prime Minister, and afterwards Secretary of State.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: But not an inferior officer depending on the Government of the day.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg pardon. A Secretaryship of State depends on the Government of the day just as much as the Secretaryship of the Treasury. But, Sir, there was one portion of the remarks which occurred in the relevant portion of the speech of the hon. Gentleman—in the part of the speech which had reference to the subject-matter of the Motion—in which, undoubtedly, he raised a question of great importance. The question of the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means in this House is a question of great importance, and perhaps I had better remind the House that we have nothing now to do with it—at least, I wish to separate that important part of the question touched upon by the hon. Member—namely, what provision ought to be made with respect to those Gentlemen who, not holding the responsible Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, are occasionally put into the Chair. That question has been raised during the present Session in a cursory manner; but it is a very important question, and it has become of additional importance since the very large extension which has been given to the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, because within my own recollection, and within the recollection of other Members, the Chairman of Ways and Means had a responsibility merely limited, I think, to the title which he bore, and was not expected to take the Chair upon all Bills passing through this House. Undoubtedly, the Government are of opinion that it is desirable that a more strict rule should be laid down than now exists with regard to the appointment of persons to take the Chair when the Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means, from any cause, is not able to take the Chair; and we are under the impression that it will be possible, by a simple regulation enough, to provide for that part of the case. But the hon. Gentleman has argued the case particularly with regard to the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, and so I will argue it. It is undoubtedly, I think, a very serious question whether the Chairman of Ways and Means is to be invested with the powers that he now possesses—namely, the same powers—I believe I am correct in saying—the same ordinary powers as the Speaker of the House, subject to those appeals to which he is now subject. I am not now dealing with the question whether there should be any appeal in this matter; the question is, whether the Chairman of Ways and Means is to be deprived of the power appertaining to the regulation of debate, which power the House, it is assumed for the moment by the hon. Gentleman, is about to have constituted for its ordinary Procedure. Now, with regard to some depreciatory remarks which the hon. Member has offered with regard to the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means, he has quoted, for instance, the fact that the name of the Chairman of Ways and Means appears on the backs of Bills in concert with those Members of Her Majesty's Government, as an imputation that a certain element of partizanship enters into his character, and that consequently he should not be intrusted with the exercise of powers of a difficult and delicate character. The hon. Gentleman has either forgotten or does not happen to be aware that the appearance of the name of the Chairman of Ways and Means on the backs of Bills is a matter of pure form ordered by the House, and has nothing whatever to do with his inclination or with his supposed partizanship. His name appears on the back of Bills, I believe, in cases where there is a preliminary Committee, and there is an order for that Bill to be introduced; in which case he, as Chairman of the Committee, is technically supposed, and formally supposed, to be the person presenting the Bill, though in reality he has nothing to do with it, and though it sometimes happens that the Chairman of Ways and Means is of the Party opposed to the Government proposal. Now, Sir, the Motion of the hon. Gentleman involves this important proposition—that upon those occasions it is desirable to depart from the established general rule of the House which gives to the Chairman of Ways and Means the same powers, speaking generally and subject to appeal, to be exercised in the conduct of debate as the Speaker of the House in the debates of the House. The hon. Gentleman says with perfect truth that the Chairman of Ways and Means is a person who has less dignity than the Speaker, and who is not only of less dignity, but who is not so completely detached from Party action in this House as the Speaker. I think the hon. Gentleman is quite right in the reference he has made to the vote given by the Chairman of Ways and Means on a Bill in the present Session of Parliament—a vote given in Committee on the Bill, I think it was, while he himself was presiding in that Committee. Well, Sir, I rather believe that that vote, if I remember rightly, was due to the purely accidental circumstance of his happening to be out of the Chair and happening to be inclosed in the Lobby without being aware of it. Therefore, if that be so, that is a subject which had better not be introduced into this debate; but, at the same time, I am by no means prepared to allow it to be tacitly assumed that the Chairman of Ways and Means forfeits the right to vote by sitting in the Chair; and for this reason, that the Speaker undoubtedly does not forfeit his right to vote. We have heard the Speaker of this House assert from the Chair his right to vote if he thought fit in respect to his opinion, and not merely in respect to the form of the House when he came to give a casting vote; and I have known a case — I remember a case early in my own day—when the Speaker of that day, Mr. Manners Sutton, afterwards Lord Canterbury, voted in Committee on a Bill; and so, coming down later, it was also done by Mr. Denison and Mr. Shaw Lefevre. I recollect a speech made by Mr. Manners Sutton, in which he distinctly asserted his right to vote in Committee—whether he did vote or not I am not certain—but he certainly expressed his right to vote. However, this is a case which we ought not to take into our view at the present moment. It is enough to consider the general proposition of the hon. Gentleman, which I admit—namely, that the Chairman of Ways and Means is a person of less authority than the Speaker; and, therefore, he is a person not so widely removed from Party action as the Speaker. But now let us consider who is the Chairman of Ways and Means. In the first place, he has always been, as I have said, endowed with powers in Committee —certain powers in Committee substantially corresponding to those of the Speaker in the Chair; and the House has, by a recent most important arrangement, given its opinion upon the general character of the Chairman of Ways and Means in a sense directly opposite to that which the hon. Gentleman has now set before us, and I wish to point out to the House what would be the effect of adopting the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman says that upon the ground of presumed unfitness the Chairman of Ways and Means, when he sits in the Chair of the Committee, shall not be authorized to exercise the power which is proposed to be constituted by the present Resolution. Well, Sir, supposing the House adopted the Motion of the hon. Gentleman on account of this supposed unfitness, the Chairman of Ways and Means would be prevented from exercising this power when he was acting as Chairman of Ways and Means; but when, in the event of the indisposition of the Speaker, or from any other cause requiring the absence of the Speaker, the Chairman of Ways and Means took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, he would then in respect of his fitness be authorized to exercise that very power which on account of his unfitness had been taken from him by the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. That is what is proposed by the Amendment which is now before us—an Amendment which the Government cannot consent to support. Generally speaking, I admit the question to be one of great delicacy, and of great difficulty, as well as of great importance; but let me point out this to the hon. Gentleman, that the necessity for very stringent powers is even greater in Committee than in the House, because the debates are less formal, and because there is a rapid succession of speeches, and a sharp competition to speakers; and if the House adopt the principle of giving less power to the Chairman of Ways and Means in Committee than is now enjoyed for that purpose and exercised by the Speaker in the Chair, I am afraid the House will really suffer in consequence. It is quite true the Chairman is a person of less authority than the Speaker; but I presume, and I believe it will be found to be the fact, if the Chairman is of less authority than the Speaker, that that will exclude the Chairman from laying any undue stress upon the weight of his Office, and make him aware that his judgments will not be accepted with the same implicit reliance as those of the Speaker, and consequently, as a general rule, will produce a proportionate carefulness in the Chairman of Ways and Means in not straining his authority, which might break down in his hands, and which, if it did break down, would do so to his own discredit as well as to the discredit and inconvenience of the House. This subject is hardly to be discussed now in a satisfactory manner, because I think that if the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means in relation to the Chair of the House is to be altered, it ought to be altered upon a comprehensive consideration of the whole question, and of all the powers which he possesses, and that whatever is done it would be most unsatisfactory to take away from him, as Chairman of Ways and Means, on account of supposed unfitness, a power which, as Deputy Speaker, he might in the very same evening be called upon to exercise. I am convinced that it is desirable and necessary, and for the advantage of the House itself—which is the whole matter here—that we ought to contemplate that for the purpose of immediate action, whatever provisions of appeal you may think are proper, the Chairman of Ways and Means requires to be armed with all the powers belonging to the Speaker for the maintenance of Order, which is yet more difficult and yet more necessary in Committee than in the House; and, therefore, I must object to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that the Prime Minister, in the concluding portion of his observations, had taken exception to the time and mode in which the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had introduced this question to the notice of the House; but the right hon. Gentleman had not pointed out any other time or mode in which it would have been open to the hon. Member to raise the point.

Mr. GLADSTONE observed that he had not taken those objections to the Amendment of the hon. Member.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that if the right hon. Gentleman stated that he did not make those observations, he had nothing more to say on the point. It seemed to him that every step they were taking in what he might call the high revolutionary policy of the Government, showed the difficulty, the delicacy, and the danger of the course which the Government invited and persuaded the House to pursue. The right hon. Gentleman himself now seemed to argue that because these enormous powers were to be conferred on the Speaker, therefore, of necessity, they must be conferred on the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House. But it appeared that the right hon. Gentleman was not satisfied with the Resolution as it stood, for he had told the House, in rather mysterious language, it was true, that further Regulations might have to be prepared regulating the appointment of a temporary Chairman——

Mr. GLADSTONE: I said nothing about a Resolution for the guidance of the temporary Chairman, but of a plan to be submitted to the House for the appointment of these temporary Chairmen.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Then, was that plan to be submitted as part of the present scheme, or in an ensuing Session of Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It has no connection with this scheme.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: If so, why had the right hon. Gentleman introduced the subject? Surely the right hon. Gentleman was not going to set the first example of Obstruction by introducing totally irrelevant matter? He (Lord John Manners) was giving the right hon. Gentleman credit for addressing himself to the arguments of the hon. Member for Portsmouth; but it seemed he was in error. It was difficult to argue with the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers from the Ministerial Benches.*] Yes; he (Lord John Manners) was not ashamed to confess that in ordinary circumstances he should feel great difficulty in contending in argument against the extraordinary ability and magnificent eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman; but that difficulty was increased on the present occasion by the right hon. Gentleman rising in his place and making depreciatory comments upon his own speech. The Prime Minister took exception to the fact that the hon. Member for Portsmouth, in the earlier part of his speech, made some reference to the position which the Speaker would in future occupy; and the right hon. Gentleman complained that that was not germane to the matter in hand. But his hon. Friend was merely illustrating his argument, and that was evidently the view of the Speaker, who, if the matter had been irrelevant, would have interposed. What the hon. Member for Portsmouth urged was that if these difficulties would be felt in the case of the Speaker, how much more would they be felt if those powers were granted to the Chairman, who was not so safeguarded as the superior officer. The right hon. Gentleman had adverted to the possibility of the inconveniences which would arise by the Speaker exercising his right of voting. On past occasions in the history of this country the Speaker had not been so safeguarded from political considerations as at present; and the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, in language that was rather suspicious, that the Speaker had not always abstained from taking part in political questions; and he instanced the case of the Speaker (Sir Charles Manners Sutton), a distinguished relative of his (Lord John Manners). But it was well known that in that case, notwithstanding the anxiety of the Government of the day to secure his valuable and experienced services in the Chair, they were obliged to forego them in consequence of his being suspected of taking part in political affairs.

MR. GLADSTONE: It was the Government who proposed him.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Then who rejected him?

MR. GLADSTONE: The House.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: But by whose guidance? The case was as historically well known as could be. There was no doubt that in those days the Speakers of the House did exercise a far greater political influence than had been the habit in more recent times. But were they to look forward to a recurrence of what the right hon. Gentleman would probably call those good old practices? For the right hon. Gentleman was vindicating the right of the Speaker to take part in political questions. He now came to the last part of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. He said that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth were carried, they would be in this absurd position—that, under the new system, if the Speaker were incapacitated by temporary illness, and his place were taken by the Chairman of Ways and Means as Deputy Speaker, the result would be that the very man who was unable to wield those gigantic powers as Chairman would be able to exercise them when elevated to the Speaker's Chair. But the right hon. Gentleman had missed the point of his hon. Friend's argument. His hon. Friend had carefully pointed out that the circumstances that surrounded the Speaker's Chair would separate the Chairman, sitting as Deputy Speaker, from the Rules that guided him as Chairman of Ways and Means. His hon. Friend's objection to the Resolution as it stood rested, not on the personal or accidental, but on the official and moral differences between the two positions, and that when the Chairman became Speaker of the House for the time he was more guarded and less liable to temptation than he was when occupying his own position as Chairman of Committees. There was another point. The right hon. Gentleman seemed most anxious that some of the important functions of the House should be relegated to Grand Committees, and that they should, practically, take the place of Committees of the Whole House.

MR. GLADSTONE: I said nothing on the subject.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he was willing to admit that was so; but he could come to no other conclusion than that the intention of the Government was as he had stated.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not sure that I gather the purport of the speech of the noble Lord. Does he mean to ask whether it is our intention that the Chairman of Ways and Means shall be, by virtue of his Office, Chairman of the Grand Committees?

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that was not his intention; but, as it had been suggested, he should be truly delighted to have an answer to it. His point was this—as he understood the scheme, its object was to confer on these Grand Committees all the functions of the Committee of the Whole House. If the Grand Committees were to take the place of Select Committees, *cadit quæstio*; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had any intention of that sort, but that it was his intention to vest in Grand Committees the powers of Committees of the Whole House. Were the Government prepared to confer on the Chairmen of these Grand Committees the same powers as would be conferred on the Chairman of Ways and Means? If so, it might happen that gigantic power might be conferred upon a person of whose impartiality and capacity the House could form no opinion. If the right hon. Gentleman said he had no such intention, and that the Chairmen of these Grand Committees were to have no higher power than that possessed by the Chairman of Ways and Means at the present moment, what became of the importance of the new system of Grand Committees as a means of expediting the Business of the House? Every one of the 60 Members of a Grand Committee would be left free to speak 40 times on every subject that was before them; and he failed to see in these circumstances where the alleviation of the labours of the House of Commons was to be found, or that any addition would be made to the convenience of the House or the dignity of its proceedings. On the whole, the arguments of the Prime Minister ought not to be allowed to prevail against the clear case which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had made out. Without saying a single word in derogation of the qualities of any Gentleman who had hitherto filled the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, or of its present occupant, and admitting that it was in the highest degree difficult and delicate to argue a question of this sort without seeming to over-sensitive minds to trench upon personal questions, he still hoped and believed the question might be thrashed out without giving needless offence to anyone; and he was quite convinced that the House would do wisely to accept the Amendment.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he was quite sure that the majority of the House would be opposed to the Amendment, because they were determined to find a remedy against Obstruction in Committee; and it was clear that the proposal of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, as well as the speech of the noble Lord, left them without any such remedy.

Mr. WARTON said, the last speaker forgot that part of the existing Procedure under which the Chairman reported to the Speaker the occurrence of Obstruction in Committee of the Whole House. Why should not the power to be conferred upon the Chairman of Committees be used only by reference to the Speaker? In such an arrangement a key to a friendly settlement of the question might, perhaps, be found. Whoever the Chairman of Committees might be, he would be a political partizan, often appointed because his seat was safe. It was bad enough to have these new powers conferred upon the Speaker; but it would be ten times worse to confer them on the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, it was not the fault of the supporters of the Amendment if the original Resolution did not provide a remedy for Obstruction in Committee. He did not believe that if the Rule were carried in its present form it would be an effective remedy, although it might give the Government power to close the mouths of the Opposition. The observations of the Mover of the Amendment were conclusive, and they were not met by anything that had been said by the Prime Minister; on the contrary, his remarks strengthened the speech of the hon. Member. The general result of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that the most necessary and most frequent use of this formidable power was to be intrusted to a person who, on his own showing, was a person of less authority than the Speaker. That being the case, the House would do very well not to accept the Resolution proposed by the Government. Two questions had been raised by his noble Friend (Lord John Manners) to which it was necessary that explicit and authoritative answers should be given. The position, up to that time, was incomplete, because they really did not know whether the power proposed to be intrusted to the Chairman of Ways and Means was also to be given to the Chairmen of the Grand Committees. The Prime Minister told them that the Government felt the difficulty connected with the temporary appointment of Gentlemen to the Office of Chairman, and that they had a plan which at some time they were prepared to divulge. It was absolutely necessary that the House should know what the plan was before deciding whether it was desirable that these powers should be intrusted to Chairmen of Committees. The proposals of the Government were incomplete until their intentions on these two points were made known; and although he would not move the adjournment of the debate in order to give the right hon. Gentleman the power of making a statement, he hoped some hon. Member would pursue that course in the event of no announcement being made.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not think that the demand made was a reasonable one, or that the argument of the noble Lord opposite was well founded. If the noble Lord had taken the trouble to read the terms of the Resolution, he would have found an answer to his question, because the Resolution was strictly limited to the Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House. It was impossible that any statement could be more definite, and yet two speeches had been founded on a contrary assumption. He ventured to say that was not the way to save the time of the House.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that he had argued it both ways.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT maintained that the noble Lord had said that the Resolution would give this power to the Chairmen of Grand Committees, and when the Prime Minister stated that it would do nothing of the kind, the noble Lord assumed an air of virtuous indignation, and said it was in the Paper. Now, it was not in the Paper, but the very reverse was there. The Government had said that they meant to give these powers only to the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House, and they meant what they had said. Then the noble Lord had said that the Standing Committees were to be invested with all the powers of Committees of the Whole House. That, also, he had evolved out of his inner consciousness. It would be time enough when they came to these Standing Committees to discuss what should be their powers and those of their Chairmen. It was a mere waste of time to import a discussion on these points into the present debate. Another red herring had been drawn across the scent in introducing the question of the appointment of occasional Chairmen in the absence of the regular Chairman of Ways and Means. That had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and the Prime Minister had said that if there were any objection to the system of appointing occasional Chairmen of Committees of Ways and Means, that question might properly require time for systematic consideration. But that was entirely a bye-point, and had nothing whatever to do with this part of the discussion. Of course, it was in the power of the House to determine that such and such persons only should be Chairmen of Committees of the Whole House, as the law was in a somewhat imperfect and vague condition as to the substitution of other Gentlemen for the regular Chairman. But hon. Members might as well say they would not discuss the present question until they had reviewed the collateral question of the position of Deputy Speakers. The question really was—"Do you mean to have the same power of controlling Obstruction in Committee as you have in the Whole House?" Everyone would see that that was the substance of the matter. Everybody would also see that if they dealt only with the House, and not with the Committee, they would have done nothing at all. When the House affirmed the *clôture* by the division which was taken in the earlier part of the Session, it intended to affirm the principle as much for Committee as for the House. That was perfectly notorious and clear, and it could not be got rid of by any side operations. The business of Obstruction had been carried on much more successfully in Committee than in the House, and the whole arena of the campaign of Obstruction would, if the hon. Member for Portsmouth succeeded in his Resolution, be transferred to Committee. As the most important Bills had necessarily a long life in Committee, it would be possible for those who desired to obstruct Business to carry on the science of Obstruction in Committee. Those who wished to stop this kind of thing would stop it in Committee, while those who liked this kind of thing would endeavour to prevent it being stopped in Committee.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he must congratulate the right hon. and learned Gentleman upon so strongly taking up the view he at present held, for there must have been some serious conversion in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's mind on this subject. They had not always heard such language from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The late Government when in Office brought forward certain Motions in order to check Obstruction; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman then interposed as many difficulties as he possibly could. In 1879 his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) proposed a very moderate and proper Resolution—namely, that the Government should have the power of going into Committee of Supply on Monday without any previous questions being raised. That was a very harmless proposition. Indeed, the Prime Minister proposed yesterday that the Rule should be applied to Thursdays as well. Who was the great opponent of that plan when it was proposed by the late Government? Why, the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who said—"You are attempting to check all due debates in the House of Commons;" and he told an amusing story of a friend of his who, after in vain attempting to dam up a Highland stream, which flooded his grounds, remarked—"There are only two things which I have not been able to conquer—namely, a Highland stream and a woman." And the right hon. and learned Gentleman went on to observe that there was one thing which you could not dam up, and that was the House of Commons. He now had to congratulate the right hon. and learned Gentleman on his sudden conversion. It was a common experience that perverts were very often more persistent in their new faith than those who were brought up in that faith, and he had no doubt that before these discussions closed the House would have some still stronger speeches from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The argument of his noble Friend (Lord John Manners) about Grand Committees was as clear as possible. If, his noble Friend contended, this Rule were to apply to the Chairmen of Grand Committees, hon. Members ought to know what a Grand Committee was to be and how it was to be appointed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman asserted that the Rules said nothing about the Chairmen of Grand Committees at present, and that it would be sufficient to discuss that question when they came to the subject of Standing Committees. He maintained, on the contrary, that they ought to have the information now. They ought to know whether there was any intention on the part of the Government to invest the Chairmen of these Standing Committees with anything like the authority which they now proposed to give to the Chairman of the Whole House. If this were the intention of the Government, this was the time when they ought to be told of it.

MR. GLADSTONE: The House has been told there is no such intention.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he would take one side of the argument first. He would take it now that it was not proposed that any powers of this kind were to be given to the Chairman of a Standing Committee. Then came the other form of his noble Friend's argument. His noble Friend said—"If you look at the composition of your Standing Committees you will find that you are giving them, in respect to the Bills referred to them, all the powers which Committees of the Whole House at present exercise."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT asked where this was stated in the Resolutions?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Why, it was proposed—

> "That all Bills comprised in each of the said classes shall be Committed to one of the said Standing Committees, unless the House shall otherwise order, and, when reported to the House, shall be proceeded with as if they had been reported from a Committee of the whole House."

His hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had pressed upon the Government a point upon which they were perfectly entitled to insist before going to a division. The Home Secretary had spoken of someone's having drawn a red herring across the path, which the Government would not follow. But if anyone had drawn a red herring across the path it had been the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had made this admission. He admitted that the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means was very different from that of the Speaker in the Chair—first, because the Chairman had not the same authority as the Speaker—not having been elected in the same way, and not possessing the confidence of the House to the same extent. Secondly, because the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means threw him and kept him in active political life to a much greater extent than the Speaker. Those were important admissions on the right hon. Gentleman's part; they were, no doubt, too obvious to be denied; but having been made, they made it absolutely necessary that the fullest and fairest discussion should take place before the House intrusted such large powers to the Chairman of Ways and Means. But the Prime Minister went on to say there could be no doubt of the wisdom of giving such powers, because they could be accompanied by an appeal to the Speaker. But the argument showed clearly that there was some doubt in the Prime Minister's mind as to the propriety of intrusting such large powers to a man who was in a position so totally different from that of the Speaker. But the right hon. Gentleman then went on to use an extraordinary argument. Granting that the Chairman did not possess the high authority of the Speaker—that he was more actively engaged than the Speaker in political life; that the method of his election rendered him more open to suspicion, the right hon. Gentleman said that the Chairman might still be intrusted with those large powers, because he would be all the more careful in exercising them, as the less the authority given to a man the more likely he was to decide wrongly. That was a strange kind of argument, for it amounted to this—the weaker the man and the less the authority, the more careful he would be, and therefore he might be intrusted with these great powers. Then his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire had raised another question. The Prime Minister had said that at some future time he would lay before the House some proposition in respect to the appointment of those Chairmen who would sit on days when the Chairman of Ways and Means could not be present. Now, he would like to know what that proposition was before voting on the question. The House knew the Speaker, and knew the Chairman of Ways and Means; but they knew nothing of the man who might take the place of the Chairman of Ways and Means on those occasions. They were entitled to know how such a Chairman was to be elected, and what were the guarantees that he might be safely charged with these important functions before going to the vote. It would be well for the Government to know at that early moment that hon. Members at least on the Opposition side were quite determined to have that information before they could vote on the proposition to give such enormous powers to an unknown Member of that House.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had been glad to listen to the remarks of his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) who had just sat down, because he had clearly shown that whatever the Government might think, or whatever they might say, the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench were determined to know the exact nature of the Rules that were to be placed before the House for the guidance of the Chairman of a Grand Committee before going to a division. It was idle for the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary to say that a red herring had been drawn across the path of the House. If a red herring had been drawn across their path, it was the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself and the Prime Minister who had performed that piece of strategy, because the Home Secretary had got up and repeated what had been said by the Prime Minister—namely, that some Rules were absolutely necessary to be drawn up for regulating the action of those who were to take the Chair on certain occasions, when the proposed Grand Committees were to discharge the functions that would be imposed upon them under the New Rules, so that the House should have some guarantee that those Gentlemen were fit and proper persons to occupy such a position. This was, in his opinion, one reason why the House ought not to allow this question to be passed without obtaining some definite proposal on the subject; but the main question for the House to consider was this — and he would admit to hon. Gentlemen opposite that it was an unpleasant one to deal with, because in all such matters personal considerations were sure to be brought more or less to the front. He would at once say that while entertaining the highest respect for the right hon. Gentleman who occupied the position of Speaker, yet when it came to the question of the appointment of Chairman of Ways and Means there was hardly a Member of the House—and it certainly was heard with great frequency from the Liberal side—who when outside that House was not in the habit of making remarks on the way in which the Business of the Committees of the House was conducted by the different occupants of the Chairman's seat, the comments not being made as between them and the Speaker, but as between the Gentlemen who happened to fulfil the functions of Chairmen of Ways and Means. If they were about to put into the hands of a man who was selected as the Chairman of Ways and Means the powers proposed to be conferred on the Speaker, they must remember that the mode in which the selection was commonly made was most faulty. The House at present had only a nominal voice in the selection of the Chairman; but if it was intended to arm him with all the authority of the Speaker, the House ought to exercise as much control over his appointment as it did in the case of the Speaker. How, he asked, was the selection generally made? The Prime Minister rose and intimated that Mr. So-and-so would take the Chair, and this being seconded by another occupant of the Treasury Bench, the Chairman was in the Chair before a remark could be made by anyone else. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister shook his head; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) appealed to the House to say whether this was not what it saw over and over again? Without going further into the question, he would appeal to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary whether the selections of the Prime Minister had always been the best that could be for the interests and dignity of the House? He was sorry to be obliged to go into questions of this kind; but they were questions the House was obliged to meet, and he ventured to say that there was not in that House a more important position, next to that of the Speaker, than that of Chairman of Ways and Means. Yet, as things were, the Office was given to a supporter of the Government for whom it was necessary to provide, and who was not thought quite good enough for the Cabinet ["No, no!"] If hon. Gentlemen opposite were satisfied that this was not the fact, let them get up and say so. But the truth was that everyone in that House knew what had happened in regard to these appointments, and what had been the consequences. This being so, he wished to ask the House whether it was not constantly the case that in Committee on important questions, when hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House rose to express their views, they were howled down by the large numbers of Gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial side? When, however, men below the Gangway, who would brook no control, or who cared nothing for the Regulations of the House, and were determined to have their say, got up and insisted on being heard, in that case the large majority of the House bowed to those men, simply because they exhibited their full intention to assert their will and independence, and allowed them to proceed without saying one word against them. He would put it to the Conservative Party, whether it was not the fact that when the Party opposite had the power, they did howl down Conservative speakers and prevent questions in which they were interested being properly discussed? He would give the House an instance of this. On the first day of the discussion of the Arrears Bill it would be remembered that when the discussion had got into a state in which it was not quite so quick and lively as it might have been, the Prime Minister got up and said he was quite certain there had been sufficient discussion, and he was surprised that any adjournment could be required in regard to such a Bill as that, which, however, in his (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) opinion, was one of the most important Bills that had ever been introduced into that House. Well, if a Bill of such a character was to be treated in such a way, how was the Opposition likely to be treated when the House had before it a measure for County Government, or the Bill for lowering the County Franchise, in which the Conservative Party was especially interested? Why, they would not be allowed to say what they wished to say. When the Government needed the support of the Conservative Party that support was ungrudgingly given. When, therefore, those great changes were being brought forward there ought to be ample opportunity of free speech and discussion, and the absence of such opportunities was a state of things which that House ought not to tolerate. Under these circumstances, and because he objected to be placed in such a position, he should give his vote in favour of the Amendment moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff).

MR. DODSON said, that the demonstrations which attended some of the sentences of the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down showed, at all events, that if, unfortunately, the carrying on of the debates in the House should ever be reduced to a question of howling down, the exercise of that power would not be confined to the Ministerial side of the House, but that there was a corresponding power on the Opposition side of the House. The hon. and gallant Member had spoken of the manner in which the Chairman of Committees was selected, as if he was simply nominated by the Prime Minister; but the Chairman of Ways and Means was just as much an elected Officer of the House as the Speaker. The election of a Chairman of Ways and Means might be contested absolutely and entirely in the same way as the election of a Speaker; and, like the Speaker, he was elected for the duration of a Parliament. No doubt, his election had not been usually contested. In very rare instances had the proposal of the Ministry been disputed; but it was not less the fact that it was open to the House to challenge the nomination, and to decide the question by vote. The late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had made an extraordinary speech; for it consisted of telling a story which was not his story, and addressing himself to a Resolution which was not before the House. He had insisted upon knowing what were to be the powers of the Chairmen of Grand Committees, or Standing Committees, as the Government called them. Answer had been given that they did not propose to invest the Chairmen of Standing Committees with this power of closure, which they were now proposing to give, by this Resolution, to the Chairman of the Whole House. The noble Lord (Lord John Manners) and the late Home Secretary had then said how very illogical it would be if this power were not given to them. If the noble Lord thought the Chairmen of these Standing Committees should be invested with the same powers as the Chairman of the Whole House, it would be open to him to propose this, and the House would, no doubt, consider it. It was necessary that the Chairman of Ways and Means should be clothed with the same powers as the Speaker on this subject. That was an opinion deliberately formed by the Government, and to it they adhered. The Prime Minister had pointed out that the House might feel some hesitation as regarded the intrusting these powers to a casual Chairman of Committee of the Whole House, and that the manner in which a temporary Chairman took the Chair was not on the same footing as that of the regular Chairman. His right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had got an Amendment which would exclude from the exercise of those powers the temporary Chairman of Committee of the Whole House. On the other hand, it was absolutely necessary to provide for relief for the Chairman of Ways and Means; and if the Chairman of Ways and Means was, through fatigue or illness, obliged to leave the Chair to some other person, the Committee ought not then to be exposed to risks of evils of Obstruction, from which it would be preserved if the regular Chairman were in his place. The Government, however, felt the difficulty and the force of the argument as regarded the exercise of these powers by a temporary Chairman; and his right hon. Friend had stated, not with reference to this Resolution only, but with reference to the general question of temporarily filling the Chair, that it was desirable that the House should arrive at some arrangement as regarded the mode of appointment of the persons who might temporarily fill the Chair. When the House proceeded to the consideration of the next Amendment—that of the right hon. Member for Preston—the Government would be prepared to make a proposal in regard to these Chairmen which they ventured to hope would meet with the approval of the House.

MR. E. STANHOPE remarked, that the further this discussion proceeded the more it became obvious that the House had not before it adequate materials even for judging of what had taken place with regard to the previous Amendment. As far as he understood the matter, nothing could have been more clear than the action which the Government had formerly intended to take with regard to the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means in reference to the *clôture.* As far as he had understood the language of the Prime Minister some months ago, nothing could be more certain than that the Government were then willing to accept, without any qualification, the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), limiting the powers under the *clôture* in Committee to the Chairman of Ways and Means.

Mr. GLADSTONE observed, that although, as far as his recollection went, he did not remember that his language had gone quite as far as the hon. Gentleman believed that it did, still, if the matter were within the recollection of the hon. Gentleman, the undertaking given should be fulfilled.

Mr. E. STANHOPE felt satisfied that if the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiries on the point he would find that his statement as to the nature of the undertaking given on the part of the Government was accurate. But, if so, it entirely disposed of the speech of the President of the Local Government Board. Before Members of the House could consent to abandon any of the safeguards that now existed for free discussion they must be satisfied that the right of free debate would not be unduly restricted, and that they would obtain some concession on the point on the part of the Government. Nothing was more remarkable in the progress of these debates than the change which had taken place in the view of the Government with regard to the 1st Resolution. When the subject had been first introduced the Government had stated that they did not rely upon this Rule specially to put down Obstruction, because they had other Rules in their quiver which would be still more useful in getting rid of Obstruction. They had got beyond that now, and the *clôture* appeared to be regarded, both by their supporters in the country and by the Government, as a means of putting down Obstruction. He believed that he would be able to show that this cumbrous procedure was utterly unsuited to Committees of the Whole House, especially when Supply was being taken; and the Government themselves seemed to share that view, because they did not propose to give the power it conferred to the Chairmen of the Grand Committees. Yet to these bodies the Prime Minister proposed to delegate the functions of the House, and Obstruction was as likely to occur in the one place as in the other. Again, the Government thought it right that in this matter the powers of the Speaker and of the Chairman of Committees should be similar. He should like to know why? They were not similar at present. There were occasions, as they all knew, on which the Chairman did not act on his own responsibility, but reported the matter to the House in order that the Speaker might take action. But, it was urged, the Chairman of Committees was Deputy Speaker, and as such could exercise the ordinary duties of the Chair, and ought, therefore, to have similar powers. Again he asked, why? He could only say that upon the present proposal he looked with very great alarm, as being one calculated to degrade the Office of Chairman of Committees. The general tendency of the House in later years had been to remove the Speaker as far as possible from active political life; but it was otherwise with the Chairman of Committees. The latter was engaged in active political life, and looked to the Leader of the Party with which he was connected for advancement. There were, therefore, special temptations for him to fall in with the views of his Party. The certain effect of the Rule now proposed would be to make the Chairman abandon his impartiality and take a partizan position. They had been told that the object of this Rule was to enable the Government to pass certain measures upon which the majority of the House was determined. Supposing that majority thought that those Bills were not advancing rapidly enough, the Chairman of Ways and Means would be subject to influences which he did not now experience, both from the Government and from the constituencies outside; and if these influences were not sufficient they had that unfailing means for bringing recalcitrant Liberal Members to a sense of their duty—a little friendly advice from the Home Secretary. He ventured to think that, in these circumstances, the position of the Chairman of Committees would become absolutely intolerable, and that the Resolution now proposed, unless surrounded by safeguards not yet suggested, would be disastrous to the honour and dignity of the House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The position of Chairman is the same as that of Speaker except in certain cases, when there is a power of appeal.

Mr. E. STANHOPE observed, that any power of appeal clearly expressed would, to some extent, qualify the Resolution. If, however, the Resolution was to be submitted to the judgment of the House in its present form—that was to say, in a form giving the Chairman the same powers as the Speaker—he would offer it his most strenuous opposition.

Mr. HICKS asked the indulgence of the House for a short time, whilst he endeavoured to show why the Amendment now before it should be accepted. He was fully sensible of the danger they were in of unwittingly saying something that would be offensive to the Chairman of Ways and Means; and, therefore, at the outset, he wished to say that he was desirous of doing justice alike to the good intentions of the present and the past holder of the Office. It was the Prime Minister who had forced this discussion on them. Many of them, he had no doubt, would have been pleased if the Amendment had been accepted, or some promise given that the Rule would be modified; but, as nothing of the kind had been done, it was incumbent on independent Members to stand forward in defence of the rights and privileges of the Members of the House, and by defending the right of free discussion to maintain the liberty of the people of England. He contended that the Rule was not properly applicable to Committee of Supply at all, and that, if it were, the manner of its application was faulty. The great evil in Committee generally was not too much delay, but too much haste—measures being occasionally passed with defects which at the time escaped notice. As an example of this, he would refer to the Parliamentary and Municipal Voters Act. That Act would never have passed if the House had known its real character; but it was left to Revising Barristers to discover what really the Act had done. Again, by 13 & 14 *Vict.*, c. 99, owners of small tenements were made responsible for poor and highway rates. This was repealed by 38 & 39 *Vict.*, c. 66. At the same time it was re-enacted as far as regarded poor rates; but the question of highway rates escaped the notice of the draftsman and the Committee. The attention of the Committee was not drawn to this by those in charge of the Bill, great inconvenience arose, and the time of Parliament had to be taken up in passing another amending Act. Then the Bill of the late hon. and learned Member for Cambridge (Mr. Marten) amending the Public Health Act would not have been allowed to pass so easily had its real object been understood; and in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill of last Session was a clause taking away from taxpayers a protection they had long enjoyed, which had to be fought obstinately in Committee before the Prime Minister consented to amend it. Passing to another point, he would ask whether the Chairman of a Committee of Ways and Means was an officer who ought to be intrusted with tyrannical powers in all the discussions which might take place while he occupied the Chair? They had heard a good deal in praise of those Gentlemen who had occupied the position filled by the Speaker—Minister after Minister had spoken in terms of eulogy of the manner in which those duties had been fulfilled—but the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means had not even been "damned with faint praise," for his conduct had been passed by in total silence. The President of the Local Government said — "The very object of raising the Speaker to the Chair was to insure his impartiality, and to remove him above all Party feeling." Now, the right hon. Gentleman had been himself Chairman of Ways and Means; but he said not one word in defence of that officer. Then the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) spoke very strongly on the subject of the Speaker's position, holding that the acceptance of such an Office was equivalent to a pledge that he would be impartial. He did not say that those arguments applied to the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means; indeed, they were arguments against intrusting the same powers to an officer who was not placed in the same impartial position. Moreover, it was an Office which Members of the highest position and greatest experience were not desirous to accept. Not only was this so at present, but year after year the difficulty of finding Gentlemen of sufficient standing and experience increased, and the tendency of constituencies to change their Representatives was becoming more and more marked, and increased the difficulty. During the last few years, moreover, they had placed new powers in the hands of the Chairman, and he would ask the House whether they had been exercised on all occasions to their satisfaction? He would give the Chairman credit for entire impartiality; but had he not made mistakes? There was the case of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver), which was submitted to the Speaker, and it could not be said that the House on that occasion was quite satisfied with the judgment of the Chairman. Then, secondly, there was the case of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), who was suspended for a second time, after which it was found that the suspension was not in accordance with the Rules of the House, though, had he been suspended once more subsequently, he would have been precluded from addressing the House for the rest of the Session. The House, however, was not sufficiently generous to strike the record out of the Proceedings of the House, although it disapproved of the decision of the Chairman. A third case was that of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), who was stopped while addressing the House upon the Irish Estimates, although it was afterwards found that the line of argument he was pursuing was perfectly right. Now, if a Gentleman of the ability and talent of the present Chairman made these mistakes, how much more might they dread the repetition of mistakes when they got less experienced officers, and temporary Chairmen, who might be selected from a House largely consisting of new Members, many of whom were returned at the dictation of a Caucus? ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite were impatient when an independent Member spoke, as he had noticed over and over again—["Oh, oh!"]—but would they deny that a large number of them had been returned at the dictation of a Caucus? Aye, or that their speeches and votes were dictated by the Caucus? Already attempts had been made to interfere with discussion. Independent Members had been met with cries of "Name him!" and at the end of last Session, upon the third reading of the Irish Land Bill, cries of "Obstruction!" were raised before that great and important measure had been three hours under discussion. Surely that was not an unreasonable time to give to the discussion of the measure. So far from the discussions which took place in the House of Commons being too long, in many instances they were too short; and what was to prevent a Minister, who had his Friends in reserve, coming down at any moment he pleased and putting an end to the discussion altogether by applying the majority Rule? The effect of this Rule would be to do away with the old Constitutional safeguard, that redress of grievance should precede the Vote of Supply; and, therefore, the Members of the House, whose interests it affected, were justified in asking for a short time to consider the question in all its bearings. He would, therefore, support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to explain more fully what I said across the Table to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) in consequence of his appeal to me. He stated that I had agreed before the adjournment to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes). I said my recollection did not go to that extent; but that if it was perfectly clear that I made that promise it should be fulfilled. We shall be prepared to fulfil the pledge to accept that Amendment, and to propose a plan under which no Member, without the authority of the House, should take the Chair, reserving to ourselves to consider, when we propose that plan, whether we should ask that a Member so appointed should be invested with the same powers as the Chairman of Ways and Means, or not. That, however, is not the main question now before us, and it will have to be held over and dealt with separately.

Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he hoped the House, before coming to a division, would bear in mind what the real nature of the question was. So far as it went, he regarded the proposal of the Prime Minister as a very important and very necessary check, for a large majority of the Members of the House were determined that the abuses to which they had been subjected should be put down. There were other means of putting this power into force without using the authority of the Chair. It might be exercised by a Minister of the Crown, or by a private Member, or by a certain number of Members rising in their places to put it in operation; but, rely upon it, however it was to be employed, there was an earnest desire to suppress the nuisance of which they had to complain. In his opinion, the intervention of the Speaker was the best mode of putting an end to this; but he confessed there was something to be said as to the difference between the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means. The danger in giving this power to the Chair was not in the Chair, but in what lay behind in the power of the House to put an end to a debate by a bare majority. He thanked the Government for putting this question fairly before the House; and the only doubt he had was whether they had not gone beyond the necessity of the case in providing that a bare majority should be able to stop a debate. That question would come on for consideration after this Amendment had been disposed of. The question now, he thought, was, whether it was injurious to the position of the Speaker or the Chairman to have to stand up in their places and give power to the House to put the Rule in force. He should like to have some further check than that. As it now stood, the responsibility which rested with the Chair was to determine whether a bare majority was in favour of putting an end to a debate or not. He did not consider that sufficient. The Prime Minister had indicated that a debate would only be terminated by a preponderating majority. If that were so, let them come to some understanding upon that point. Even with the intervention of the Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means, if the question were only to be decided by a large and preponderating majority, then that was a power which might be put in force by any individual Member of the House. He did not see why they should not come to a vote on the issue now before the House, and then decide the more important question.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE remarked that the speech which had last been delivered was most valuable because it appealed to the reason and not to the emotions of the House. The question before them was one which went to the very root of Parliamentary Procedure. Parliament as it was, not in its formal Constitutional aspect, but as the working, living thing which they knew, was the growth of a long tradition. All long traditions must be anomalous, theoretically inconsistent, and, it might be, grotesque; but wise men accepted those anomalies and inconsistencies for the sake of the value of a thing which had not been dictated, but had grown into life and vigour. The Prime Minister now proposed, instead of that tradition, a code; and could there be any more inconvenient way of dealing with such a proceeding than by submitting it in little bits and snips? The Notice Paper, with its figures down the side of the 1st Resolution, resembled a spelling-book for infants of four or five years old. When his noble Friend the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) asked a very reasonable question, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, clothed in official ignorance, most admirably misunderstood the point raised by his noble Friend. His noble Friend had asked a question about the Standing Committees, and that subject was pooh-poohed as if it were an attempt to draw a red herring across their track; but if they looked at the Resolutions they would see the relevancy of the question to the matter under consideration. Let them refer to the last of the Prime Minister's Resolutions. The postscript of the series was like a lady's letter — it was the be-all and end-all of the thing. It was that the discussion of a Bill in one of the proposed Standing Committees should be tantamount to its discussion in Committee of the Whole House. And what were the Bills which were to be submitted to those Standing Committees? Were they the small waifs and strays of the Session—the philanthropic projects which might tend to effect some social improvement? Nothing of the kind. No doubt, many of the Bills which came before the House might be dealt with in a more expeditious way than they were now; but, according to the proposals of the Government, the Bills which were most important, difficult, and delicate were those which were to be referred to Standing Committees. They would include measures for the amendment of the law and measures relating to trade and commerce. They would be referred to Committees composed respectively of Gentlemen of the long robe, and of Gentlemen of that branch of the Legal Profession who had no robe at all, or else to hard-headed men from Manchester; and these, by way of helping on Business, were still to be allowed to speak as often as they pleased in Committee on the questions which were their crazes. Ten barristers might speak 30 times each, and five solicitors 97 times. The great and important Bill for the codification of the Criminal Law would, he supposed, go to a Standing Committee, so would the French Commercial Treaty; and if Business was to be expedited by leaving these to the old machinery, the hypocrisy of the new project stood confessed. The object of these new-fangled inventions, so the House was told, was to expedite Business. The idea of their inventors was, he might venture to guess that experience showed, that the comparatively free and easy procedure of the Committees, such as they knew them, had the effect of helping Business on; but these sagacious Gentlemen forgot that in old-fashioned Committees Members spoke sitting, as they could hardly do in Standing Committees—and that was a main secret of their efficiency and convenience. Could it be supposed that the same methods of doing Business would be followed by large Standing Committees of 60 or 80 Members? Would not they rather look to the etiquettes of Committees of the Whole House? That being the case, as he felt assured it was, the whole 1st Resolution stood convicted in face of the Grand Committees of political unreality, and the Grand Committees themselves of being instruments of Obstruction; and unless the Prime Minister, or the Home Secretary, or the President of the Local Government Board, or even the Junior Lord of the Treasury, could give satisfactory assurances as to the intended handling of an innovation so full of dark, but important consequences, the House would be justified, if not in rejecting the Resolution, at any rate in deferring it to a more convenient opportunity. One word more. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) had seemed pleased with himself when he discovered that if the Chairman of Committees were left out of the Resolution there would be no means of overcoming Obstruction; but the hon. Member had failed to perceive that there were other ways of putting down Obstruction, embodied in a later Resolution, which would injure neither Party. He would do him the justice of supposing he had never read the Resolutions; and he felt sure the Home Secretary would agree with him that voting without reading was the duty of a good Party follower. The British Parliament was, he believed, the only Parliament that had a standing Chairman of Committees; while in other Assemblies the President continued to rule the deliberations of that which corresponded to Committees of the Whole House. Let them take care that they did not lead people to ask what was the use of a Chairman of Committees. In his opinion, the existing arrangement worked well; but the institution, though practically a good one, ought not to be strained beyond its strength. But, finally, it could not be contended, even if it were undesirable to intrust the powers in question to the Chairman of Committees, that that officer, when acting as the Speaker's Deputy, ought not to possess the attributes of the Office of which he was the actual, though provisional occupant.

Mr. WALTER said, he could not pretend to rival the diffusive eloquence of his right hon. Friend (Mr. B. Hope); but he would briefly state the difficulties which seemed to him to surround the Amendment, and compelled him to abstain from voting upon it. To be plain, he held that it was like putting the cart before the horse to decide in whose hands certain powers should be placed, and by what persons they should be exercised, before the House had clearly determined the nature of those powers and their proper limits. If the Resolution left the House, as he hoped it would, amended in the terms proposed by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), the effect of which would be that both to the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees would be accorded the powers they both required, then both those officials would rightly be intrusted with the exercise of them. If, on the other hand, the Resolution left the House in its present form, which he deemed to be one of the most objectionable—because undoubtedly it did clearly and distinctly lay down the doctrine that in a House of more than 400 Members a debate might be stopped at the will and pleasure of a bare majority—he had rather see the odium of exercising the power thrown upon the Minister of the day than upon two official personages, who were both supposed to be the very *beau ideal* of impartiality and fairness. For this reason, until he knew what the powers in question were to be, it was impossible for him to say in whose hands they might most properly be placed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR remarked that only three speeches had been made that afternoon by non-official Members of the Liberal Party, and two of them had been decidedly hostile to the Rule in its present shape. He did not know whether that gave them fair reason to infer that the Government stood on very uncertain ground in this matter; but he rather thought he might take it as an indication that in their hearts the majority of the House disliked the proposal quite as much as they disliked the whole substance of the 1st Resolution. In the characteristic speech of the Home Secretary he seemed to accuse those who wished to cut out the Chairman of Committees from the operation of this Rule of being anxious to promote Obstruction when the House was in Committee; but he assured the right hon. and learned Gentleman that they who sat on the Opposition side of the House were quite as anxious to put a stop to Obstruction as any Party could be; but they desired to stop it in a different manner, and believed it would be better stopped by individual rather than by general *clôture*, and in that way the Business would be better carried on. When they were, at the early part of the Session, discussing the general principle of the *clôture*, the chief argument against it was that it would injure the prestige of the Speaker, and that, in the long run, it would succumb to Party influences; but, if so, how much stronger would that apply to the Chairman of Committees? The Speaker's position was one of ancient and admitted weight and authority; and although the Prime Minister had pointed out that some Speakers had become Prime Ministers, yet he had to go back for an instance to Mr. Addington, 80 years ago. In modern times it had been agreed by all Parties in that House to take the Speaker out of the political atmosphere and raise him to the position of a functionary who was quite above it and a person possessed of more than ordinary qualifications. Such, however, had never yet been the position of the Chairman of Committees, who was almost always a Member of the Government before his appointment as Chairman of Committees, and who, when he resigned that Office, usually rejoined the Ministry. The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had said that the appointment of the Chairman of Committees rested with the House itself. Technically, that was so; but he would appeal to the House whether the Chairman of Committees was not a mere nominee of the Prime Minister? When a Prime Minister came into Office and considered how he would dispose of his patronage, did he not put down among the places he had to give away the Chairmanship of Committees? Was it not clear that a Chairman of Committees was dependent on the favour of his Party, while the Speaker was not dependent on the favour of any Party? If, therefore, it ever should be the fortune of this country that a Prime Minister should use the Chairman of Committees as a lever to forward his own objects, the results might be disastrous. They were always told that the Government would lose very much in the opinion of the country by an improper use of this power, and that no Government would make an improper use of it. That safeguard was of the most flimsy description. If it were at the suggestion of the Government that the Chairman of Committees misused his power it would be their bounden duty to support him, not only in the House, but in the country. And the supporters of the Government would do the same. It would be a part of their brief to go about the country and say that what was called an abuse of power was only its legitimate exercise. And that would be done, not before a tribunal really acquainted with what had gone on within the walls of Parliament, but before people who gathered all their information from newspaper reports, which, however accurate, could never give the spirit of what had been done. How was it possible under a system of that kind that the people of this country should act as an impartial tribunal by which the use of this power was finally to be judged? The House ought not to come to a decision on this subject until they knew what the Government were about to do respecting those Grand Committees. Three Members of the Government had spoken since the question was asked from the Opposition Benches, and yet no answer was given to it. [Sir William Harcourt: Nine times.] Well, he had listened with particular attention to the speech of the Home Secretary, and the only conclusion he could come to was that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not taken the trouble to understand even the elements of the question. And with regard to the other eight answers, there had not been found eight speakers to support the Government Resolution. Therefore, unless one of the speakers on the Treasury Bench had repeated himself several times, or unless his arithmetic was at fault, the right hon. and learned Gentleman was greatly in error as to the number. He trusted the House would not consent to carry out a provision which must strike deep at the dignity of Parliament, without, at all events, knowing the full scope of the proposal which the Government laid before them.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, that the speech of the Prime Minister afforded some of the strongest reasons for supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth. The House had been told that they might trust those whom the President of the Local Government Board had, with his usual felicity of expression, called "casual" Chairmen. The position of the matter now stood thus. It was said that the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) would be accepted; that the Resolution would include the Chairman of Ways and Means only; and that, at some future time, a scheme would be brought before the House, and, if it were accepted, Her Majesty's Government would ask that the same powers should be given to those Chairmen as to the Chairman of Committees. The Prime Minister, in answer to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, had, with singular ingenuity, repeated the same thing in three different forms. First, he said that it would be invidious to deprive a Chairman of Committees of the power given to the Speaker; next, that to take this power from the Chairman of Committees, while giving it to the Speaker, would be to depart from the established rule that he should be equal to the Speaker in authority; and, thirdly, he said that the effect would be to disable the Chairman of Committees from exercising a particular power. Now, he ventured to say that this phrase did not represent the state of the question before the House. This was not a disabling, but an enabling proposition; because it proposed, for the attainment of certain objects, to give special and most remarkable powers to the Chairman of Committees. Surely the House might well pause before delegating those powers to an Officer whose status was very inferior to that which the Speaker enjoyed, and with regard to whose decisions a great many Members of the House would have a well-founded distrust. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke), and the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), as to the difficulty of dealing with the question now. If the House had decided that there should be a two-thirds' majority, it would not much matter who had the power to put the Rule in force. Although the hon. Member for Berkshire looked forward to the Resolution being modified before it left the House, they on the Opposition side had to deal with it as it came before them. It was admitted that the Chairman of Committees must be a political partizan, and, though selected with the approval of the House, he must necessarily be the representative and instrument of the Prime Minister. [Mr. Dodson dissented.] He was sorry that a right hon. Gentleman who had himself filled that post should have dissented. But experience ought to have shown that the Chairman of Committees could not carry on the Business of the House unless he was in intimate relations with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister admitted the inferior position of the Chairman of Committees, and urged that by reason of his lesser authority he would be careful not to strain a despotic power. But in practice there would be no such safeguard, because a Government Whip would convey to him the information that a majority of the House was not only ready, but anxious to close a debate; and the only place where the decision could be challenged would be, as the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) suggested, in the constituencies. And although there might be great respect in the House for the Chairman of Committees on account of his long services and personal character, that would not be felt outside the House. The country had great respect for the Office of Speaker, because for 80 years it had been dissociated from Party. But the country knew little or nothing of the Chairman of Committees; and, consequently, the country did not invest him with any authority. If the House were forced to vote upon the Amendment, he hoped that it would refuse to give to the Chairman of Committees the power of closing a debate with the aid of a bare majority, and would therefore strike out his name from the Resolution.

MR. RAIKES said, that it was with great reluctance he found himself compelled to make a few observations in reply to speeches delivered on his own side of the House. Had not the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) already exhausted his right of speech, he should have left it to him to vindicate the honour of the Office which he had so worthily filled. He thought it would mislead the country, and be injurious to the reputation of the House, if the hypothesis of the political relations between the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Government of the day, which had been so frequently asserted, went out without a contradiction from those who had held the Office. It would be impossible, he thought, for any Member of that House, with perfect self-respect, hereafter to accept that Office, if it were to be supposed that he was merely the creature of the Minister of the day, and that he occupied towards him a position which he did not with regard to any other Member of the House. During the period he filled the Office it was his duty — and he hoped he succeeded in performing it —to cultivate with Gentlemen who sat on the left side of the House precisely those confidential and friendly relations that subsisted between him and the occupants of the Treasury Bench; and he thought no one who had seen how Business was conducted in the House could fail to understand that it would be impossible for any Chairman to conduct the Business of the House if he were so far to forget himself as to be merely in friendly and confidential relations with one side of the House. He did not wish to enter into the larger question of intrusting a power which they might see devolving on the Speaker to the Chairman of Committees; but he wished to point out that, as far as he could understand this Rule in connection with the other Standing Orders of the House, and the Act relating to the Deputy Speaker, supposing the Rule passed in its present form, with the omission of the Chairman of Ways and Means, it would then be competent for that Gentleman in the absence of the Speaker, filling the Chair as Deputy Speaker, to exercise a power which could be denied to him in the performance of his ordinary duties. He did not intend to take any part in the division upon this question. He could fully understand the unwillingness of many Members to extend in any way the exercise of a power which they regarded with great distrust, even in the most modified form; and he hoped nothing he had said would in any way prevent any Member giving effect to the conviction he might entertain as to the propriety of conferring this power. At the same time, he hoped that those who were in future called to the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means might continue to enjoy that confidence which in former days the House had, in the most unstinted manner, bestowed upon them.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he thought it behoved them to be careful lest future Chairmen of Ways and Means should become entangled in all sorts of political arrangements. They ought also to remember that impartiality might not always be the chief characteristic of the occupant of the Chair. He was disturbed by some words that had fallen from the Prime Minister. Those words caused him to fear that the new powers would be placed by the Government, in the absence of successful opposition, even in the hands of Chairmen of Grand Committees. It was said that the House was such a bad one that New Rules were necessary; and it was argued that the House, when in Committee of Ways and Means, was even worse than at other times. Surely such arguments were a little unjust. He had always thought that the House was the purest, most honest, and most talented House that had ever been brought together. The presence of discarded Cabinet Ministers on nearly every Bench on the Ministerial side of the House showed that the House was one boasting extreme purity. It was very hard that the Prime Minister, who usually sat between two right hon. Gentlemen (Sir William

Harcourt and Mr. Dodson), whose malpractices had led to their temporary absence from the House not so very long ago, should revile the House as he had done. They should pause before giving the Chairman of Committees greater discretionary powers than he possessed at present. Whatever a Chairman might do, the Government, of course, would be bound to support him. The position of the Speaker was essentially different from that of the position of Chairman of Committees; and the willingness of the House to allow this great power to be in the hands of the Speaker was no reason why they should allow it to be in the hands of the Chairman of Committees. They all knew that as long as the Judges were removable at the pleasure of the Crown there was no security that the law would be purely administered. The only security for that was obtained by giving independence to the Judges. The same might be said of the Office of Chairman of Committees. The Speaker was the first Gentleman in England, and he looked for no promotion, or ought to look for no promotion or honours from the Ministry. The Chairman of Committees stood on a much lower level than the Speaker. He remained to fight political battles long after he had left his Chair.

Mr. PELL said, he thought the position which the Government appeared to have taken at the commencement had already been shaken. Propositions had been laid before them by the Prime Minister which required time for consideration. An hon. Member (Mr. Walter) had said, with great truth, that the Government on this occasion had put the cart before the horse. Hon. Members would have considerable difficulty in voting on this subject until they knew more about the proposals of the Government with reference to the Chairmen of Grand Committees. The Speakers of that House had obtained their position almost invariably by the service of a long apprenticeship. By a long continuance in the House, and by having frequently accepted Offices which required great skill and dexterity, they had acquired a position in the House which had enabled Members, irrespective of their politics, to perceive that they were best fitted for the Chair. But the apprenticeship of Chairmen of Committees had been very short indeed, and naturally Members would not attach to their decisions the importance which they attached to the decisions of the Speaker. The Government had not explained what their proposals were with reference to the Chairmen of Grand Committees. If Grand Committees were appointed to save the time, the valuable time, of the House, it was necessary that the powers of that functionary should be like those conferred on the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House. He remembered that the hat of a gentleman who visited the Zoological Gardens fell into the pit; the gentleman incautiously descended into the pit, where he was embraced with great fervour by a bear. He was saved with great difficulty, and when he came out of the pit he said—"I did not know the nature of the animal I should have to encounter." Neither did he (Mr. Pell) know the powers or dangers that would attend the Chairmen of Grand Committees. He should support the Amendment.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) has received the very rare compliment of being cheered twice by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Benches; but I am sorry that, after having had the courage to speak upon this occasion upon the duties of the Chairman of Committees, he has had the modesty to run away the moment he made his speech. Had he remained, I should have liked to have asked him one or two questions with respect to the nature of the communications he made. He stated that during the whole of the time he filled the Office of Chairman of Committees he was on the most intimate relations with the opposite Parties. Now, I should have thought that that was not at all a part of the functions of a Chairman of Committees; and I am sorry he is not present, because if he had been I should have told him that I had long suspected him. What we want to know is where we are. I have listened with a great deal of attention to the different speeches that have been made, but I have received no information. It is extraordinary; but it seems absolutely impossible for any Member of the House to say where the Government are leading us: and after listening for some hours I am constrained to say that the Government do not know their own minds, and, what is more, they do not care a pin about it. Positively, for a long time the Government Bench was left in the hands of the President of the Local Government Board; and although the state of the House is such that it was necessary to violate the Constitution to consider this question, yet the first day it comes on for discussion the Treasury Bench is left for a considerable time in the sole possession of one Member of the Government, and that Member the President of the Local Government Board. It is quite inexcusable that the Government should propose to deal with questions by means of Grand Committees. The Prime Minister has stated that if there was one question more important than another it was that of Grand Committees. Now, I want to know if the Chairmen of those Grand Committees are to go up to the Table and be placed in the same position as the Chairman of Committees? I do not know why it was thought necessary to bring us up from all parts of the country, at great inconvenience, when it is quite impossible to get anything more than a vague statement from the Government. I have been for some years a Member of this House, and I cannot think why we should have been called together to discuss anything, except, perhaps, the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray's) imprisonment, which everybody, one would think, might have discussed. We have heard that there are several supporters of the *clôture* dying to speak upon the question; but no one can explain the extraordinary phenomenon why it is that when we have been summoned here to discuss a great Constitutional question the command has evidently been passed round to the other side to hold their tongues, and they have obeyed with an obedience which does them credit. It is very hard upon the Opposition, and, more than that, it throws a doubt upon the sincerity of the proposals of the Government. Another difficulty seems to be this—that it is quite impossible for Members on the other side to say anything new on this question. Perhaps so; but if they would only make an effort, some good might arise out of it. They are always charging those who sit below the Gangway with Obstruction; but if the right hon. Gentleman opposite would only get up and tell us how he shapes his proposal, and what are its objects, we should know how to deal with it, and, perhaps, he would find the Opposition a good deal more contented with it than he might think. Surely it is time to inform the House what is their solution of the extraordinary problem which has been put before it. We ought to be told whether or not the Chairmen of the Grand Committees are to have these powers; and surely it is high time for the Government to get up and make a statesmanlike explanation. In its absence, it does not seem to me that the Opposition can pursue any other course than to express its discontent, and support the Amendment.

MR. DAWSON said, he was very sanguine that before long the Irish Members would be relieved from attendance in that House; and, therefore, he did not take the deep interest in this question which was evinced by the noble Lord who had just sat down. He wished to make two remarks at this stage of the discussion, one of which applied to the House and to its Procedure, and the other to the Party to which he had the honour to belong. The Government had afforded the House an opportunity of inspecting the Rules of Procedure in force in foreign countries and in the Colonies; but during the whole of this debate he heard no reference whatever made to these documents. He was certainly prepared for that, because there appeared to him to be no analogy whatever between the Foreign and Colonial Assemblies whose Procedure they had examined and that for which the present Rules were sought to be introduced. He challenged the Government to point to any one of these Foreign Assemblies where there was transacted the legislation of two nations separated so much in feelings, in instincts—separated so much physically and politically—as the two nations whose Representatives formed the principal portion of that House. Could they show him any Colonial or Foreign Assembly where the Representatives of one nation stood in the same relation to the Representatives of another as did the Irish Members to the Representatives of the British nation in the House of Commons? But there was a still more extraordinary want of analogy if they looked at the representation of Ireland in that House. That was a representation of the people of one country by a minority the most unconstitutional and unparalleled that he had ever become acquainted with. Therefore, the Rules of the Foreign Assemblies which the Government had issued for the purpose of substantiating the demand they were now making on the House were entirely inapplicable to the case before them, and referred to a very opposite and contrary state of things. There was one matter which affected the Party to which he belonged to whom the Prime Minister had overtly and covertly alluded in the course of the debate. It was said that the *raison d'être* of this measure was the action which the Irish Party had felt it their duty to pursue in the House. If there were prolonged debates, and if the Irish Members, as had been alleged, were guilty of Obstruction, they should ask what were the nature of the debates, and the questions they interfered in, and what were the nature of the debates and questions in which they had no participation. He came into that House in 1880, and in a very short time from that there were carried for the English people eight of the most important Acts of Parliament that the House of Commons ever passed. The Budget was carried, which revolutionized the taxing system of the country; the Employers' Liability Act was passed, which involved financial questions and changes affecting the incidence of profit, greater even than those touched upon by the Land Act. The Burials Bill, which would be looked upon in Ireland as a sentimental grievance, was introduced and passed; the Ground Game Bill, which was the thin end of the wedge in English Land Reform, was also passed; and what was the action during the discussion of these great and extensive measures of the Irish Representatives? Did they stand up to waste the time of the House? Did they stand up to oppose those great and wonderful reforms? No; during their discussion they did not enter a protest ——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is not addressing himself to the particular Amendment now before the House.

Mr. DAWSON said he was under the impression that when an Amendment was before the House he could speak to the Resolution to which that Amendment gave rise. If he was wrong, of course he should bow at once to the correction of the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the House has disposed of the Amendments, the Resolution will be put as a whole to the House, and then any observations on the Resolution at large would be in Order. The House is now considering the Amendment to the Resolution.

Mr. DAWSON said, that with respect to the Amendment there appeared to be very little indeed in it. If the Chairman of Committees was to decide all matters, and to be the arbiter of the House, it would seem that his Deputy ought to have the same jurisdiction vested in him.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I cannot help thinking that the House has some cause to complain of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. The circumstances under which we meet are very peculiar circumstances. An exceptional and special Session has been decided upon, at the cost of very great inconvenience to Members of this House, for the purpose of considering what we are told is an extremely important Code of New Regulations for the conduct of Business. We have come up, though we strongly object to some of the leading principles in this Code of Procedure, and though we find that very serious questions are involved in its discussion. Yet we have endeavoured, as far as we could, and as consistently as we could with our duty, to expose the objections we feel. We have endeavoured to conduct the Business for the transaction of which we have been summoned in a manner that shall be reasonable, and not involve waste of time. The least we had to expect from the Government was that they would pay us the compliment, if nothing more, of taking part in the discussion of a vital and important proposal—that they should not absent themselves during a great part of the time, more especially when we find that the word of command to keep silence was passed through their ranks. [" No, no!"] Well, if that is not so, I congratulate hon. Gentlemen upon the silence they have observed. But whether there be grounds for it or not, we have felt the difficulty of our position in exactly the same way as if a word of command for silence had been passed, because we have been shut out from full and fair discussion of questions which demand settlement. You are now about to introduce a wholly new principle into the way in which the debates of the ancient House of Commons are to be conducted. This is the most serious change that any of us can recollect, and is one not to be taken lightly without reasonable discussion. The Government have special interest in matters of this sort. They desire, of course, to shorten the Business, and get on as rapidly as possible with the measures they have in hand; but we have a right to know what independent Members of Parliament on both sides of the House feel with regard to proposals so made by the Government, and the only single word that has yet been spoken by an independent Member on the other side of the House has been the few words spoken by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold).

MR. GLADSTONE: You cannot have been here.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mention any other Gentleman who has spoken.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) and the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Those were the two Members I was about to cite as having spoken against the Government; but for the moment I thought it was more correct to mention first the hon. Member for Salford, because he did speak in favour of the Government proposal, and all he said was that, unless we accepted the clause as it stood, we should shut ourselves out from the power of preventing Obstruction in Committee. The hon. Member for North Lanarkshire said that, so far as he was concerned, he thought we were putting the cart before the horse, because the real question to be settled was by whom the ultimate decision to close should be given; and he intimated that if the Government proposal of the decision being taken by a bare majority were enforced, he should be opposed to it, and the hon. Member for Berkshire said something to the same effect. These are the kind of supporters of whom the right hon. Gentleman is so proud. But, independently of the fact that the discussion has been left almost entirely to certain Members of the Treasury Bench—not including the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, who had apparently always taken such an interest in this question—who have made their speeches and then gone out of the House to do other business, we find, to our great surprise, that the right hon. Gentlemen themselves had not even taken the trouble to come to an understanding of their own plan. Now, considering that this plan has been in their minds during the whole of the present year, and has been brought constantly forward since the beginning of February, and has been from time to time the subject of communication between both sides of the House, and considering that there have been two months' rest in which to arrive at some decision, I did think they would have come forward with some clear plan to lay before the House. I said just now that hon. Members opposite had kept silence since this question had been brought forward, and I would suggest as a reason for this that they really did not know what it was they were to support. Even now, in the present Sitting, we have had a modification of the Resolution of the greatest importance. Let me remind the House that last night, when the Government came forward and asked us to give precedence to the discussion on the Rules of Procedure, the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Motion by making a statement which was extremely fair as far as it went, and seemed to be of a satisfactory character—making a statement of the course they intended to take and the alterations they were prepared to make in the Resolutions; and we had every reason to believe, when we came together this morning, that we were in possession of the latest mind of the Government. Well, let us consider what is the question we have been debating to-day. It is a question of the very highest importance. A great deal has been said about the comparative position and independence of the Speaker who rules over our deliberations and the Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means, or other Gentlemen who may act as Chairmen in Committee, and many observations have been made upon them, not in an offensive spirit, but more or less of a personal nature; but I wish to put the matter to the House independently of considerations of that kind; I wish to remind the House that the question is not as between the comparative independence of yourself, Sir, or any distinguished Predecessors and Successors and the position of the Chairman who may from time to time be selected. The question we have to consider divides itself into this—What Rules ought to be enforced when the House is acting as a Whole House; and what Rules ought to be enforced when the House is in Committee? There lies the difference. The difference, it appears to me, does not lie as between the Speaker and the right hon. Gentleman who is Chairman of Committees, but as between the House constituted in one way and the House constituted in another way. Unless that distinction is kept in mind you will get into inextricable confusion—indeed, you are getting into such confusion already. I am not putting a frivolous or captious contention before the House; I have a high authority, and I wish the House will be good enough to consider that authority. I refer, Sir, to yourself. Last year—1881—the House, for sufficient reasons, voted that the conduct and control of Business, that the powers of the House, should, for a certain limited time, be transferred and placed in the hands of the Chairman. In consequence of those powers having been so placed in your hands, you were good enough to frame certain Rules for the conduct of the House, under which Rules the House proceeded so long as Urgency continued. Those Rules were received with very great respect, and also great admiration, from all parts of the House, and also from the Members of Her Majesty's Government. I hold a copy of those Rules in my hand. The first thing I see is that those Rules divided themselves into two wholly different sections — first, Rules to be observed by the Speaker; and, secondly, Rules relating to the procedure of Business in Committee of the Whole House. In framing those Rules, you, Sir, distinctly laid down what appeared to you to be the proper regulations for the conduct of Business while the House was acting as a whole body, and these were followed by regulations adapted to very different circumstances—to the case of the House sitting in Committee. If, then, in the present instance, this distinction is kept in view, the House, without much confusion, might come to a decision with regard to them; but instead of that we have here a Rule which mixes up the powers to be given to Mr. Speaker and those to be given to the Chairman of Committees, and we are called upon to apply them equally to both those functionaries. The great difficulty that is suggested by the hon. Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) and others is that we do not really know what is to be the actual power which you are going to give to somebody; but when we have to give it to somebody, we must consider to whom that power ought in reason to be given. With regard to Mr. Speaker, we understand what it is we are asked to do. You propose that when Mr. Speaker is of opinion that the question has been adequately discussed, and there is a disposition in the House to close the debate, Mr. Speaker shall put the Question, and in that way it is assumed that the Business of the House, as a whole, will be forwarded and advanced; but what are you going to do when the House is not sitting as a Whole House? You do not know yourselves, or, if you do, you did not at the beginning of this Sitting, and have kept us in the dark up to the present moment. I say you did not know at the beginning of the Sitting, and that is a remarkable statement to make; but it is literally true. The important question was raised months ago whether this important power should be confined to the recognized and duly appointed Chairman of Ways and Means, or whether it should also be exercised by those who have been spoken of as casual Chairmen. The Prime Minister told us, some time before the Adjournment of Parliament, that he was prepared to accept the proposal of the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes); but now the Prime Minister has quite forgotten that; he discussed the question on the assumption that that was not the case; and when he was reminded of it, he said, with a light heart—"If I said so, of course I stand by it," as if it did not make the slightest difference; but it does make a very serious difference. The whole question is whether we are to provide exhaustively for the two conditions of the House—the first being when it is fully constituted with the Speaker in the Chair, and the other when the Chair is occupied by somebody else. In providing for the one the Resolution does not provide for the other, except in the case of the Chair being occupied by the recognized Chairman of Ways and Means. Unless something else were to be proposed, this does not exhaust the conditions with which we have to deal. And, let me remark, this is not a matter of little importance. The right hon. Gentleman talks of the distinction between the Chairman of Ways and Means when called upon to act as Deputy Speaker and the Chairman in his capacity of Chairman of Ways and Means. That is a case which does not often arise, and is not likely to arise when there is a probability of these powers being exercised. But these casual Chairmen—when are they to be called in? Generally at the time of these prolonged Sittings, which are difficult times; and here you are going to deal with cases of Obstruction, but are leaving out altogether the case of these casual Chairmen. While Mr. Playfair is in the Chair he will have power to end a debate; but if he is exhausted by the length of a Sitting, and some other Member—perhaps a Member of the Government—takes the Chair, he will not be able to exercise such power. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) said it was absolutely necessary to prevent Obstruction in Committee, which may occur when the Chair is occupied by one of these casual Chairmen, who will not be able to exercise these powers. That being so, I say the scheme of the Government will not hold water; it does not cover the whole ground, and it is an unworkmanlike proposal. Am I alone in raising this difficulty? The Government have themselves recognized it, and say they will meet it; if only the House will give them a cheque in blank in favour of somebody not decided upon they will make a proposal by-and-bye as to the person in whose favour it is to be drawn. We were distinctly told that if we will pass this measure, so far as to carry the words giving power to the Chairman, the Government will make a proposal to the House, and then let us see to whom it is we give the powers. I can understand that there may be supporters of the Government who, with such blind faith in their Leaders, are perfectly ready to say—"We will give you this cheque and leave you to fill it in at your own pleasure;" but we, who are naturally a little more sceptical, would like to know in whose favour this is to be drawn, and I think it would be but reasonable that we should be allowed to discuss that question fully, and with greater knowledge of what we are about to do. With the Resolution in its present shape the Speaker is called upon to carry the Chairman of Committees on his back. Nobody supposes that if you had this Resolution in the shape in which it would stand without having the Speaker's name mentioned in it, it would be supported as it has been. A large number of Members support the Resolution, and others, though they object to it, see less objection than they otherwise would to its being accepted, because they have confidence in the character of the Speaker; but it is not fair that we should be called upon, on account of our confidence in the Speaker, to let him carry on his back some unknown Chairman of Committees. We are told with regard to the Grand Committees that we are very much in the wrong, and are altogether unreasonable, because we raise a question as to what is to be the position of the Chairman of these Committees. We are told that we are impertinent to inquire—[Mr. GLADSTONE: I answered the question.]—but the House must remember that these Grand Committees, if the Resolution is adopted as it stands—on which I say nothing, but reserve my opinion—involve a most important and vital change in the constitution of the House, as the House will be, when it is not fully constituted with the Speaker in the Chair, and your proposals ought to have reference to that character which the House will then bear, and not to that which it will bear if your scheme comes into operation. It cannot be said that we are to put out of sight a matter which is an essential part of the whole scheme. We were told by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) that Committee is just the stage at which Obstruction is most rife, and when it is most important it should be dealt with. But then you are going to alter entirely the constitution of your Committees by the appointment of these Grand Committees; and we want to know, have you a scheme, or have you not, which shall deal with the conditions of the House under all circumstances, when it is acting otherwise than as a Whole House? We are bound to insist on some clear and explicit answer upon the subject. I will not go into the question as to whether this form of *clôture* is the right way of dealing with Obstruction. We were told distinctly by the Prime Minister that he did not intend this for dealing with Obstruction, and that was a statement which took exceedingly well in February; but now it has become obsolete, and it now appears that it is intended to check Obstruction. I believe the statement in February was the true one, and that the Rule will not have any effect in reducing Obstruction. I am as anxious as anyone else to deal with Obstruction; but it must be dealt with in a very different way than by these measures. With regard to Committees, I venture to say you have not half thought out your plan, and it is an insult to the House to propose a plan which has not been thought out and digested. We have heard that we may trust to the Chairman because, having this authority, he will be more careful; but if we are to have arguments of that kind put to us, and are expected to swallow them, we shall be putting ourselves in a curious position in the eyes of the public. I have made these remarks because I think they are called for and are just, and what I wish to press upon the Government and the House is, that we should insist upon seeing the whole plan of the Government put before us. I will go further, and say this by way of my own suggestion. I do not believe there would be any better method, and, perhaps, there could be not so good a method, of proceeding as by following the lead set by the Speaker when he drew up the Resolutions on Urgency—that is to say, of defining your Resolution, and applying what you think fit—that is to say, following the Speaker's whole system upon the position which ought to be taken up when the House is constituted as a full House, and then by separate Resolutions endeavouring to apply the Rules, with more or less modification, to the case when the House is in Committee. I believe you would save time by doing so, and you would not only avoid confusion, but you would place the House in a condition more intelligible, and more satisfactory in relation to the proper discharge of its important functions.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had had no intention of rising to reply to the right hon. Baronet; but as he had been appealed to by name by the right hon. Gentleman, he would answer as far as he could the questions that had been put to Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Baronet had assumed that some order had been given by the Government to hon. Members who supported the Government not to take part in this discussion. He would remind the House that the right hon. Gentleman gave no grounds whatever for that statement. Possibly it might not have occurred to the right hon. Gentleman that those Members who thought that there was a great deal too much discussion in the House would consider they would best remedy the evil which they had assembled there to encounter by not speaking so much as hon. Members opposite, but rather by letting a few speakers deal broadly with the subject. He must, however, say that he should not have thought so small a matter worthy of the attention of the House if the right hon. Gentleman had not himself made allusion to it. If the present Amendment were carried, there would be no power of control vested in the House at all when it was in Committee. In fact, the House would, when in Committee, be left without any check on its debates. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not take part with those who had drawn a personal distinction between the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he did not rest his argument upon that.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was true the right hon. Gentleman did not rest his argument on that; but he drew a distinction between ordinary Sittings of the House and Committees of the Whole House. He was disposed, to some extent, to agree with the right hon. Gentleman; but what was the difference between the two conditions of the House? In ordinary Sittings every Member could only speak once; whereas, in Committee, every Member could speak as often as he thought proper. In which condition of the House, therefore, was an abuse of the liberty of discussion most likely to occur? The right hon. Gentleman agreed that when it was in the power of an hon. Member to speak once some check should be placed on the exercise of that power; but, strange to say, he did not think any such check was necessary when hon. Gentlemen could speak as often as they pleased without restriction. That was the distinction that had been drawn by the right hon. Gentleman; and did not such a difference show the necessity rather of imposing restrictions in Committee than in the Whole House? Then the right hon. Gentleman, so far as he (the Attorney General) could gather from his remarks, passed from that point to another argument. He said—"Look at the condition of things that you will arrive at when you have agreed to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston." Well, he must confess it was not very encouraging for the Prime Minister and those in immediate charge of these Resolutions to accept any Amendment, if the concessions made by such acceptance were dealt with as the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with them. But the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) moved, not as a substitution, but as an Amendment to the proposition before the House, that the power, the application of which they were now discussing, should be conferred on the regular Chairman of Committees, and should not be placed in the hands of the individual who had been described by some speakers that afternoon as the casual Chairman. The right hon. Baronet, following, as he sometimes did, the lead of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), turned on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston, and attacked it, it should be observed, when it had been accepted by the Prime Minister. He questioned if, in the event of the Amendment not having been accepted by the Leader of the House, it would not then have received the support of the right hon. Baronet. What the right hon. Gentleman who led the Opposition said really amounted to this—"You are going to give this power to the ordinary Chairman of Committees; but it is to the casual Chairman that you should really give it. He is the man whom you should always invest with this power, because he generally sits in troubled times, when a great deal of unnecessary discussion is going on."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I did not say that; I said that if you decline to give it to him, you leave out exactly the kind of Chairman who most needs this power.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was quite ready to accept the explanation; but, as he understood the right hon. Baronet, he advanced that as an argument why these powers should be conferred on the casual Chairman, and why he should not be left out. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) proposed to strike out the casual Chairman from enjoying such powers, and he certainly thought at the time the argument of the right hon. Baronet was intended to show that he should be kept in. He (the Attorney General) admitted the right hon. Baronet was right in saying that, at the present time, and under the existing Rules, they had to seek the aid of casual Chairmen in troubled times, because the physical powers of the Chairman of Committees did not enable him to continue his labours; but it was precisely in order to get rid of that state of things that the Government brought forward their proposals. The proposed Rules ought, therefore, to be looked at as they would apply to the new state of things. The right hon. Baronet said he was going to vote for the Amendment now before the House, because, at the present moment, he did not know how the Government were going to deal with the powers of Chairmen of Grand Committees. Was there much connection between the two questions? When they were asked to take away from the House when in Committee all power of terminating undue debate, was it worthy of this discussion to say—"I will vote for the absence of that power, because I do not know what will be done with regard to Grand Committees?" It was in order to get rid of the present unsatisfactory state of things that the Rule was proposed to the House. It would give to the regular Chairman of Committees power to check unnecessary Obstruction. There would be a termination of unnecessary debate, and consequently a termination of that great drag on the Chairman's physical powers which was the only reason why he could not perform his duties at present.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he would vote with all his heart against the Resolution proposed by the Government, unless the Prime Minister would accept the wise and Constitutional Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). He was unable to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), because his doing so would practically imply that he was satisfied to give to the Speaker a power which, in his belief, would be detrimental to the freedom of discussion and destructive of the character of the House as a deliberative Assembly. The closing of debates by a simple majority would be tantamount to vesting absolute power in the hands of the Chief Officer of the Crown.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, that if hon. Members opposite had not received the order to hold their tongues, he did not wonder at their wishing that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government should be carried, for on this occasion it must have been with great difficulty of persuasion that they induced themselves to maintain silence. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition adverted to the absence of Members from the Treasury Bench. He presumed the silence of the Members of the Government was self-imposed. Having imposed the *clôture* on themselves they now wished to impose it upon the House. His right hon. Friend had put a distinct question to the Government, whether any scheme had been framed with regard to the proposed Grand Committees? The only answer the Attorney General gave was that in due time the Prime Minister would formulate a scheme. That was no answer at all, and in order to give the Government an opportunity of reconsidering the question he should conclude by moving the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Viscount Folkestone.*)

MR. CHAPLIN, in supporting the Motion, said, that his right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the close of his observations, had made a proposition which had met with universal approbation on the Opposition Benches, and which was that there should be two separate Resolutions—one applying when the Speaker was in the Chair, and the other when the House was in Committee. No answer had been given to that suggestion.

MR. LEWIS said, he thought the Leader of the Opposition was entitled to some answer to his suggestion that they should first deal with Regulations for their proceedings when the Speaker was in the Chair, and then take up the consideration of the Regulations for proceedings in Committee. He did not wish to talk the Resolution out, but thought it better to adjourn until they had the two separate Motions.

MR. GLADSTONE: I confess when the Leader of the Opposition coolly invited us to divide this Resolution into two Resolutions, I bethought myself of the disparaging reference he had made to certain arguments on this side of the House, and of the fact that he gave us credit for less than the average amount of intelligence that is to be found in any assembly of Englishmen. Now, Sir, I will answer the question. A number of Gentlemen have given us Notice, including the very Gentlemen who now complain of us for not answering this question, that they intend to oppose every Resolution allowing a closing power to a majority, not merely by discussion and reasoning, but by a resort to all the Obstructive Forms of the House. That being so, the right hon. Gentleman recommends that we should divide this Resolution into two separate Resolutions, in order that not once, but twice, these Obstructive tactics should be adopted. I do not think that any hon. Gentleman will fail to understand why, in these circumstances, we have not given a better reception to the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 136; Noes 199: Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 344.)

And it being past a quarter before Six of the clock, the Debate on the Amendment stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 26th October, 1882.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION — VOTE OF THANKS TO HER MAJESTY'S NAVAL AND MILITARY FORCES.

RESOLUTIONS.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I have the honour to move a series of Resolutions, of which I have given Notice, conveying Votes of Thanks to the Commanding Officers and troops serving in the late Expedition to Egypt. I think that the Resolutions should be put separately, although I will now treat them as a whole. Your Lordships will understand that I do not, in the slightest degree, ask you to commit yourselves to any approbation of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. All I ask is that you will co-operate with the Sovereign and the other House of Parliament in the grateful duty of expressing the thanks of the nation to the brave men who have had so great a success in Egypt. Your Lordships are aware that soldiers and sailors are particularly alive to the good opinion of their countrymen, and I believe there is no honour which they value more than that of a Parliamentary acknowledgment in regard to their services. My Lords, the Naval Forces engaged at Alexandria were, in the first place, the Mediterranean Squadron, which was strongly reinforced; secondly, the Channel Squadron, which arrived at Malta after the attack on the forts; and, thirdly, the Detached Squadron, which had been round the world conveying the sons of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and which was ordered from Gibraltar on its way home. Fourthly, apart from these, there was part of the East Indian Squadron, under Sir William Hewett; and, fifthly, the Reserve Squadron, under the Duke of Edinburgh, was at Gibraltar, ready to go to the Mediterranean if required. Rear Admiral Hoskins was selected for service in the Suez Canal. The force of the Royal Marines numbered 2,500, and the total of officers, seamen, and marines 14,500. In the 1st Resolution I ask your Lordships to give a Vote of Thanks to Sir Beauchamp Seymour, under whose command the Naval Force was engaged. Our Votes of Thanks are entirely confined to what they have done in Egypt; but I may, perhaps, be allowed to mention that the Government feel themselves under obligations to Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour for previous services during his Mediterranean command. He commanded the Fleet during the negotiations concerning the Greek and Montenegrin Frontiers, as to which there is an absurd legend that he had instructions never to use force. That was perfectly untrue, although, luckily, the necessity did not arise; but we owe much to the judgment, temper, and tact of the Admiral in dealing both with the Oriental authorities, and with our gallant foreign Naval Allies. They were of great use in contributing to the success of the arrangements. My Lords, Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour exhibited the same qualities, in a very remarkable degree, in Egypt, during the critical time before the attack on the forts of Alexandria. I may mention, among other circumstances which are satisfactory, that he was on the best possible terms with the French Admiral (Admiral Conrad), of whom it is only fair to say that during the whole of the time he showed a most loyal and friendly feeling towards the English. Admiral Seymour showed great skill and judgment in the attack upon the forts, and it is to the arrangements that were then made that we must partially attribute the fact that there was not a greater loss of life. The attack was carried on with great courage and success, with small loss of life and damage to the ships, although the Egyptians had 44 modern rifled guns and 200 smooth-bores, and made a most courageous defence. Even 10 hours after the opening attack the forts were not all silenced, only one by one giving way. It was found that preparations were made for mounting more guns, with great stores of ammunition and torpedoes. If the attack had been delayed, we should have suffered very severely. On our side very great care was taken to avoid damage to the town. The conflagration on the 12th was due to lamentable causes, on which I will not now dwell. I cannot help alluding to the courage of a small party who landed to disable these silenced guns, and swam back again to their ships. Sir Beauchamp Seymour spoke with great admiration of the manner in which the officers and men carried out their various duties. Until the arrival of Sir Archibald Alison, on the 17th of July, with two battalions from Cyprus, and 1,000 marines, the defence of Alexandria was undertaken by a small body of the seamen and the marines of the Fleet—a duty requiring skill, energy, and vigilance on so long an extent of lines. The police protection of Alexandria was also provided for with singular energy, temper, and good sense. After the arrival of more troops, the officers and men of the Fleet continued to assist the Army in many ways—in mounting heavy guns, in fitting up and working guns on a railway truck, which were used in reconnoissances, and in providing for the water supply of Alexandria, which was threatened by the damming of the Mahmoudieh Canal. This important, indeed necessary, work was carried out so completely that water was in sufficient supply not only for the soldiers and sailors, but for the whole population, at that time, of Alexandria. In alluding to such works as these, I feel great regret that the scope of the subject hardly permits me to refer to the courageous, enduring, skilful work done by civilians in connection with waterworks and railways, and performed under circumstances of the greatest personal risk. It was decided from the first that the line of operations upon Cairo should be by the Suez Canal, with the base at Ismailia, and preparations were made to hold the line of the Canal from Port Said to Port Suez by the Navy and Marines until the arrival of the troops. Rear Admiral Hoskins was in charge of this delicate operation, and admirably well he did it. Sir William Hewett showed his well-known energy in occupying Suez, and preparing to take possession of the southern portion of the Canal. Circumstances, of which your Lordships are aware, caused great anxiety, and obliged Admiral Hoskins to act with forbearance and caution. And now, my Lords, as a friend and neighbour of one of the principal depôts of the Marines, it is with peculiar pleasure that I allude to that distinguished Corps, who, although sometimes inclined to dread being squeezed out by the superior numbers of blue-jackets and of soldiers, always manage to retain a great and well-deserved hold on the appreciative respect and sympathy of the public. They were in every action from first to last. They were the first troops to land with the sailors at Alexandria. They distinguished themselves at the reconnoissance in force on the 5th of August, under Sir Archibald Alison. The Royal Marine Artillery behaved with great gallantry at Kassassin. The Light Infantry were in the first line at Tel-el-Kebir. Both lost heavily during the campaign. As to the Transport, over 28,000 officers and men and nearly 6,000 animals were conveyed to Egypt and the Mediterranean in connection with the operations. Forty thousand tons of stores were sent out; 124 ships in all were engaged by the Admiralty. Not a single casualty occurred. When the movement of the troops from Alexandria was settled, the plans carefully prepared beforehand were carried out in the early morning of the 20th of August. On the arrival of the transports the whole line of the Canal was safe in the hands of the Navy, the enemy shelled out of Nefiche, three and a-half miles from Ismailia—one of the cleverest operations of the campaign—and telegraphic communication established. The pilotage of the transports was exclusively undertaken by the Naval officers; and the arrangements were so perfect that, while one or two merchant vessels were never stopped at all, the normal traffic of the Canal was resumed in less than 48 hours. The discipline was so good that, out of 300 sailors who occupied Port Said for a month, only four cases of want of discipline were serious enough to be brought before the officer in command. The action at Chalouf, between Ismailia and Suez, secured the line of railway to Suez. A 40-pounder gun on a truck was worked by seamen. A Naval Brigade, at Sir Garnet's special request, took part in the action of Tel-el-Kebir. But the greatest service rendered to the Army was the conveyance of stores and provisions along the Fresh Water Canal, and the greatest energy was displayed in bringing back the wounded from Tel-el-Kebir to Ismailia, which has been gratefully recognized by Sir Garnet. It sounds as if a canal and a railway were extraordinary aids for transport; but it must be remembered that the Canal was a narrow, shallow ditch, meant to convey water, not to carry traffic, and that the single line of railway was broken up for miles. I now come to the 2nd and 3rd Resolutions. During the Naval operations, measures of precaution had been taken; the Mediterranean garrisons had been strengthened by two battalions, and a force was sent from Malta to Cyprus on the 8th of July, which subsequently arrived at Alexandria on the 15th of July. It was on the 20th of July that the Cabinet decided on the Expedition. The Vote of Credit passed on the 27th of July. Preparations commenced on the 21st of July, and on the 30th the first troops left for the field, followed from day to day till, on the 11th of August, there was a complete Army Corps, with proper proportions of Cavalry, Artillery, and Engineers, of about 36,000 men, 54 field guns, and 5,600 horses. I have refrained, though reluctantly, from alluding to the merits of the Departments in which the two noble Earls near me have worked so hard; but I do not feel the same scruple with regard to the Indian Government. Orders had been sent to India on the 8th of July, as a preliminary measure, to send the Seaforth Highlanders to Suez. Immediately on the receipt of the orders of the 25th of July, for the despatch of the Indian Contingent, the Government of Bombay were called upon to take up and equip sufficient transport for the whole Force. So well was the call responded to, that the first instalment of the detachment sailed on the 5th of August; and by the 9th September 47 transports, aggregating 114,500 tons, had left India, conveying 322 commissioned and warrant officers, 1,690 British troops, with 12 guns, 3,970 Native troops, 7,209 followers, 1,765 horses, 4,375 mules, and 775 ponies. The first detachment arrived 27 days from the date of the first instructions for their despatch, and the Force continued to arrive until the 15th of September; and though the season of the Monsoon was the least favourable time of the year for sending troops by sea, man and animals arrived in excellent health, there being no casualties among the men, and only 27 among the horses. The Indian Government provided tents for 16,000 troops coming from England, and raised, equipped, and despatched, on Sir Garnet Wolseley's requisition, a corps of 600 muleteers for employment with the Transport animals. The result was a perfect success; the troops were able to take the field immediately on arriving, and to keep it in perfect health, thorough efficiency, and comparative comfort, until the close of the operations, during which, under the command of General Macpherson, they did such admirable service, and nowhere more than in the attack on Tel-el-Kebir, and by the part they took in the brilliant march to Cairo. The Indian Contingent has already left Egypt, excepting the commissioned and non-commissioned officers selected to visit England before their return to India, when I hope they will receive the honour due to them. To return to the history of the campaign, Sir Archibald Alison had, by bold and skilful action, made safe our position at Alexandria, and the value of recent tactical training was shown on this occasion. Sir Garnet Wolseley, aided by Sir John Adye, instantly on arrival carried out the plan of campaign which had been carefully preconcerted in England. The bulk of the Army was removed bodily to the new base with speed, secrecy, and success of details. On arriving at Ismailia, the force under General Graham pushed forward to secure water and seize the obstructing dams made across the Canal. It rapidly seized Kassassin Lock, and made the supply of water safe. There were two successful skirmishes under General Graham, and on the night of the 28th of August there was a Cavalry charge, executed with courage and steadiness. Here the Household Cavalry had the first opportunity of vindicating their military efficiency. The Force, strengthened by Sir Edward Hamley and one brigade, pushed forward for a great result. My Lords, at this moment of offering our thanks to the Army of Egypt, I cannot help feeling that we have been anticipated by the popular and warm receptions which have been given in different parts of the country to detachments of the returning Force. Most of your Lordships have, like myself, probably, only had the opportunity of seeing some of the Household Cavalry passing through the cheering multitudes of this great city. It was remarked to me that, on the Continent, a victorious army would have been re-clothed before entering the capital. I do not know whether that is the case; but it seemed to me that these sunburnt men, looking older, thinner, but in first-rate condition, in weather-stained, worn-out jackets, told their own story of endurance and of courageous discharge of duty in a more telling manner than by any attempt of smartening them for the occasion. It was after this affair at Kassassin that alarming prognostications were made at home and abroad—that the delays and dawdling of Sir Garnet had destroyed the chances of success which at one time were within our grasp. We are all wise after the event, and we all now acknowledge that delays and dawdling are not Sir Garnet's especial defects. A great military historian has remarked that the great difference of wars of this century, compared with those of previous times, is that, owing to the greater powers of locomotion in an army, an extension and a rapidity have been given to war which were previously unknown; that, in consequence of this, every soldier thinks of going straight to his end—namely, the capital of the country he is attacking; and that this system, when successfully carried out, is more economical in blood and gold than the former system. But he adds that, in that system, there may be great disappointments. They are movements that require a first-rate General with genius to execute them—one who has the power of appreciating the powers of his own forces and those of his enemies; one who is able exactly to calculate questions of time and distance with extraordinary accuracy. When second-rate or third-rate Generals attempt it, their rashness is easily punished. Colonel Wolseley's reputation stood high when it was decided to send him in command of the Red River Expedition. The work was done by him not only completely, but with singular celerity. In the Ashantee War, Coomassie, despite its almost inaccessible position, was taken in seven weeks; while Cairo was taken in three weeks after the arrival of the troops at the base of Ismailia. It has already been said that before leaving England Sir Garnet had named the place and the date of the great battle. With regard to the date, I am bound to say he was not quite mathematically correct. To my noble Friend behind me, he said the 15th would be the date of his great battle; to another, the 13th; while to a third, he said that Cairo would be taken on the 15th, the result being that the great battle was fought on the 13th and Cairo taken on the 14th. If the quotation I have made as to the qualifications of a General is correct, your Lordships will admit that Sir Garnet has some claims to the character of a first-class General. I beg pardon for this digression. It appears to me superfluous to give your Lordships any account of the attack upon the works of Tel-el-Kebir. The military despatches, the letters of correspondents, the descriptions in the Press, have given you the most vivid knowledge of that well-planned and well-executed attack—the short time of sleep, the night march, guided by the stars alone, the perfect silence, the discipline which prevented a single gun being fired, and the final rush with such fatal effect to the enemy; a struggle in which English, Scotch, and Irish regiments, swelled by the Reserves, who had patriotically come forward almost without exception, were engaged in generous rivalry to do their duty, under the command of Generals Hamley, Willis, Alison, Graham, the Duke of Connaught, Drury-Lowe, and Macpherson. In the moment of exultation, we all remember the anxieties of families at home; we all deeply sympathize with those whose relations have been killed or seriously wounded, and rejoice with those who have seen them return with glory to their homes. There is one illustrious Widow who did not hesitate for one moment in her wish that her Son should share the perils of his companions in arms, but whose anxiety for his safety was intense. Her Majesty must be rewarded, not so much by his safety, as by the manner in which the Duke of Connaught has been spoken of in the public despatches, while from all quarters confirmation has flowed in of his soldier-like ability and qualities, coolness under fire, and especial care of his men. My Lords, I cannot conclude without speaking in the highest terms of the conduct of Generals Sir Evelyn Wood and William Earle. The less attractive, but most important, duty of watching the enemy at Ramleh was performed by the first of those distinguished officers, while the latter most efficiently guarded the communications. The Cavalry and Artillery march to Cairo, which crowned the operations, has, I understand, especially excited the admiration and the curiosity of the most eminent of the German military authorities. The safety of that famous town is a subject the importance of which cannot be over-estimated. My Lords, I have spoken highly of the qualities of the men who have achieved this successful Expedition. I am perfectly aware that there were circumstances in our favour. In the first place, Egypt is the one foreign country in the world where it is the easiest for us to apply our military and great maritime resources. In the second, our Armies were not confronted by the trained soldiers of Germany, France, Austria, Russia, or Italy. All I claim is, that in these short operations, although, in some details, useful information has been obtained for further improvements, those which for some years have been carried on in both the Navy and Army have not been without their fruit; and that, as to the officers and men, they have shown a skill, a courage, and powers of endurance and of discipline in doing everything they have been asked to do, which must give the nation perfect confidence that if, which God forbid, they should be exposed to a still more crucial test, they would come out with equal credit to themselves and to the country at large. I beg to move the Resolutions of which I have given Notice.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, in a Motion of this kind we are happily not divided by any distinctions as to Party, and it is with the most cordial and earnest pleasure that I rise to second the proposition which the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) has made to the House. In doing so, I have nothing to add to the concise and perspicuous narrative which the noble Earl has given us of the glorious events of this short campaign; but I must permit myself, before joining in heartily voting the substance of the Motion, to make two criticisms, without laying any undue stress upon them, as to the wording in which the Motion is couched. In the first place, the Motion of the Government speaks of this as a "military rebellion." I do not mean to say that it is not; but that this is the introduction of a controversial statement, regarding which diverse opinions are held; and, that being so, I think it should have been carefully banished from the proceedings in a ceremony of this kind. My other observation refers to the last words of the Motion—namely, "the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force." I have no doubt that a cordial good feeling did animate the United Force; but is it precisely necessary to state that in a public document? I should have thought that was a matter we might assume, without further insisting on it—that among the Forces serving Her Majesty united feelings would prevail. But, after all, these are mere criticisms of words, not of substance. In the essence of this Motion we shall, I think, all of us join, and join in a feeling of thankfulness and relief, because in recent years, owing to a vast variety of causes, on which it is not proper now to insist, doubts have been propagated as to the efficiency of our Forces, and as to whether England would maintain her old supremacy, both by land and sea. It was thought that the vast changes which mechanical science had introduced in the methods of naval warfare had diminished the peculiar pre-eminence our sailors had attained, and that England could no longer rely as of old upon being, by right of her position and the traditions of her race, the foremost maritime nation in the world. But I think that the experience of Alexandria has shown that our sailors can handle the new mechanisms of warfare as intelligently and brilliantly as they did the old, and that the intelligence and spirit which have always animated the British sailor are shown with equal lustre and with the same results, whether he works with iron or with oak. Although we were, I think, not opposed to an enemy altogether worthy of our steel, and though the dangers run were, owing to the foresight of Sir Beauchamp Seymour, not so great as they might have been, still I think that the effect of the bombardment of Alexandria must be to show the native fitness of the British sailor for waging naval warfare under new, as well as old, conditions, and that, displaying as it did the intelligence and practical skill of the British sailor, it will powerfully increase the reputation of England over all seas, and will greatly assist the diplomacy of England, whenever it may be called upon to act in the future. Of Sir Beauchamp Seymour the noble Earl has spoken in terms of fitting praise. The present Government have, I think, good reason to be proud and to speak with gratitude of that Officer, who has conducted delicate and difficult matters with singular tact and skill; and though, as a Party, we have, hitherto, had no experience of his services or qualities, we shall certainly join heartily in celebrating his praise, and according to him the tribute paid by this Resolution. We shall certainly most cordially welcome him when he makes his appearance here. With respect to the next Resolution, I cannot say so much—I mean with regard to our inability to join from personal and official knowledge, in tribute to the distinguished Commander whose merits are set forth therein. Sir Garnet Wolseley has served under the present and the late Administration of which the noble Earl opposite was and is a Member, in a military capacity, and with what success we all know. Under us he served in a civil capacity; but in that capacity, as in his previous military capacity, he displayed that which is the peculiar characteristic of genius—namely, a vast and most accurate knowledge of detail, over which he had the most entire and complete command, and which did not interfere with in the least degree, or narrow, as it sometimes does, the largeness and the scope of his general mental grasp. In civil affairs, as in military, he showed that peculiarity. He has been criticized, as the noble Earl told us, adversely during the progress of these operations. I think the noble Earl dwelt too much upon that circumstance. Every Commander, while the crisis of action is going on, and while the effect of his measures is more or less doubtful, will necessarily be subjected to adverse criticism. It has been said that this was an audacious stroke, and that if Sir Garnet had been opposed by a more vigorous and better trained army it might have ended badly. I am not soldier enough to know if there is any justice in that criticism; but if it be just, it seems to me only to add to the distinction of Sir Garnet and the merit of his tactics. It shows that the peculiar brilliancy of the operation was this—that he knew precisely how to measure his stroke to the capacity and power of resistance of his enemy, neither despising his enemy nor wasting time in unnecessary precaution. But he could draw truthfully and exactly the precise line where caution should end and where audacity should begin. The noble Earl has referred to the services rendered by the other gallant officers and men mentioned in the 3rd Resolution; and, amongst other things, he has very naturally alluded to that patriotic and courageous decision at which the Queen arrived, when she decided that the Duke of Connaught should share the labours and dangers of his fellow-soldiers. It was not only a courageous but a wise decision. Those dangers were by no means unreal. It is true that General Officers do not face the dangers of war, so-called, to the same extent, perhaps, as those who stand in an inferior position. But this was a very peculiar war, attended with dangers of a special kind. The greatest dangers did not come from the enemy to whom we were opposed. I was very much struck, in the Papers which the noble Earl has laid on the Table this morning, by the statement that was made by M. de Freycinet, when he said that the French Ministers of War and Marine were of opinion that if this war was to be conducted at this period of the year, one-half of the troops would perish by sickness. That was a danger which affected alike the highest and the lowest, Generals and common soldiers. Happily, it has not proved so great a danger as M. de Freycinet anticipated; but that was the estimate formed by those who, from their Algerian and Tunisian experience, were eminently qualified to form an estimate of the kind of danger to be encountered by those who went to the war; and there can be no doubt that the Duke of Connaught, in joining the Expeditionary Force, has acted in accordance with the principles which animate his family, which make the duties they undertake real by personal labour and work, and the performance of duties, so as to win, as it were, over again the authority which naturally belongs to their position. By so doing, he has not only proved, as we know, on high authority, a most gallant and efficient officer, but I think he has set an example which will work advantageously in every rank of the British Army. My Lords, no greater praise can be given to those who have taken part in this brief but glorious campaign than to say that they have acted in the highest sense of the word as Englishmen. The greatest reward that Englishmen can receive is the approval of their countrymen whom they have served; and it is the proud duty of the Houses of Parliament, who represent their countrymen, to confer upon them, by their Thanks, those honours and rewards which they have so well deserved, and with which no other honours can compare.

Moved to resolve,

"1. That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal which aided materially in the suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive:

"2. That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the military operations in Egypt, which resulted in the victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suprpession of the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive:

"3. That the Thanks of this House be given to

General Sir John Miller Adye, K.C.B.;

Vice-Admiral William Montagu Dowell, C.B.;

Lieutenant-General George Harry Smith Willis, C.B.;

Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.;

Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B.;

Rear-Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, V.C., K.C.B.;

Rear-Admiral Sir Francis William Sullivan, K.C.B., C.M.G.;

Rear-Admiral Anthony Hiley Hoskins, C.B.;

Major-General His Royal Highness Arthur, Duke of Connaught, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.;

Major-General William Earle, C.S.I.;

Major-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.;

Major-General Gerald Graham, V.C., C.B.;

Major-General George Byng Harman, C.B.;

Major-General Drury Curzon Drury-Lowe, C.B.;

Major-General Sir Herbert Taylor Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B.;

and to the other Officers and Warrant Officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including Her Majesty's Indian Forces, both European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services they have been called upon to perform:

"4. That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the gallantry, discipline, and good conduct displayed by the Petty Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, and of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native; and, also, the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, I have no doubt that your Lordships will permit me to express, in a few words, on this very interesting and important occasion, my views as to the services which have been rendered to the country by Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt. I am the more glad to have this opportunity of doing so, because, from what has fallen from the noble Earl who brought forward this Motion, it is beyond doubt that great services have been rendered to the country by the hearty co-operation of the Naval and Military Forces. Our position is most peculiar. As an Island, we are in a very different position from a Continental Power, and, without the assistance of our Navy, the Army would be able to do but little or nothing beyond our own shores—in fact, it is the Navy which enables the Army to carry out the duty required from us in our foreign wars. Consequently, your Lordships will feel that unless the greatest cordiality and good feeling existed between the two Forces, the services expected from the Army could not be carried out in the manner they ought to be. But on this occasion especially the Navy has rendered the most useful and valuable services to the Army; and I am sure that there is nobody who feels more strongly the value of those services, and who is more prepared to give hearty concurrence to this Address as far as regards the Navy than myself, not alone on personal grounds, because that would be of comparatively little importance, but on the part of the Army. On the part of the Army, I can with all my heart thank the Navy for the admirable manner in which they carried out their duty, and for the valuable and useful assistance which they rendered to the Army during the whole of the campaign. And when I say that, I do not confine myself to the admirable assistance afforded to the Army by Sir Beauchamp Seymour, Admiral Hoskins, Vice Admiral Dowell, and Sir William Hewett; but I contend that there was not a sailor nor a sailor boy who did not work as hard as he could in order to enable the Army to carry out the objects of the campaign. My Lords, when I speak of the Navy I must not be supposed for a moment to forget the services which were rendered by the Royal Marines. The Royal Marines find themselves in rather a difficult position, and are apt to think themselves rather left out in the cold as compared with the other Naval and Military Services. But I may say that, as far as the Army is concerned, we are only too glad to avail ourselves of the valuable services of the Royal Marines. Upon every occasion on which they have been called upon to serve their country they have done their duty most admirably, and have shown that they are suited for all sorts of work, and are an extremely fine body of men. On this occasion they have had an opportunity of showing of what value they are to their country, and what useful work they can perform, whether on board ship or on land. But I speak now more especially of their service upon shore. As to the action of the other portions of Her Majesty's Service, there can, I think, be only one opinion. Their conduct has been such, and the result of their action has been so successful, that nothing but praise can be given to them. Whether we look to the mode in which the Navy and the Transport Service conveyed the military contingent to Egypt without any accident, or whether we look to the military operations which followed and led to the success which, singularly enough, as the noble Earl has pointed out, was almost predicted to a day by the gallant General who carried out the operations, we certainly have a right to be proud of our Navy and our Army. Sir Garnet Wolseley has been somewhat severely criticized for the delay which occurred after Ismailia; but a most extraordinary criticism it was when we came to analyze it. The fact was that we landed in Egypt without anything; we had to take everything with us. The consequence was that everything, even to a sack of coal, had to be landed before anything could be done in the way of preparations for an advance. Then, as to the transport after the troops had been landed. Generally, in an ordinary country we expect to find means of transport ready to hand. But in this case it was not so; and the distance from this country was so great that without the enormous transport which we had collected there, and which would have taken a great amount of time, and would have involved great additional trouble and expense to have sent from this country, it would have been impossible to obtain means of transport at the very moment when the troops landed in Egyyt. The whole operation turned upon the sudden seizure of the Sweet Water Canal, because unless we had at once seized that Canal, and so secured a supply of water for our troops, we could have done nothing. The seizure of the Canal was an essential necessity and a speciality, and it could only be effected suddenly. If that had not been done, we could not have carried on the operations which followed. We therefore say that we went faster than our transport could possibly have followed, and that was the cause of the delay and no other. As it was, the advance to Kassassin was made in order to save the Sweet Water Canal, and, that object having been accomplished by a small body of troops, every endeavour was made to send a larger body to the front, with the success which your Lordships are fully aware of. I have thought it necessary to point this out, because, although it is patent to a military mind, sometimes that view of this question may be overlooked. I know that my gallant friend Sir Garnet Wolseley felt himself ably seconded by Sir John Adye and General Willis, and by other Generals of Division. I think it right on this occasion especially to name General Drury-Lowe, who commanded the Cavalry. We are often told that the day for Cavalry has gone by, and that it is very absurd to maintain a force which is so expensive, and which is of no good. I think, however, that this short campaign has fully answered that criticism. I may also add that there has been a good deal of criticism on what has been termed the extraordinary idea of sending Her Majesty's Household troops to Egypt. The Household troops would, I think, stand in a very false position if they were only to be seen in the streets of London and in St. James's Park. They are splendid and gallant troops. What was the result when they went into the field? Sir Garnet Wolseley has said that he never saw troops behave so splendidly, and that he only wished he had had a great deal more of them. These troops, although they had such great hardships to go through, have come back looking, perhaps, not quite so smart as one would wish to see them on parade—rather thin, perhaps, both men and horses—but I can assure your Lordships that I was astonished to see the wonderfully good condition of those splendid squadrons, which I had the pleasure of inspecting personally and very critically on their return. Their conduct you all know. Their night charge was most gallant. A charge at any time is not an easy operation, and requires great determination, tact, and judgment; but by night its difficulty is enormously increased. The charge ordered by General Drury-Lowe was admirably conducted by Sir Baker Russell and Colonel Ewart, commanding the regiment. As regards the other operations, nothing could be better than the way in which General Graham managed to hold his own at Kassassin. It was a delicate position, and he was most ably seconded by General Drury-Lowe. As regards the great operation of Tel-el-Kebir, we may ascribe our success entirely to the mind of one man—Sir Garnet Wolseley. I do not know that anyone was taken into his counsel in regard to any order or direction that he gave. It may be said that his action on that occasion was very rash. No doubt, night marches are rash; but that showed genius. If men, after all, are to have success, they must sometimes be rash. If they were not rash they would do nothing at all. The question is whether a man is justified in being rash in regard to the mode in which he resolves to conduct his operations. I consider that the result has proved that he was perfectly justified, and, what is more, that if he had not carried out the operation as he did, before daylight, our loss would have been infinitely greater than it was. I do not mean to say that the works would not have been taken, because I should rely greatly on the courage of the English soldier; but I fear that we should have had a great amount of casualties, and we all know that in war casualties ought to be avoided. My Lords, I have seen it stated that much cruelty was shown by our troops to the wounded Egyptians after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Now, my Lords, I do not believe a word of it. This was a sharp and hard operation, and your Lordships know you cannot make war in a milk-and-water sort of way. What occurred, I believe, was this. Wounded men, or men who pretend to be wounded, are lying on the ground after the charge has passed, and not being wise in their generation, they seize the opportunity of taking a quiet shot at those who have gone beyond them. They, no doubt, think by doing so they will do themselves a good turn. Instead of that they do themselves a bad turn. They produce retaliation, because if a man sees a wounded enemy fire at his comrade he naturally fires at him in return, and makes short work of him. I believe that is what actually happened. I heard of a man who was shot from behind by a wounded Egyptian, while giving another wounded Egyptian some water from his flask, so, of course, someone finished the offender. These are very sad and painful things, but there is always something in them. It is no good to simply say they were not true. On the other hand, it is very wrong to exaggerate them. Now, in what has been said, I believe there is the grossest exaggeration. It will be found that the kindness and attention paid by our men and by the authorities to the Egyptian wounded after the fighting was really remarkable. I believe the great bulk of the Egyptians were well treated by our men until they were helped over to their own side. Of the conduct of the Duke of Connaught I hope I may be allowed to say a word. As he is a relation of mine, it would ill become me to say much. The noble Earl and the noble Marquess have already done him full justice; but I am bound to say this—that I have letters from Sir Garnet Wolseley requesting me to assure Her Majesty that there was not an officer under his command who attended more constantly, more unweariedly, or with more advantage to his duty than the Duke of Connaught. I believe that, from the first, no brigade was taken more care of by its commanding officer than the Duke's. In war there is, of course, an element of danger which all must share, and we must admire the courage and fortitude of Her Majesty for having allowed her Son to go. The Duke himself we may now congratulate upon his safe return. Some complaint has been made that the

Brigade of Guards was not put in the first line. Well, if I had been there, I should have placed them in the second line. I do not know that it is always best to put the most solid troops in the position where the greatest danger may arise. The second line is sometimes a good deal knocked about; and so it might have been on this occasion, had not the rapid advance of General Graham's Brigade and of the Highlanders made the Egyptians flee before them. As it was, I believe the Brigade of Guards was exposed to great danger from the rapidity of the Egyptian fire, and in their hurry to fire they fired high and the bullets went over the heads of the first line and into the second line. I think it right to say this, because it has been said the Brigade of Guards was put in an inferior position. It was nothing of the sort. As regards the Indian troops, I am much pleased with the reports which have reached me. They have done their full share of the work; and the splendid conduct of the Cavalry under General Drury-Lowe will be matter of history. We must all feel that the Indian Contingent has performed valuable service in conjunction with Her Majesty's other troops. No one could have discharged his duty better than Sir Herbert Macpherson; and General Drury-Lowe tells me that the way in which the troops marched to Cairo without intermission was as splendid an operation as has ever been seen. Where all have done so well it would be invidious of me to speak of particular regiments. I believe every officer and every man of the Army, from the General downwards, did their duty in a most creditable manner, and loyally served their Sovereign and their country. I know how strongly the Army and Navy feel the compliments paid them by the Houses of Parliament on such occasions as the present; and although the returning troops were greatly pleased at the noisy cheers with which they were received the other day in the streets of London, they will, I am sure, consider the voting of this Address an even greater compliment. I cordially support the Motion of the noble Earl, and I can assure your Lordships that I rejoice to think that Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Beauchamp Seymour are about to receive those honours which they so much deserve, and which will enable them to take their seats among us in this House.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, that before the Motion was put he wished to express regret that there had not been coupled with the names in the Vote the name of any officer of the Royal Marines or of the Royal Marine Artillery. He hoped that the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty would be able to find some reason for the omission of names of officers of those corps from the Vote.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, my answer to the question of the noble Viscount is this—that the name of no officer has been included in the list on the Paper lower in rank than that of Major General. Colonel Herbert Jones, who bore the rank in Egypt of colonel on the Staff, commanded the Royal Marine Light Infantry, and Lieutenant-Colonel Tuson commanded the Royal Marine Artillery, and no noble Lord can doubt the great merits of those officers, though they have not been named in the Vote of Thanks.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, that the value of the Vote which their Lordships were about to pass would be enhanced by the speech of the noble Earl who introduced it; for though brief it was comprehensive, so that where all had done well, none could be aggrieved by the omission of mention of their services. If the military operations in Egypt had been in a lawful and just war he should have given a most cordial support to the Vote of Thanks. As it was, he wished to be allowed to praise the uncomplaining patience and endurance of the men and officers during their march through the sands at the hottest time of the year, and under a sun that was more trying than any that they had experienced before. The return of the Household Cavalry, with the loss of so few of their horses, was a special matter of congratulation, when there was every reason to expect that the greater part of those horses would have perished, and after the rumours that had prevailed of the intentions with which the Household Cavalry had been sent out, and which intentions, if they really existed, had now been happily frustrated. This Vote would receive, both in this House and in the country, more universal concurrence than had been given to the general thanksgiving which the Government had imposed upon the Church, thereby making it to Judaise, since for Rabbinical preachers and their congregations alone the command to "spoil the Egyptians" had not been abrogated; whilst for Christians it had been abrogated by the hospitable reception given by Egypt and the Egyptians to the Holy Family in their flight from Herod. Up to the present time the Government had not yet stated the grounds of their attack upon Egypt. It was clear from the event that it was not on account of the Suez Canal, for that had never been threatened; and it had been proved that the ships could have kept it open without landing men or ruining cities. The Government had already affirmed that the war was not undertaken for the bondholders. Now, the Vote said that these military operations had been undertaken to suppress a military rebellion; but that could not be, since after the bombardment of Alexandria the Khedive had blamed Arabi Pasha for not having taken better measures to repel Her Majesty's ships and to defend Alexandria. Two explanations remained. One was that "evil communications corrupted good manners," and that the recent frequent communications between the Government and Zululand had affected the Government with the desire to "wash their young men's spears," and to perfect the efficiency of the Army as a man-slaying machine. The other was that the Prime Minister, like all great actors, was envious and jealous of performing all the parts of a drama. His Homeric studies naturally made him commence with that of Agamemnon. After that, in Mid Lothian, he rendered with great success the minor part of Thersites. Lastly, he had played the part of Ajax contending with Ulysses for the shield of Achilles; he strove with Lord Beaconsfield for the mantle of Pitt and Palmerston, and with the result that, like Ajax, he went mad and turned his powerful arms against the sheep; so that from 1,500 to 2,000 Egyptians were slaughtered like sheep in from 15 to 20 minutes. This was the Minister who so lately feared blood-guiltiness.

The said Resolutions severally *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the Lord Chancellor do communicate the said Resolutions to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour and General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley respectively, and that they be requested by the Lord Chancellor to communicate the same to the several Officers referred to therein.

ARMY—REINSTATEMENT OF COLONEL VALENTINE BAKER IN "THE ARMY LIST."

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in asking, If Her Majesty's Government would now reinstate the name of Colonel Valentine Baker in *The Army List?* said, that he did not know Colonel Baker; but, from all that he had heard, he thought—and he had been told that most of the men and all the women in the country thought—that he had been too hardly used by the removal of his name from *The Army List*, and by the loss of his commission. He was, however, more concerned for the consistency of the conduct of Her Majesty's Ministers; and he did not see how they could abstain from replacing his name on *The Army List*, or otherwise removing the slur put upon him by its removal from that List, when they had placed him, or allowed him to be placed, at the head of the new Egyptian Army, when it appeared that they corresponded with him, and that English officers were to be placed in the Egyptian Army under his orders. If the Government were to refuse to reinstate Colonel Baker's name in *The Army List*, or otherwise do away with the effect of its removal, it would be equivalent to proclaiming that they had one standard for officers in England and another for Egypt, and that men were fit for Egypt who were not fit for England. This would not agree with the Government pretensions of re-organizing Egypt, and this example set in the Military Department might be followed in the Civil Service. But the Government must have thought of these considerations before they selected Colonel Baker for the service in which he was now engaged, and which he could not have obtained except by their recommendation.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, my answer to the Question of the noble Lord is that it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to reinstate the name of Colonel Valentine Baker in the list of officers in Her Majesty's Service.

EGYPT (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I rise to ask the noble Earl opposite, Whether he has any information to give with respect to the intention and policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt? I do not rise with any sanguine anticipation that I shall get a satisfactory answer, because of the language which has already been used by the Head of the Government "elsewhere." But I feel bound, at all events, to justify myself for putting the Question by calling your attention to the peculiar position in which Parliament stands with respect to the decision of the Government on this momentous question. When first these troubles began in the summer, almost simultaneously it was announced that a Conference was going to be held; and while a Conference is being held it is not considered seemly or consistent with the interest of the Public Service that any discussion should take place about the matters which are submitted to the Conference. For that reason the matter was not the subject of great discussion. I do not know that the Conference achieved very much; but I think its principal achievement was to silence the British Parliament. Before the Conference came to a close—if, indeed, it has come to a close—a war arose—I beg pardon, I should say the suppression of a military rebellion took place—which did not in any way belong to the proceedings of that Conference, or issue out of them; but which was, in fact, rather contrary, in the view of many Members of the Conference, to the spirit in which that Conference was assembled. But the military operations in which Her Majesty's Government have been engaged, effected, with regard to Parliament, precisely the same result which had been effected by the peaceful discussions in which they had been engaged before, and it was still impossible for Parliament to discuss the matter. Now the war is closed, and no sooner is it closed than Her Majesty's Government has commenced negotiations; and now, on the strength of those negotiations, they will tell us that it is impossible to make any statement to Parliament. It is possible this process may go further. A fresh war may come out of the negotiations, and then it will be impossible for Her Majesty's Government to make any statement whatever as to the political measures which Her Majesty's Government desire to adopt, and then there may be another Conference, and so on. We have had no statement whatever upon authority with respect to the main end to which Her Majesty's Government are tending. Now, I say, if total ignorance is hard to bear, it is not, perhaps, quite so hard as ignorance relieved by the occasional fitful gleam of incorrect information. Though Her Majesty's Government have not spoken, we have received information which I cannot but believe is incorrect—no doubt unintentionally so—from a distinguished statesman who stands on the threshold of the Cabinet, who represents the important Department of the Colonial Office.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: He is in the Treasury.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Then I am afraid he is more interested still. His statement is that Egypt is to be left to "stew in her own juice." That dark saying has given me much perplexity to solve, and it is because of the impossibility of attaching any satisfactory meaning to those proverbial and mysterious words that I have come as a suppliant to the noble Earl for some information. The difficulty of leaving Egypt to stew in her own juice is, in the first place, to understand precisely what the process was to which this distinguished statesman referred. I cannot believe that Her Majesty's Government have for one moment desired to leave Egypt to absolute anarchy. To do so would be utterly to condemn the whole of the policy of the war. It would be to say that all this valuable blood has been spilt, that these terrible risks have been run, that this mighty force has been dispersed, and that heavy burdens have been cast upon the English taxpayer, in vain. I cannot believe that Her Majesty's Government would deliberately leave the whole of Egypt to anarchy. Then it is said, stewing in her own juice means that Egypt is to be left to flourish in an orderly, and contented, and progressive condition, without any aid or support from any external source. I think that those, whoever they may be, who look with much hopefulness upon this process forget the enormous change which has taken place in the position of the Khedive in consequence of the events of this year. I do not say it for the purpose of expressing blame. I merely desire to record it as an historical fact that Her Majesty's Government preferred to postpone the period of their intervention till the Khedive was absolutely overthrown by his rebellious soldiers; that they deliberately preferred to do that rather than interfere at a time when his soldiery were submissive and his authority intact. The result of this fact is that the position of the Khedive when he comes back is as far removed as possible from his position when he went away. He comes back on foreign bayonets. I think, in one of the noble Earl's speeches, he said it was our duty to uphold the Khedive, and I have no doubt that was the intention; but it is not what has been done. The noble Earl has not held up the Khedive; he has picked up the Khedive. Nothing could be more widely opposed than these two processes in their results. What is the Khedive to depend upon if he is to have no external assistance? Do not let it be supposed that I am speaking with any want of sympathy for him, or any want of admiration for his character. I highly honour the steadfast good faith he has shown to the English Government—that manliness and regard for his pledged word which we do not always meet with in Asiatics with whom we have to deal. But there is no doubt that the ordinary sources of strength which supports an Oriental Sovereign will be found wanting to him. An Oriental Sovereign may rest on the unbroken tradition and the power of his family coming down from some anterior date. When the Khedive left Cairo he had the traditions of Mehemet Ali's great performances and the unbroken power of his House since that time. These traditions are shattered now, and can give him no possible support. Up to that time he was, at least, supposed to rest on the adhesion and affection of his Mahometan subjects; but we know in this case, so far as it has acted at all, Mahometan feeling has been adverse to him, and that what has been done has been done avowedly in the teeth of the Caliph of Islam. Oriental Potentates often rest, as Mehemet Ali himself did, on the affection and adhesion of the Army; but that Army has become mutinous, has been dispersed, and the Khedive can no longer rest upon it. There are none of the ordinary elements of Mahometan society on which we can safely base the restoration of the Khedive's power. I do not say that they may not grow up; I do not say that after a sufficient lapse of time, if his Government is strong, and firm, and equitable, he may not acquire sources of power and support which are independent of any foreign aid; but one effect of our having allowed him to be overthrown, instead of keeping him upright while he yet stood, is this—that there is no power and no force on which he can rely in Mahometan society; and unless we are prepared to do the business over again, and to leave Egypt to an anarchy which is inconsistent with all our professions, and fatal to our interests, he must be sustained by that which is the only thing upright in that land — namely, the power of Great Britain. I am aware there are many ways in which that power can be applied. I do not now inquire into what way it can be most profitably applied; but whatever that way may be, it will be inconsistent with the cynical recommendation that Egypt should be allowed to stew in her own juice. It is not so much in the hope of receiving a satisfactory answer, as with the belief that the noble Earl will find himself able to give some information to many people in this country who are anxious on this question, that I ask him to tell us that British power will continue to uphold the Khedive, even though he may prefer to defer to a future period information as to the precise means by which that power will be applied. At all events, if he gives me no answer, at least I can say this—that though Her Majesty's Government have a strict Constitutional right to refuse information while negotiations are going on, yet by the peculiar sequence of events during the present year they have severely strained that right; and they must not be surprised, if they continue to maintain reserve on this point, that the greatest anxiety will be felt, because men must know that it is to the power of England that Egypt will ultimately look, and they will feel a deep solicitude lest by any imprudent pledges now, or, still more, any imprudent concessions, the power of England to perform that duty in the future may be compromised.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I must say I was considerably alarmed at the prospect of having to answer the Question of which the noble Marquess gave Notice, and I am relieved to find that it appears even to him that I could not be expected at present to give an answer that would be perfectly satisfactory. At the same time, I could not but be struck by the genial and lighthearted manner in which he has approached this important subject. His references to Mr. Courtney remind me of the fact that Mr. Canning was once with difficulty restrained from leaving the House of Commons and coming into the House of Lords in order to answer one of the speeches of Earl Grey. I do not know whether Mr. Courtney will leave the House of Commons, or that Mr. Gladstone will recommend him for a Peerage, in order that he may come here to answer the speech that has been made to-night; but, failing some such arrangement, I am afraid I cannot undertake to answer for him. I cannot answer, in the first place, why Mr. Courtney should not be allowed to follow the example of the noble Lord the late Governor General of India with regard to the quotation about one stewing in his own juice. Next, I cannot answer for the particular line of policy he has described. Indeed, I have a good precedent for not doing so; for while the Secretary to the Treasury is a man of singular ability and knowledge, I feel about him very much as Lord Beaconsfield felt about Lord Sandon, referring to one of whose speeches the late Earl said that when the Head of a Department who was not in the Cabinet addressed his constituents no official authority ought to be attached to any statement he might make on a matter that was still before the Cabinet; and, if I am not greatly mistaken—and I read the report of the speech of Mr. Courtney—he most distinctly stated that in what he said he spoke only for himself. As to the points touched upon by the noble Marquess, for reasons which will be perfectly obvious to him and to your Lordships, it would be entirely out of keeping with a sense of deep responsibility, which has been increased by the glorious successes of the men whom you have thanked to-day, if I were now to give a crude and premature description of the steps which we are about to take. I am relieved, however, of the necessity of doing so; and I am able to answer the only Question which the noble Marquess has really put by saying that it certainly is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to maintain the Khedive as the Head of the State in Egypt.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

QUESTION.

In reply to the Marquess of SALISBURY,

EARL GRANVILLE said it was proposed that the House, at its rising, should adjourn until the 10th of November.

Moved, "That the House do adjourn to Friday the 10th day of November next."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS—IMPRISONMENT OF THE REV. S. F. GREEN FOR CONTEMPT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I wish to ask the noble Earl a Question of which I have only been able to give him private Notice. I received a letter on Tuesday from the Archbishop of Canterbury requesting me, on his behalf, to ask the Government their intentions with respect to the imprisonment of Mr. Green, and particularly what measures they propose to take to procure his release? I feel the importance of a request coming from such a high authority; otherwise I should not have thought it a matter in which I should have stood in the way of any Member of the Episcopal Bench who wished to take it up. I need hardly say I have no sympathy with the contra-legal attitude assumed by Mr. Green, nor has the Archbishop. That the existing laws must be obeyed when pronounced upon by a constituted authority seems to me so elementary a principle that I am surprised anyone can doubt it. It may be there are occasions on which conscientious disapproval may prevent a man from obeying the law; but I cannot understand that conscientious disapproval of the law should compel him to remain in an office to which he has been appointed on the distinct understanding that he should obey the law. Though I wish to guard myself against being supposed to sympathize with Mr. Green, so far as his contra-legal position is concerned, and though I do not wish to express any opinion whatever—and, indeed, know very little as to the nature of the controversy which has been going on upon the subject—I imagine there cannot be two opinions in the House that the proper remedy for such an evil as Mr. Green's declaration that he will not obey the law is not his imprisonment; the proper remedy, if he will not fulfil the legal conditions of the office he holds, is that he should cease to hold that office; and that he should be imprisoned for more than a year is not only wrong, but monstrous. I cannot understand why Her Majesty's Government have allowed the matter to proceed so far; I do not think they are sufficiently alive to the danger they are running—not by virtue of the accuracy of Mr. Green's contention, but by the sufferings he is undergoing—of serious schism in the Church of England. I cannot acquit the Government of responsibility in this matter. Whether it is in the Prerogative of the Crown to interfere I do not know; different opinions are held; but this, at least, is matter of fact. In 1881 and 1882 Bills were sent down from this House which would have the effect of releasing Mr. Green; the Government would only have had to raise a finger and the Bill would have been passed; but in each case the Bills were allowed by the Government to be counted out in a House of Commons in which the Government has such a commanding majority, and when the attendance at the end of the Session depends mainly upon the Government. It cannot be contended for a moment that the Government are free from responsibility for the fact that the repeated efforts of this House to apply a remedy to this great scandal have entirely failed. The Archbishop reminds me that he applied to Mr. Gladstone early in the Recess, and he was assured that the matter would receive consideration; but at the present time, and in the present condition of the legal circumstances of the case, there seems to be no more prospect of the release of Mr. Green than there was many months ago. I say the Government are incurring serious responsibility and are running considerable danger by allowing this matter to drag on. It entirely depends on them to say what should be done. Even now they may allow the last Bill, which is not killed yet, to pass through the House of Commons; but if they allow the continuance of what, apart from all theological opinions, is an admitted scandal, on them the responsibility must rest.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, that very many of the clergy and laity considered that Mr. Green had supported the law of the Church against infringement on the part of the State. The learned Judge who sentenced Mr. Green was appointed solely by Act of Parliament. He was called Dean of the Arches, but he had never been canonically appointed to that office. As one who approved the course Mr. Green had taken, he desired to say that he and those who agreed with him repudiated the idea that the course which had been taken was intentionally in opposition to the law.

EARL GRANVILLE: In reply to the Question of the noble Marquess, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government are advised that the only proper course of dealing with this matter under the present law, and under the present circumstances, is that some person whose application can properly be received should make an application to the Judge with regard to Mr. Green's release. We are further informed that the right rev. Prelate has already taken the proper steps to make application to the Court of Arches with a view of seeing whether the Court can, under the circumstances, order his release. I may remind the noble Marquess that, though there is to be no legislation during the remainder of this Session, Her Majesty's Government have given a pledge to introduce a Bill which will deal with these questions of contempt of Court in all cases both ecclesiastical and civil.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: And is Mr. Green to remain in prison till that Bill passes?

EARL GRANVILLE: I have already stated that measures are being taken at this moment with the object of obtaining Mr. Green's release.

LORD DENMAN said, that the adjournment of the House of Lords on the Bill of Pains and Penalties was from 9th September till 3rd October; while the House of Commons sat on till 13th September, and then adjourned to 17th October, and on that day was prorogued. Bills which had passed one House of Parliament, like Mr. Green's Imprisonment Bill, as pointed out by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), were not extinct; and if they passed with any amendment by the House of Commons, time should be given for their consideration by this House before the Prorogation.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned accordingly at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Friday the 10th day of November next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 26*th October,* 1882.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE INDIAN CONTINGENT—INCIDENCE OF EXPENSES.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, What is now the estimated cost of the Indian contingent to Egypt; whether the amount incurred by the Indian Government is to be repaid wholly or in part from the revenues of this Country; and, whether Papers would be presented to Parliament containing the correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India (regarding the troops sent from India to Egypt) dating back from the first intimation that in case of necessity Her Majesty's Government proposed to employ Indian troops?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, up to the present time the Indian Government has not been able to furnish me with any further estimate of the cost of the Indian Contingent than that which I gave to the House last August. Now, however, that the whole of the Contingent has been re-embarked and the duration of the operations is known, I expect very shortly to receive a revised and more accurate estimate from the Government of India. Till that is received it is impossible for the Government to make a final proposal for the adoption of the House as to the division of the charge; but there are certain expenses which have been incurred by the Indian Government which it was always intended to repay, and which, in any event, we shall propose to repay from the Revenues of this country. Papers will certainly be presented; but the Correspondence with the Indian Government in regard to the employment of the Indian Contingent is as yet necessarily incomplete, and I do not think it desirable to print it in its present state.

MR. ONSLOW asked, if the noble Marquess could state whether the expense would be more or less than what he had estimated—namely, £1,800,000; and, whether Her Majesty's Government proposed, at the present time, to charge any portion of that amount on the Indian Revenue? If that were so, he would, on the first opportunity, move a Resolution deprecating such a course. He also wished to know, whether the Papers would include all the financial arrangements which the Indian Government had concluded?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have not received any statement or reply up to the present time as to any change in the financial Estimates of the Indian Government. I cannot state what Papers will be presented until I receive them. I have no reason to suppose that the original Estimate I gave will, in the opinion of the Government of India, be exceeded, or even that it will be reached. As to the proposal whether India shall pay anything or not, I have nothing at the present time to add to the statement I have already made.

MR. ONSLOW subsequently gave Notice that in consequence of the unsatisfactory reply of the noble Marquess he would repeat the Question that day week.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—OFFICIAL VALUATORS.

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is true that, at a meeting of some of his constituents in Coleraine, on Saturday, the 14th October, a resolution was passed demanding of Her Majesty's Government the dismissal or removal of the Court Valuers recently appointed by or with the sanction of the Government, under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881;" whether such resolution was forwarded to him, requesting him to support and enforce its prayer on the Government; and, whether he has undertaken that he would make it his business to place the views of the meeting as strongly as he could before the Lord Lieutenant; and, if so, what is the result of his representations to the Government as regarded the Valuers being retained or dismissed?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER): Sir, a large and important meeting of Ulster tenant farmers, most of whom were my constituents, was held at Coleraine, in the county of Londonderry, on the 14th of this month, at which a resolution was adopted expressing great apprehension at the appointment of Court Valuers, and calling for their removal, on the ground that their appointment was opposed to the letter and spirit of the Land Act, and to the previous practice of the administration of the law. This resolution was forwarded to me, with the view of having it brought before the Government, and I undertook to place the views of the meeting as strongly as I could before the Lord Lieutenant, expressing my belief that they would receive careful attention. I accordingly did so, but am unable to state whether my representations have had any result.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Court Valuers recently appointed were chosen by the Land Commission on their own responsibility, in accordance with the Land Law (Ireland) Act; and, whether Her Majesty's Government interfered in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Court Valuers recently appointed were chosen by the Land Commission on their own responsibility, and the Government did not interfere.

EGYPT—THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any arrangement or convention has been concluded providing that the cost of the British Army of occupation shall be charged upon the revenues of Egypt?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, no Convention has been concluded; but the question of the cost of the Army in Egypt is, of course, under consideration. I fear that it will not be in my power, looking to the circumstances stated on Tuesday by the Prime Minister, to give the House information with regard to it.

INDIA—LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence between the Government of India and the various Local Governments on Lord Ripon's Scheme for the extension of Local Self-Government in India?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the Correspondence has not been received officially; but I have already asked that I may be furnished with that which is referred to in the Resolution, and with all subsequent Correspondence and orders on the subject. As soon as I receive it, I will say whether it can be laid upon the Table.

EGYPT—THE TRANSPORT AND COMMISSARIAT.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will lay upon the Table any Reports received from Sir Garnet Wolseley or others on the efficiency, or otherwise, of the Transport and Commissariat arrangements during the Egyptian campaign?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Captain Aylmer), I have to state that Sir Garnet Wolseley has not made any general Report on the Commissariat and Transport arrangements of the Egyptian campaign. The only mention of the Department is in a despatch not yet printed, in which certain of its officers are named as having his entire approval as to the way in which they discharged their duties.

CRIMINAL LAW—ARMED BURGLARS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in consequence of the increasing risks from armed burglars, as recently shown in several attempted burglaries, he is prepared to make such alteration in the Law as will invariably add the punishment of flogging to all burglars convicted of making use of deadly weapons, or even at the time being in possession of them?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have ordered Returns to be prepared to show how far the offences referred to are or are not on the increase throughout the country. I have not received the full Returns yet, but only those for the Metropolitan district. In the course of the last year there were two cases in which firearms were actually used by burglars, and three cases in which they were found in the possession of the burglars, but not used. I agree with the hon. Member that this is a matter deserving very serious consideration. I cannot say, however, that at present I have come to the conclusion to adopt the measure suggested. I cannot say how soon I may receive the Returns.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the total number of applications, under the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Bill, which have been lodged with the Land Commissioners; how many of such applications have been heard and disposed of; and, how many dismissed, as not coming within the provisions of the Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, up to and including yesterday, the Land Commissioners had received 3,628 applications, comprising 5,393 holdings. Out of this number of holdings 3,213 were the subject of joint applications and 2,180 of separate applications. In the case of the joint applications, 1,141 conditional orders have been made, out of which number 561 have been made absolute. Orders have not yet been made in the case of the separate applications. Up to the 21st of October six investigators had been appointed. Investigators have reported in about 100 cases, and conditional orders will be made in a day or two. Twenty-four cases have been struck out without prejudice to either party, as to being adjudicated on subsequently. These were cases in which several tenancies were comprised, and where a *primâ facie* doubt existed, such as would render a local inquiry necessary. So far as I can learn, no cases have as yet been absolutely dismissed on their merits.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether it was not the case that 100,000 tenants in Ireland would be found to be in arrears; and, if he would inquire what was the reason that only 5,000 had applied to take advantage of the Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, he should require Notice of the Question, in which case he would try and get the information.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SPEECH OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Address or Speech he made recently to the Liberal Tenant Right Deputation as to the conduct of the Valuers appointed under the Irish Land Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have no notes of the speech to which the hon. Member refers. My remarks ran to a considerable length, and were entirely framed in reference to what had been said by the gentlemen who composed the deputation. On inquiry of the authorities at the Table, I am told that it is, perhaps, unprecedented to lay a speech on the Table of the House, or rather to lay speeches, for I certainly should have the strongest objection to present my own speech without the other speeches that called it forth, and to which it was a reply. Moreover, there is not the slightest occasion for what would be a most serious innovation upon the Parliamentary practice, because the proceedings of the deputation are very fully reported in the Dublin papers. I read the reports next morning while the matter was still fresh in my mind, and am quite ready to take the responsibility of anything in the report either of *The Irish Times*, *The Freeman's Journal*, or *The Daily Express*.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—OFFICIAL VALUATORS — APPOINTMENT OF MR. BUTLER.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the pledge he gave before the adjournment that Mr. Butler, Secretary of the Carlow Grand Jury, should either resign that appointment or his position as Valuer under the Land Act, has been carried out?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the hon. Member will find, if he refers to my answer, that he is under a slight misapprehension with regard to this matter. What I pledged myself to do was to communicate to the Land Commissioners my view that Mr. Butler should be called on to resign one or other of the two appointments. I have accordingly done so on the part of the Government, and I can only express my regret that the Commissioners should have arrived at a determination to allow him to retain both offices.

Mr. HEALY: Might I ask whether this establishes a difference of opinion between the Irish Government and the Land Commissioners respecting the Court Valuers; whether the Land Commissioners think this gentleman ought to hold the two appointments, and the Irish Government think he should not?

Mr. TREVELYAN: There is a difference of opinion upon this point.

FRANCE AND TUNIS—RUMOURED TREATY.

Mr. PULESTON (for Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state the main conditions of a Treaty alleged to have been secretly concluded between the Bey of Tunis and the French Republic, by which Tunis has been virtually made a French Province; and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to recognise such a Treaty?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have no official information of the conclusion of such a Treaty, and until the terms of such a Treaty are known to them they are unable to state the view they take of its stipulations.

EGYPT—MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY—THE CHAMBER OF NOTABLES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in any plan for the internal government of Egypt, Her Majesty's Government contemplate recognising Ministerial responsibility and the control by the Egyptians, through their Representatives, over taxation and expenditure; and, whether, in regard to any arrangement for the future Administration of the Country, it is intended to consult the Chamber of Notables?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, this Question will be answered by the Prime Minister in reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), which is substantially the same.

EGYPT—APPOINTMENT OF BAKER PASHA.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Baker Pacha, lately a General in the service of the Sultan, has been appointed Commander in Chief of the armed force of the Khedive, at the suggestion, or with the assent of, the British officials now in Egypt; and, whether the scheme, published in the English newspapers, and purporting to emanate from the aforesaid Pacha, by which it is proposed to bring into existence an army of mercenaries, recruited from various parts of the Globe, and officered by Englishmen, meets with the approval of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Sir Edward Malet informed Her Majesty's Government that the Khedive wished to appoint General Baker to command his Army. Sir Edward Malet was told by telegraph that if the appointment was the personal wish of the Khedive, Her Majesty's Government would make no objection. The Khedive replied that—

> "Not only was it his personal wish that General Baker should come, but also his prayer; that he and his Ministers were entirely of one mind on the subject, and that he earnestly begged that the General would come as soon as possible."

Her Majesty's Government were not consulted by the Egyptian Government on the steps taken to recruit an army.

Mr. O'KELLY gave Notice that tomorrow he should ask, whether the Sultan was consulted before the appointment of Baker Pasha; and, whether the Government were aware that Baker Pasha had left Constantinople without the permission of the Sultan, and was now in the position of a deserter from the Sultan's Army?

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is true, as has been reported, that

> "Headings of the tunnel or tunnels under the Straits of Dover are being driven with increased rapidity from the French side towards the British Coast;"

and, whether our Government will remonstrate with that of France with a view to obtain the stoppage of such works?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I have no official information with regard to facts alleged to have taken place in connection with the works of the Channel Tunnel on the French Coast. In fact, I have no other information than what I have gathered from the newspapers. But my hon. and gallant Friend need not be under any apprehension that the Tunnel will be built without the consent and against the will of this country. Under these circumstances, it would not be useful or even dignified for Her Majesty's Government to remonstrate with the French Government upon the matter.

ARMY—THE FIRST CLASS ARMY RESERVE.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can state why it is not intended to demobilise the soldiers transferred to the First Class Army Reserve since June 30th 1881, although the emergency for which these men were recalled to Service with the Colours has now passed away?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Alexander), I have to state that if he refers to the Queen's Proclamation calling out the Reserves, he will see that the emergency therein defined has by no means ceased. I am anxious, however, to discharge the Reservists from the Colours as soon as practicable; and I have already given orders for the discharge of all those who had joined the Reserve before July, 1881.

EGYPT—ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the statement contained in the "Daily News" of October 25th, that

> "Two Members of the National Chamber, accused of having furnished Arabi with voluntary contributions are now chained together in an underground dungeon, which has only been opened thrice in the last fifteen days. The condition of the prisoners and of the den is foul beyond description. There are scores of such instances illustrative of the cowardly and ferocious character of the attempts to crush the national movement?"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the attention of Her Majesty's Government was called to the statement to which my hon. Friend refers, and Sir Edward Malet has been instructed by telegraph to report immediately on the subject.

ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS—IMPRISONMENT OF THE REV. S. F. GREEN FOR CONTEMPT.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that, three years having elapsed since the inhibition of the Rev. S. F. Green, the benefice which he held is now vacant; and, if so, whether any reason can be given for his further detention in prison; and, whether he would now advise the Crown to exercise the prerogative of mercy, and to secure his immediate release?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I think I have already stated to the House that I have been advised by the Law Officers of the Crown that this is a case in which the Prerogative of Mercy could hardly be properly or Constitutionally exercised. The hon. Member will see that the matter is one which is within the cognizance of the judicial bodies for contempt of whose jurisdiction Mr. Green is now imprisoned; but I am happy to learn that the Bishop of Manchester has recently brought the case under the notice of the Judge of the Court of Arches, and I hope that the result of that representation may be that which I think everybody will desire under the circumstances.

EGYPT—DISTURBANCES IN THE SOUDAN—THE "FALSE PROPHET."

MR. BUXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any information, which he can lay before the House, or whether he has any reason to doubt the truth of the announcements in the papers of very serious disturbances in the Soudan and Upper Egypt, and of heavy losses incurred by the troops of the Khedive?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, there is no doubt that the Soudan is in a disturbed condition; but there is some reason to suppose that the accounts which have appeared in certain papers are exaggerated. The matter is receiving attention at Cairo.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT subsequently gave Notice that he intended to ask, Whether the Government propose to take any steps, and, if so, what steps, in regard to the reported defeat of the Egyptian troops in the Soudan by the troops of the "False Prophet?"

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Question has already been answered by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State up to the limit of such knowledge as we possess. Of course, it is difficult for me, as I cannot say absolutely when we shall have full information, to state when we shall be in a condition to say more. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will put his Question down for Monday, I will give him what information I then possess.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—MURDER OF CONSTABLE KAVANAGH.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, now that a conviction has been obtained for the murder of sub-constable Kavanagh, he will recommend that the fine of £1,500, leviable on the Barony of Ballynahinch, be remitted, either by special action on the part of the Government or by the Government paying the £1,500 to the Barony constable, and thus providing for the family of the murdered man?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the sum referred to in the Question of the hon. and gallant Member was a presentment made under the provisions of the Grand Jury Act, and the Government, therefore, cannot interfere with it.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—OFFICIAL VALUATORS — APPOINTMENT OF MR. FITZGERALD.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the case that the County Court Judge of Waterford, Mr. Waters, Q.C. has appointed a Mr. Fitzgerald as Court Valuer in cases coming before him under the Land Act of 1881; whether this is the same Mr. Fitzgerald who was produced as valuer on behalf of the tenants in nearly all the cases heard before the Sub-Commissioners at their recent sittings at Dungarvan, county Waterford, and was introduced to the Court by the solicitor for the tenants, as the "County Court valuer;" whether he is himself an occupier of land in the neighbourhood of Dungarvan, and admitted, on cross-examination, that he was not on good terms with his landlord; and, whether he will represent to the County Court Judge the extreme impropriety of appointing a person of this class, with a direct personal interest in the reduction of rents, to value and advise on interests opposed to his own in his own immediate neighbourhood and county?

MR. HEALY: Before the Question is answered, I wish to ask you a Question, Sir, upon a point of Order. The hon. Member refers to the "extreme impropriety of appointing a person of this class, with a direct personal interest in the reduction of rents;" and I would ask, whether, as that involves debatable matter, it can be put?

MR. SPEAKER, in reply, said, that, although the Question did, in some sense, bring doubtful matter before the House, as prejudging the question, under the circumstances, he did not think it right to interpose between the Minister and the hon. Member, who put the Question upon his own responsibility.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, Mr. Waters has been good enough to favour me with a report in reference to this Question. He informs me that, on each occasion on which the Land Commissioners were not able to give him the assistance of an official valuer in the County Waterford, he appointed Mr. Fitzgerald to act as independent valuer for his Court. He states that Mr. Fitzgerald is a graduate of Trinity College, a magistrate of the County Waterford, where he rents the demesne lands of Sea View, near Dungarvan—a very large property of several hundred acres, which he sub-lets to tenants—and a landlord in the County Limerick, and that he has thorough confidence in his ability and impartiality. In a postscript, Mr. Waters further informs me that he knew nothing of what occurred before the Sub-Commissioners, except that Mr. Fitzgerald had informed him he was a witness on behalf of tenants in two cases. Since then Mr. Waters says he has been asked on behalf of three landlords who have cases pending in his Court—one case being on the estate of the Duke of Devonshire—to send Mr. Fitzgerald to value the lands. I have no intention of making any representation on the subject to the County Court Judge.

MR. TOTTENHAM: I beg to give Notice that, on Monday next, I shall ask a similar Question, whether a like objection was made in the County Antrim?

Mr. O'DONNELL gave Notice that, on Monday, he would ask, Whether the right hon. Gentleman knew that the decisions of the Sub-Commissioner in Dungarvan had been received with general disapproval in the neighbourhood?

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in connection with certain civil proceedings, soldiers have been ordered to the Isle of Skye; and, if so, will he explain the circumstances which have called forth a step so exceptional?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, we have, as yet, only received brief telegraphic messages regarding this matter. Until the full official Report, which has been ordered, has been received, the Government will not be in a position to decide upon the steps most proper to be taken for the vindication of the law in the Island referred to.

EGYPT—RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AT CAIRO—THE "HOLY CARPET."

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked, Whether it was with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government that Sir Garnet Wolseley attended officially the Mahometan ceremony of the departure of the holy carpet for Mecca; and, if not, whether the course taken on that occasion has been approved by the Government?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the War Office has no information as to the occurrence to which his Question refers, or the reasons for it. After Sir Garnet Wolseley's return at the end of the week, he will, doubtless, explain the circumstances.

EGYPT—THE SUEZ CANAL.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in any negotiations opened with other Powers, or in any proposals made by Her Majesty's Government for the settlement of affairs in Egypt, care has been taken to provide, firstly, for guaranteeing the freedom of navigation of the Suez Canal, whether for Her Majesty's Ships of War or of the Mercantile Marine, both in time of peace and of war; secondly, for securing to the Egyptian people, within the limits of international obligations, and by representative institutions, some control over the legislation, administration, and expenditure of their Country; and, thirdly, for the extinction of slavery in Egypt and the suppression of the Slave Trade in the Red Sea?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Question of the hon. Member refers to three matters of the greatest possible importance. Two of them refer to the guaranteeing of the freedom of navigation of the Suez Canal, and to the securing to the Egyptian people some control over the legislation of their country, both of these being questions connected with the subject-matter with which the recent Expedition has been concerned. The third matter referred to in the Question does not belong directly to that subject-matter, but to a design and a policy which has been pursued by this country for a great number of years with the deliberate approval—even warm approval—and concurrence of the people. All that I can say at present about these three subjects—and I hope the hon. Gentleman will be satisfied with it—is that they do, and will continue to, command the close attention of the Government; and if I do not enter into details it is simply and solely from the belief that to enter prematurely into such details might be disadvantageous to the purposes which, I believe, the hon. Member and the Government contemplate in common.

EGYPT—REPORTED MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, What efforts have been made by the Government to ascertain the existence and whereabouts of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, Lieutenant Charrington, and their companions?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, no effort has been spared by the Government to ascertain the fate of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, Lieutenant Charrington, and their companions. The conduct of the search from Suez has been intrusted to Colonel Warren, R.E., an officer who has been connected with the Palestine Exploration Society, and who is well acquainted with the district and with the habits of the Bedouins. I need not repeat the account, which has already appeared in the newspapers, of the preliminary steps taken by Colonel Warren previously to the 20th instant. On that day Colonel Warren, with Lieutenants Burton and Haynes, accompanied by about 150 Bedouins, including all the principal Sheiks who could be collected, left Suez for Moses' Wells on their way to Nakhl. We have to-day received from Captain Stephenson, the senior naval officer at Suez, a telegram dated October 26 (this day), which I will read to the House—

> "News from Warren by four Bedouins, dated 23rd, top of Wady Sudr; stopped at mid-day, 22nd, at Wady Cahalin, where Palmer's party last encamped; swept up valley in extended order, short distance found remnants of baggage about a mile from Spring, came on spot where baggage was looted, three private letters, some notes, also volume of Byron's works belonging to Charrington; nothing found belonging to Palmer or Gill. About 17 miles above Spring and 1,000 feet above the sea saw three Bedouins, captured one belonging to Aligal Tribe wearing tobacco pouch belonging to Charrington, states it was given him by Ali Murshed, Sheikh of Terebin, who is said to have killed Palmer's party; hope to get him shortly, as we have captured his wife, children, sheep, &c. Shall not reach Nakhl for a few days; endeavouring to obtain persons implicated in this neighbourhood. All party doing well."

Besides this search which is being conducted from Suez, inquiries are being independently prosecuted from Gaza, under the direction of Mr. Moore, Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem. Her Majesty's Government have every hope that in this way the truth will soon be ascertained. I may add that we have been careful at once to communicate to the relatives of the members of the missing Expedition every item of intelligence as received.

MR. MACFARLANE: May I ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he has considered the propriety of sending a vessel up the Arabian Coast of the Red Sea, as possibly by that means there may be a chance of finding these missing gentlemen?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, every step that has been taken has been taken under the advice of those on the spot—Mr. West, Consul at Suez, and the various Egyptian officers—who are best acquainted with the Bedouins and their habits. Colonel Warren, before starting for this Expedition, had been up the Eastern arm of the Red Sea, and had been for some time at Tor, engaged in obtaining all the information that could be had.

EGYPT—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government abide by their Despatch of January 16th of this year, in which Lord Lyons is instructed

> "To state to M. Gambetta that Her Majesty's Government concur with him that the proposal of the Chamber of Notables in regard to voting that portion of the Budget which deals with unassigned resources and the expenses of administration" (i.e. the portion which does not affect the service of the debt) "cannot be agreed to;"

whether the Conference at Constantinople, representing the "Concert of Europe," still continues its meetings; and, whether he can state what measures Her Majesty's Government are taking to secure tranquillity in Egypt, and to maintain the predominance of British influence in that Country and over the Suez Canal?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, in answer to the first and third paragraphs of the Question of the hon. Member, I can only refer to the statement made by the Prime Minister on Tuesday, in reply to the inquiry of the right hon. Member for North Devon, respecting the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. As regards the second paragraph, I have to state that the meetings of the Conference at Constantinople have been discontinued.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT inquired whether it was meant that the Conference had actually been broken up?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I can use no other word with regard to the sittings of the Conference than that they are discontinued.

MOTIONS.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—VOTE OF THANKS TO HER MAJESTY'S NAVAL AND MILITARY FORCES.

RESOLUTIONS.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that he wished to call attention to the fact that the Notice which Her Majesty's Government had given of this Vote spoke of "the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive." Seeing that there was an Amendment to be moved, he would suggest to the Prime Minister whether it would not be better to confine the Vote of Thanks to the services of the Army in Egypt, and leave out the debatable matter as to a military rebellion to be discussed on some other occasion.

Mr. MOLLOY, in supporting the suggestion, said, he had given Notice of an Amendment to the 2nd Resolution, that all the words after the words "the occupation of Cairo" should be omitted.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, it appears to me that it is necessary, and that it is usual in a Vote of Thanks of this kind, to give a more marked or pointed idea of the character of the services rendered than would be conveyed by a mere colourless reference to military operations. It seems to me as if we were rather ashamed of giving to these military operations their true name. I do not think this Notice can have been brought with the intention of raising any differences of opinion of that kind, and I hope the Amendment will not be moved, because the Vote as it stands can have no possible effect in committing hon. Gentlemen on the point.

Mr. MOLLOY, in reply, said: If the Prime Minister will remove everything of a debatable nature I will be happy to withdraw my Amendment. In order to effect that, the part of the Vote which speaks of a military rebellion should be withdrawn; and if that is not done I shall press my Amendment to a division.

Mr. GLADSTONE, in rising to move the Vote of Thanks of which he had given Notice, said: Sir, I was about to have said—and I have not yet abandoned the hope that I may say—that I was conscious, in rising to discharge the task now incumbent upon me, that I should at least have the advantage of the unanimous sympathy and support of the House, believing that it will be seen that these words—words of description—are words really not beyond the necessity of the case, and are thoroughly conformable to usage, and by no means do more than describe the fact. Nor have they any tendency to commit hon. Gentlemen with regard to their views of the ground and nature of the recent complications in Egypt. I shall yet trust that the House is not to be deprived of the advantages and the grace of rendering its thanks to distinguished men without any dissentient voice, or any rival proposals. Understanding the advantages of that concurrence, I must request the indulgence of the House, and commence with this apology—that I conceive it to be extremely difficult to discharge, even ever so partially and imperfectly, what is the duty of an historian by means of any such bald and slight outline of the recent occurrences as I can at the present moment, with propriety, lay before the House. I am sensible that I may fail in justice to many distinguished acts that have been done, and that I may fail in giving the due proportion to the several facts, and to the services of persons to whom I shall have to refer. It will not be, Sir, from a want of desire adequately to perform my duty, nor from a want of a very deep sense that there never was an occasion upon which the Houses of Parliament in this country had either stronger or more unqualified and unmixed reasons to feel from the heart those sentiments of gratitude to which we are about to give formal expression through the medium of the Motion I have the honour to submit. Now, Sir, I will say a few words severally, in the first place, on the operations that have been performed; in the second place, on the Services which, under the authority of Her Majesty, have been engaged in its performance; then upon the principal officers who have had the chief executive responsibility; and, lastly, I would refer to the two highly distinguished men, the Admiral and the General, to whom we are above all indebted, under Providence, for the accomplishment of this great and important success in Egpt. With respect to the operation that has been performed, I know that I have a certain danger to encounter. It is supposed—and I am afraid it is sometimes justly supposed—that among the many great characteristics of the people of this country, there are also besetting infirmities, and that, among our infirmities, there are two which, though opposed in their operation, yet may have a moral connection one with the other, a tendency, on the sudden action of the moment, sometimes to exaggerate difficulty and misfortune, and sometimes to overrate successful performance. I endeavour, therefore, Sir, to look at these operations, which will hereafter employ the pen of the historian, as impartially as I can. I would point out, therefore, to the House, in the first place, what was their object. Their object was to bring back from anarchy to order an entire country—a country peopled, if we include the Soudan, by some 8,000,000 of persons, and held against us by a Force that I cannot estimate at less than 60,000, of whom not less than 50,000 were either enlisted in the actual Army of Egypt or were what may be called Reserve men, or ex-soldiers, of that Army, who had returned to the Colours for the occasion. Now, Sir, the means that we had for performing this operation were those of naval transport; and I could not do any sort of justice to the subject without stating, at least in round figures, what has been done in this respect, for I am bound to say that, on this happy occasion, we owe a debt to the Civil Departments under the Admiralty and under the authority of the War Office, which, even though it may be perfectly true that there are some of these Departments that have not yet reached the acme of perfection, yet is only second to that which we owe to the Military and Naval Services. And let me say what has been done with respect to transport. We had to perform this operation at a distance of more than 3,000 miles, from England to Alexandria and from Bombay to Suez. In the course of less than a month nearly 200 vessels were charged with the Army and the material that they had to convey to the scene of action. and those vessels could not have had a tonnage of much less than 400,000 tons. Such was the amount of the agency to meet the difficulties of the distance which it is in the position of this country—and, perhaps, of this country alone in the world—in these times to command. These transports, again—I speak in round numbers—carried 34,000 men, combatants, besides a body of 8,000 to 10,000 non-combatants, and 18,000 animals, intended for service either in the field, or for the civil purposes necessary to the Army. And what, Sir, was the time in which this operation has been conducted by the various Departments concerned? It was on the 20th of July that the Government arrived finally at the conviction that it was impossible to confine operations to the City of Alexandria and to the Forces in its immediate neighbourhood. It was on the 27th of July that the House of Commons supplied us with the financial resources necessary for the prosecution of the work we had in hand. On the 11th of August a *Corps d'Armée* of two divisions, complete in every respect, in every arm, and in every branch of supply, had left the ports of this country for Alexandria. On the 5th of August the despatch of the troops from India had commenced. In the course of the month of August the entire Force was landed in Egypt; and on the 14th of September, after a brief, but not inactive nor inglorious period, the General of the British Army was able to write from the field of Tel-el-Kebir, and with the knowledge of the possession of Cairo, that the war was virtually at an end. Well, Sir, we are greatly indebted to some of our fellow-countrymen for these results; and when I turn to the various Services making up the number of the Naval and Military Forces—of course, in the numbers I have given the Naval Force was not included—when I turn to the various elements of that Force, I feel it is difficult, that it is impossible, to award to them, with minute justice, the credit they deserve; but in truth, Sir, their competition with one another has been so vivid and so sustained that it would be hardly possible for me, were I to enter into details, to fulfil the purpose I have described with anything like exactitude. I may, perhaps, remind the House that Sir Garnet Wolseley wrote from the field of Tel-el-Kebir these remarkable words—

> "I do not believe that in any previous period of our military history has the British Infantry distinguished itself more than upon this occasion."

Sir, as an idea has gone abroad that there is some want of physical force in the British Infantry, unless when it is largely supplemented by the Reserves, the House will not be sorry to learn that the battle, to which I shall have further to refer, was fought with the assistance of only 1,000 men of the Reserve, the whole of the rest of the Army who carried the lines of Tel-el-Kebir being men within the actual term of their service. With respect to the Artillery, its efficiency attracted, I believe, the admiration of all who had the opportunity of observing it. With respect to the Cavalry, when I come to refer to Sir Garnet Wolseley I shall have to say a word upon that arm; but it is not of these forces alone that I ought to speak—I should be guilty of a gross injustice if I did not state that the entire Force which came from India was worthy in every respect of the brotherhood into which they had entered with the Army from this country, and that, as has happened before and will happen again, the Navy vied, even upon shore, in military service with its gallant comrades of the Army. I may even say that the limited Force which was drawn from Malta was worthy likewise of the Service to which it belonged. Sir, it is quite truly said that the campaign was a short one. I said just now that the landing of the troops in Egypt continued pretty much throughout the month of August, especially from India, the Indian troops being slightly in arrear of those that came from this country; but I do not mean to say that the war had not commenced in August. Very far from it. It was a month distinguished by active operations; but this campaign must not be measured by the length of time which it occupied. The surrounding circumstances must also be regarded; the distance, the length of sea voyage, the severity of the climate, the march through the Desert, the exposure to physical influences must also be taken into consideration. For my part, I am not ashamed to say that rarely in my life have I witnessed a more touching spectacle than that offered to our eyes on Sunday last by the return of a portion of the Household Cavalry through London. We have been accustomed to look upon those magnificent young men who form the regiments of the Household Cavalry with unmixed admiration for the vigour and buoyancy of their youth, for their very great physical power, for their splendid appearance; but we have hardly ever associated them with the fatigues and sufferings of war. But on that occasion, however, the most careless eye could not fail to observe that those who had left us in the very height of health and vigour had come back, after these few weeks or months of war, worn, wan, and even in some cases emaciated, by the labours they had freely and zealously undergone on behalf of their Queen and country. Well, Sir, the Vote which I am about to propose presents specially to the notice of the House the names of those officers whom alone it is possible to select on this occasion, for the conditions of our time require us to proceed by selection, when, if mere merit was concerned, the list which I have presented to the House might, indeed, be indefinitely multiplied and prolonged. The principal officers—I do not speak now of the Admiral and the General—to whom I shall have the honour to call the special attention of the House are men whose names are not unknown to us in previous years. In the first place, I may mention Sir John Adye, the Chief of the Staff, who, as the House well knows, is the second self of the Commander in Chief, and who was so associated with him in the operations of the campaign that it is difficult to draw the line of severance between the one and the other. I then come to the Generals of Divisions, General Willis and General Hamley, to whom the gratitude of the House is due for the admirable discharge of their duties as immediately under the General in Chief in command of the Forces. Next to these, Sir, I present to you the names of Sir Archibald Alison, the Duke of Connaught, Sir Evelyn Wood, and General Graham. Sir Archibald Alison has received the most marked token of the confidence of his Sovereign and of his country in being selected to the chief command of the considerable Force now remaining in Egypt, on which the security and tranquillity of that country as yet chiefly depend. Next, Sir, it is with peculiar satisfaction that the House will notice that His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught has, at every point in the detail of this campaign, earned the commendations of his Commander for his thorough knowledge of his Profession, for his intelligent and considerate care for those under his command, and for his perfect conduct when he led that portion of the Army in the field. We may offer, though custom does not permit us to introduce it in a formal shape, our hearty congratulations to Her Majesty upon this opening promise of the career of her gallant Son, for Her Majesty's maternal affections have been, if it were possible, yet more deeply interested than her patriotic sentiments in the issue of this important Expedition. With regard to Sir Evelyn Wood, that experienced servant of his country, though he was, by the chance of war, not present at the centre of operations, yet he was not deprived of the opportunity of showing that he remains worthy of all the reputation which it has been given to him to achieve. With respect to General Graham, I will venture to say a word when I come to speak of Sir Garnet Wolseley. There is one other military officer to whom it is most necessary to refer—I mean Major General Earle, who was in charge of the communications. If the House will bear in mind what is meant by that word, what it was to supply the military and physical needs of the Army by a choice of routes, of which one was the small Sweet Water Canal, never intended for carriage; of which another was a railway, broken up almost all along the line; and of which the third was the Desert, they will understand what kind of service it is that was performed by Major General Earle. Although there are other names that I might dwell upon, I will not do so; because I do not wish, though I may have to do so longer than has been usual upon some of these occasions, unnecessarily to detain the House, for it yet remains to me, in fulfilment of the sketch which I drew at the beginning, to refer to the distinguished men who were the Naval and the Military Commanders of Her Majesty's Forces. They have already accepted the gracious offer of Her Majesty to add their names—Sir Beauchamp Seymour's and Sir Garnet Wolseley's names—to the Roll of Peers; and it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government in due course—and that, I believe, will be very shortly—to submit to the House — following the example which has been set on former occasions—to submit to the House a measure, in connection with that call of those gentlemen to the House of Lords, conferring upon them a suitable annuity in further acknowledgment of their services. With regard to Sir Beauchamp Seymour, undoubtedly it was as Commander of the Fleet in the Mediterranean he found himself charged with the most arduous duties—with duties in respect to the successful performance of which we might have trembled if we had not known, from former experience, much of the nature of the man who was intrusted with the great service at Alexandria. Since the accession of the present Government to Office, and also in performance of his duties as Commander of the Fleet in the Mediterranean—of course, I am not referring now to the propriety or impropriety of any political measure—but the House will agree with me, and I think will unanimously agree with me, that he earned no small title to the gratitude of this country by the extremely difficult services—political as well as naval—which he performed when stationed at Dulcigno, on the Albanian Coast, two years ago; nor can I pass by this occasion without graceful mention of the fact of the admirable manner in which, upon so many occasions, Admirals of the British Fleet have found themselves capable of confronting, and of satisfactorily discharging, political duties of the nicest character which have fallen upon them in connection with the service of their country. It was therefore in the full confidence in this experienced Admiral that we saw him proceed to Alexandria under the instructions he had received; and well did he justify that confidence, for, in Alexandria, he had not merely to conduct with success the important action which is known as the Bombardment, but he had to watch with the nicest care, as a matter of principle, and not merely as matter of vigilant observation, for the moment when it was his duty to act under the instructions he had received. Nothing could be more insidious than the operations by which it was endeavoured to elude his vigilance. According to the information and the advice that we received, had that vigilance been lulled to sleep, had the processes of strengthening the works, which was clandestinely carried on, in despite of formal assurances to the contrary—had these processes been allowed to continue, even for so short a time as for another week, it is too probable that, notwithstanding an overwhelming force of ships, that great operation would not have been concluded without the loss of some of the best blood and vessels of Her Majesty's Navy. Sir, with the valour and skill of Sir Beauchamp Seymour, we have on record that he had to meet an enemy who, on that occasion, showed themselves not unworthy of his steel. It is but just to record that the artillery of the Egyptians was of a high class. It consisted of modern rifle guns, though not in weight, as nearly as possible equal to our own, and there was nothing to complain of in point of courage and capacity on the part of those who served them. In fact, there is every reason to suppose that if we compare the Bombardment of Alexandria with an event which, I think, naturally offers itself for the purposes of comparison—the Bombardment of Algiers, also in the Mediterranean, about 65 years ago—we may draw a satisfactory reflection from placing in comparison with one another the amount of loss suffered by the British on the one occasion and on the other; and yet, as I have said, there is no reason to believe that that difference of loss arose from any inferiority of the Egyptian resistance as compared with the resistance which was offered at Algiers. The numbers of the killed and wounded, which I have not now exactly in my recollection, during the action of the Bombardment were—though we deplore that there should have been any at all—yet they were very limited in number. A few tens, or two or three score, I think, would cover the whole statement, which I have not got accurately before me; but it may be in the recollection of the House that the killed and wounded at Algiers, when, for his distinguished services, Lord Exmouth was raised to the Peerage, though the vast majority of them were in the English Fleet, yet, in the entire Combined Fleet that conducted the bombardment, they amounted to a figure not less considerable than 900 persons. Sir Beauchamp Seymour, in conducting the Bombardment of Alexandria, hardly less studied sparing the city than he studied destroying the fortifications. He avoided almost entirely the infliction of damage to the city, for to other causes, to which I will not now recur, and which may not yet have been thoroughly examined, the conflagration of that city was due, and he happily had no responsibility. Sir, it was not merely the conduct of a naval operation which devolved upon Sir Beauchamp Seymour. He had likewise to land his forces, and to man with his men, at a moment's notice, a line of forts. The hostile Army having withdrawn from the city under cover of a flag of truce—and I will not now stop to discuss that most questionable act—Sir Beauchamp Seymour, with his seamen and marines, had to undertake, and for six days completely to discharge, the duty alike of the police and the defence of Alexandria—of the police of Alexandria, which had been thrown into confusion by the plunder, the fire, and the conflagration that had occurred, and of the defence of Alexandria in the neighbourhood of a force unknown in its exact amount, but known to be large and known to be hostile. After that portion of his duty had been done, he had to provide—strange, indeed, was the care thus cast upon him—he had to provide for the water supply of the population, for those with whom he was in conflict seemed to think that they were justified in stopping the Mahmoudieh Canal, a measure which could have no possible effect as regarded the enemy in the field, because it is matter of notoriety that a Fleet moves, supplied and provided with means sufficient, and more than sufficient, for creating a water supply for itself, so that the measure was taken with the menace of the greatest suffering possible, of something even more than suffering, possibly of very extensive loss of life, to the population of Alexandria, a population of the same origin and the same nationality as that to which the authors of the measure themselves belonged. Well, Sir, the last great service that Sir Beauchamp Seymour had to perform on this occasion was the occupation of the Suez Canal, for which, of course, he had the supreme responsibility. He was seconded in that and in the whole of his proceedings by the greatest gallantry and skill on the part of the Admirals who served with him, and in particular it is my duty to commend to the honourable notice of the House Admiral Hewett, who took possession of Suez, and was responsible for the Southern part of the Canal, and Admiral Hoskins, whose duty was to occupy the Northern part of the Canal, as far as the important and vital part of it, Ismailia; and I must say I think the world felt a thrill of astonishment and admiration when, after a period of quietude — when people were uneasy —aye, and in this House there was much uneasiness about the Suez Canal and what was to happen to it—those who had foreborne to strike before the time came, struck the moment it had arrived; and before anyone could put a question or raise a difficulty, it was announced that the whole line of the Suez

Canal, the new base of operations, Ismailia, with the whole command of Eastern Egypt, was in the possession, and under the disposition, of the British Forces. Although I think, perhaps, I have said as much as necessary, yet not too much, on the subject of the services rendered by the Navy, I will just add this much—two facts which really ought to be noted. It will be recollected that when the Suez Canal was occupied, it was not occupied for the purpose merely of shutting out everybody from the use of it; it was for the purpose of introducing into it, and arresting at the proper point, this vast fleet of transports, nearly 200 great ships which I have described to you; and it is probably within the knowledge of the House that, for the nice business of pilotage through the Canal, that vast fleet of transports had to rely upon British resources, and that service of pilotage was successfully performed by the skill exclusively of British Naval officers; and, further, that while they had to effect this great operation of carrying 200 transport ships into the Canal and discharging them there, the regular traffic of the Canal—I own I was astonished when I heard it—was only suspended for a period of 48 hours. I have said already how these services were followed up by the action of the Marines and of the Naval Brigade during the advance of Sir Garnet Wolseley; but it is no wonder that Sir Garnet Wolseley has recorded himself his sense of his obligations by saying of the Navy that the Army owed them a deep debt of gratitude for the assistance they had given. Well, Sir, it remains for me to speak of Sir Garnet Wolseley himself, and here, again, we were not without the commendation and assurance of anterior service in the case of a man who, though happily he is still comparatively young, and may long, as I trust, remain available for the service of his country, yet in his short life, in his comparatively short career, has had the opportunity of receiving the thanks of this House and of establishing distinguished titles to the public gratitude. First, Sir Garnet Wolseley showed the virtue—not a very common virtue—of successfully keeping his own counsels to himself; and while those prying eyes which do so much to entertain the public, and sometimes to perplex, or even to disturb, the action of a general, were completely at fault and befogged, and were dreaming of a useless assault on the difficult forts of Aboukir, Sir Garnet Wolseley, I may say almost in a moment, took firm possession of his new base of operations, and established himself at Ismailia. I believe the whole of the campaign had this, among other merits—that by dint of his insight and experience, and of the valuable assistance which he sought from the most competent and best-informed sources, it was a campaign of which the whole plan was accurately and minutely laid out, as it was within the same time, or even a shorter time, actually, minutely and successfully accomplished. Sir Garnet Wolseley, when he arrived at Ismailia in the middle of August—he arrived at Alexandria on the 15th, and went on the 18th or 20th of August to Ismailia—had not, of course, his entire Force with him; but he found he was in danger of the loss of his water supply, and, under these circumstances, it was necessary for him to make a venture for the purpose of securing it. He accordingly sent forward a portion of his Force, and then came those proceedings well known to the House on the 26th and 28th of August at Kassassin. I need not dwell upon their military features; but I believe there was a charge of heavy Cavalry under General Drury-Lowe, which might well be named in its whole features as a subject for just admiration. But the qualities that Sir Garnet Wolseley has shown on this occasion, and the accomplishment of the plan which he intrusted to General Graham, were qualities of hardihood and vigour admirably backed by that General, who, if it were by these proceedings alone, has insured a distinguished name in the military service of his country. These were qualities of promptitude and vigour which were crowned by a complete success. The news of these actions arrived in this country, and that excited the appetite of the public, and in that public I include the entire country—no doubt, of us all. Stimulated by what had been already done, we looked out in eagerness for more to follow, and as day after day passed on from that 28th of August without any action on the part of Sir Garnet Wolseley, the stock of patience possessed by observers both there and here began to run short. The voice of censure upon Sir Garnet Wolseley began to be heard, and it was feared that, after all, he was not quite a man of the vigour for which credit had been given him. But, Sir, he was a man of that vigour for which credit had been given him, and he united with that vigour other military qualities not less necessary to form the character of a great General. He paused at Kassassin for a considerable time. Did he do so without cause? I am given to understand, upon what I think is sufficient authority, that as early as the 9th September, at any rate, Sir Garnet Wolseley could have made his attack on Tel-el-Kebir with a moral assurance of victory. But, Sir, there are some victories which are nothing more than the commencement and inauguration of a prolonged struggle. There are other victories which in themselves at once assure the consummation of the great work that the General has in hand; and it was the wise delay of Sir Garnet Wolseley, and his determination, whatever storm of criticism might come upon him, not to stir—not to touch the enemy until he could effectually crush him, and attain at once the objects of the war. It was that quality which caused Sir Garnet Wolseley to wait until he had such a force at his command—until he was able to throw out forward, right and left, such a brigade of Cavalry, for the purpose of surrounding a defeated enemy, that he might perform that great operation which I will describe in the single phrase of converting a victory into a conquest. It is impossible not to dwell for a few moments before I close upon the character of this remarkable action of Tel-el-Kebir. It is not merely remarkable because it was a victory achieved against a force well and securely, as they thought and might think, entrenched, or achieved against an entrenched force by a force inferior in numbers. Sir Garnet Wolseley fought the action of Tel-el-Kebir with 13,000 men. The force which was entrenched within the lines of Arabi, reaching for an extent of three and a-half miles from north to south, was about 26,000 men; but that was not all. Remarkable as the success is, the skill and the consideration—aye, and the humane consideration—with which it was achieved are, I think, more remarkable. Sir Garnet Wolseley waited until he could succeed, and he waited until he could succeed not only with the fullest measure of success, but with the smallest measure of loss of human life. We read, Sir, in *Shakespeare,* this expression—"Victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers." Well, Sir, it is a happy circumstance for a General to find himself in the condition of one who, having achieved a victory, brings home full numbers; but it is happier and better yet to be in the condition of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who will feel that consolation in his life and in his death that the fulness of those numbers was not owing to accident, or to the weakness of the enemy, but was owing to a deliberate and a well-laid combination, a skilful comparison and adaptation of means to ends, a judicious arrangement for every step of his measures, and the realization in actual experience of all that he had planned. He went forward in the silence of the night. He gave every order with the greatest minuteness and the exactest measure of place and of time. The Army bivouacked until the hour of half-past 2 in the morning. At that hour they breakfasted, and they then went forward upon a computation that, going in the dark through the Desert, this number of corps were to arrive at the lines of the enemy at a point of time, marked out almost to a minute, at daylight, and at that point so marked out they did arrive. They did march in silence through the Desert. It was the boast of the old Greeks that, while their opponents raised military clamour to keep up their spirits, they went in mantled silence to the war, and so it was that marched the Army of Sir Garnet Wolseley. They arrived at the enemy's lines at the very point of time which he had prescribed; and the movement, which was subject to so many chances of error, it is not uninteresting to recollect, was actually—such are the resources—such is the practical utility of science—directed by observation of the stars. It was thus that the force arrived at the lines of the enemy. They had been directed to practise a severe self-denial. They were to fire no shot until they took the first line, and they did fire no shot. They bore the fire of the enemy, they went steadily forward; and to that wise precaution of the General, and wise forbearance and manliness of the men, is in great part owing on our side the comparatively, at least, bloodless character of the battle. Well, the House knows with what complete and rapid success this operation was crowned. But one word more is to be said. What followed the battle? The echo, and the fame of it went through Egypt. It did its work at once at every point where the forces of the enemy were gathered together; and the men who had achieved the success at Tel-el-Kebir did not, on that account, rest inactively under the shade of the laurels they had won. Without a moment's loss of time the Indian Cavalry were pushed forward under General Macpherson, to the important point of Zagazig, at the junction of the railways, and that point was occupied at half-past 4, on the very afternoon of the day when the action of Tel-el-Kebir had been fought. More than that, a march of 65 miles to Cairo, beginning on that afternoon, was accomplished by the British Cavalry under General Drury-Lowe, and the gallant and skilful officers who worked under his command. Some of those were Indian; but, of course, the main portion were British Cavalry, and they arrived at Cairo on the afternoon of the 14th. Sir, there was a little incident which is not recorded in the official papers, but which is, I believe, unquestionably true, and may be worth mentioning to the House, because it shows the wisdom of relying much on the moral effect of a victory complete and crushing in itself. A garrison of 10,000 men held the City of Cairo; but all the heart and all the pith was gone out of them in consequence of the news they had received from Tel-el-Kebir. When General Drury-Lowe marched forward with his Cavalry, the first vanguard representing, of course, no more than a few hundred men, though a large body was coming up almost immediately behind them, on this tremendous march —for such I believe I may properly call it—of 65 miles—the garrison of 10,000 men, instead of waiting to resist them, made what I may call a procession of surrender. The Cavalry saw in their front a white line presented by some object which, at first, they were unable to accurately determine; but they found, after a very short interval, that this was the front rank of a body of several thousands of troops marching out of Cairo, apparently well qualified to cope with them, but who had taken the precaution of hoisting on the points of their bayonets handkerchiefs, or any rag of white, or anything that would carry a white appearance, in order to signify immediate, absolute, unconditional submission. That was the ripe result of the skilful operations of Sir Garnet Wolseley, and on the very day after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir he found himself in possession of the Egyptian capital, able to give an official and responsible assurance to the Government at home—aye, more than to the Government—to the Sovereign and the nation, that in his judgment the war was ended. I will not detain the House any longer. I have spoken longer than I intended. I have done so under the impression—I would not willingly make too much of what has happened—under the impression—it may be an erroneous impression—that these are remarkable occurrences; that they are qualified to carry into the mind of the House of Commons, and into the mind of the nation, the full conviction that if there has been much labour and much discussion, and much doubt and difficulty and vast expense of late years in connection with our military establishments, the nation does not remain without some return for what it has laid out; that it has not got merely gallant people to depend upon—for that it always had—but that it is approaching at least to a powerful and effective organization; and there will be the conviction that when, in a just cause, there is a great object to be gained, that organization will be found effective in its ends, and that men will not be wanting, whether as Admirals or as Generals, to encounter the immense difficulties and the arduous labours which, in the moment of a crisis, are cast upon them, and to carry forward the flag of their country to honour and to victory. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the 1st of the Resolutions of which he had given Notice.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I rise to say a very few words in seconding the Motion which has been made by the Prime Minister; and perhaps I may be allowed, at the beginning, to express and re-echo the hope, which the right hon. Gentleman expressed in the beginning of his speech, that the graceful act which we are now called upon to perform will not be marred by any want of unanimity on the part of the House of Commons. No doubt, to everyone who is connected with the Military or Naval Profession, it must be a source of the greatest gratification and delight to receive the approbation and thanks of the British Houses of Parliament; but that gratification must be greatly enhanced —indeed, it may be said almost to carry its character, according to the unanimity with which that approbation and those thanks are expressed. It is absolutely impossible that in cases of this kind, or in any great cases of military operations, these should not be mixed up with the consideration of the greatness and value of the services performed, questions of political character — questions upon which there must, and will be, differences of opinion, and upon which there must be discussion and division between different Parties and sections in the House. Such, undoubtedly, is the case with regard to these Egyptian operations; but the present is not the time, the present occasion is not the occasion, upon which those differences can profitably be considered; and I say that for two reasons—in the first place, because I think that, as I have already said, it would mar the graciousness of the act we are about to perform; and, secondly, because the discussions themselves would, I acknowledge, be somewhat prejudiced by the very fact of the splendour of the services which have been rendered, and by the eloquence with which they have just been described to us. The speech to which we have listened was in itself a great and an inspiring piece of eloquence. Yet I do not mean to say that, great as the speech was, it exceeded the acts which have called it forth. The services which have been rendered would speak for themselves, even if they had not so eloquent an exponent as the right hon. Gentleman; and, therefore, I wish to say, once for all, that I hope and trust we shall understand that the Vote we are called upon to give is one solely with reference to the Military and Naval operations, and that we in no way, by doing so, or by any construction that can be put upon that Vote, commit ourselves upon questions of a debatable and political character. I cannot quite understand what is the objection which is raised to the expression with regard to the suppression of the Military rebellion in Egypt. I could quite understand, if we were to suppose that, by adopting this phrase, we adopted, without further discussion, the Government explanation of the circumstances of the country, that we should be doing that which it would be unreasonable to call upon us to do; but what I understand and appreciate on the part of the Government in introducing these words into the Motion is, that they desire to put on record not only the fact that the services rendered were in themselves noble and conspicuous, but that they fully accomplished the object which the Government, who ordered the operations, had in view, because, as the right hon. Gentleman so eloquently put it, it was a case not of a victory, but for the time being, at all events, of a conquest. Whether the consequences will be such as the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues expect and hope is a matter we shall have to discuss. Whether the conquest is in a strict and real sense complete, and whatever its sequel may be—a matter upon which I entirely reserve my opinion—upon that we may have severe discussion—for the moment, it was a complete transaction, and one which was accomplished greatly to the credit of those engaged in it. I need not say it would be out of place for me to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the details of the advance, and of the actions of which we are speaking. Nor need I undertake to single out and praise any of those whose services have been so well recorded by the Prime Minister. But I would ask to be allowed to make an exception in the case of one of those officers who has, as the right hon. Gentleman reminded us, a peculiar claim upon our sympathies. I mean His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught. I cannot but feel we are specially interested in the fact that a Scion of the Royal House has gone forth to the duties which his Profession involves, and has discharged those duties in the manner in which he has done. Of the Generals and the Admirals who have commanded in these operations it is really useless for me to speak. We know what they are, and we have known for a long time—recently, at all events —with what very great skill they have conducted the services placed upon them. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman named and singled out a name which I was afraid might not have otherwise been specially mentioned—I mean that of Sir Herbert Macpherson. The fact that he commanded the Indian Contingent is one which gives him a special claim to our consideration; and there are other Services to which, I think, we ought to pay official tribute, and I would particularly mention the Marine Forces. What is particularly remarkable, it seems to me, in this whole operation is, that it afforded an opportunity not only for the display of individual valour, not only for the display of the strength of one particular arm of the British Forces, but that it has shown in a remarkable manner how the whole Forces of the Empire may, in a short time, and with great precision, be brought to bear on a single point of the Globe. And I think there is this, at all events, which is remarkable in the campaign we have witnessed; in the first place, it has been so short. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of that as if it might be thought that, because it was short, it had not been very significant. I say that the very fact of its having been so short is, in itself, one great and most remarkable feature which distinguishes it amongst other operations. The fact that it was so completely organized and so well arranged as it was in so few weeks is, in itself, I think, one of the great features of the campaign. But there is this also that is remarkable—and I do not know that any other instance can be found—it has been found possible to combine every description of Force of the Empire in the operations. We have had the Artillery, the Infantry, the Cavalry, the Indian troops, the Marines, the Sailors —we have had all these Forces, all of them actively engaged; and it is, in fact, owing to the way in which one was able to come with its Force to the help and assistance of the other that the great success of the operations is due. It would not be just or graceful on my part if, in referring to these actions of our Services, I were to omit to pay a tribute to those who have conducted the operations from home, and who have directed the Departments through which the Services are controlled and equipped. I think I may take up the concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman, and say that there is a little more than even the services rendered by the particular Departments on the present occasion to be noted; for the operations which have been so successfully completed are themselves a testimony to the work not of a particular Ministry, but to a succession of Administrations, and to a succession of Parliaments in making proper provisions, or endeavouring, at all events, to make proper provisions, for the strength and efficiency of our Naval and Military Forces. We have certainly been able to show—and it is of the highest importance to the country and the world—how rapidly and how effectively England can act upon occasion. I trust that the House may be content upon the present occasion, and more than content; that it will be desirous to evince its satisfaction with the conduct of our troops by unanimously adopting this Resolution. But, at the same time, I may repeat the warning with which I began —that in giving this Vote we by no means accept, what we might be supposed to express, any particular theory with regard to the political questions which are involved.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B. for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria, and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal, which aided materially in the suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR WILFRID LAWSON, who was received with cries of "Oh!" said, he rose to move as an Amendment to the Motion which had been made the Previous Question; and if hon. Gentlemen would give him a proper hearing he would promise to detain them as shortly as he could while explaining his reasons for doing so. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that this was not the time to discuss the policy which led us into the late war; there would be no occasion to do so now, because from what he knew of the Leader of the Opposition and of what he said in the country, he felt perfectly sure not many weeks or days would elapse before the right hon. Gentleman gave them an opportunity of saying what they thought on that policy. He would give the right hon. Gentleman's words the other day at a meeting in Glasgow, when he said—"I believe myself the war was unnecessary, and, being unnecessary, cannot be said to have been justifiable." An unjustifiable war was the greatest crime which a Ministry or a country could commit.

[Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The Prime Minister cheered that; he accepted the challenge; and, therefore, if they did not have an opportunity of voting on that point before very long all he could say was that the public life of this country would be thought by many to be little better than a political farce. They would probably have to wait a little while, however, because before coming to a conclusion the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition would have to consult with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). He did not move this Amendment merely on account of the Egyptian War, to which he was opposed. He was always opposed to special Votes of Thanks to the Military Service. He had looked back to what he had said last May 12 months, when a Vote of Thanks was proposed on account of the Afghan War. He did not think one's own speeches agreeable reading; but on that occasion he found it more disagreeable than usual, because he discovered that he had made two assertions, both falsified by events. One assertion was that he did not fear they should have an opportunity of passing such a Vote so long as the Liberal Ministry were in Office, because they would not go into any such war; and the other foolish remark was that the Radical Party, who had assisted in putting them into power, were decidedly opposed to all aggressive wars. It was with great regret he admitted the foolishness of his remarks, for this war, which he acknowledged had been very popular with the country at large, was even more enthusiastically supported by other classes of the community, by Radicals, Nonconformists, and Quakers. He did not wish to find any fault with the soldiers. [An hon. MEMBER: Or the sailors!] — or the sailors, or the marines. All these brave men had done what they believed to be their duty, and what the country told them was their duty; but was that a reason for a Vote of Thanks to them? Why, we have a celebrated motto — "England expects every man to do his duty," whether soldier, sailor, or Member of that House. If Votes of Thanks were to be given, why not thank the Minister for War? His right hon. Friend the Member for Pontefract (Mr. Childers) had had a great deal of trouble. Why not thank the man who made the war, the Prime Minister? He did not see, without disparaging him for a moment, why the soldier was specially selected. The soldier when he entered the Army entered into a contract to do a certain amount of work, and also to run great risks. He entered into a contract to kill, destroy, ravage, anywhere the country pleased that he should go. He got his remuneration, and, more than that, the soldier acquired a great social position, especially in this Christian country, where he was looked upon as the greatest man possible. If the soldiers had done anything more than their duty he did not think he should have found it in his heart to rise and oppose the Vote. What were the facts? He saw an hon. Member of great experience on the opposite side of the House shortly before he was going to Egypt, and he said — "What about these Egyptian soldiers?" The hon. Member replied, as he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) believed too—"Why, they are the worst soldiers in the world." So they had proved themselves to be. They were actually beaten by the Abyssinians, and when he had said that he had said enough. We went to attack these people —we, a rich, powerful country, spending £30,000,000 a-year in preparation, while the Egyptian War Budget was about £600,000—we, with all the resources of civilization at our command, not only with 35,000,000 of people, but with 200,000,000 in India at our back—we, experienced in those wars, for we had made three invasions within the last few years—the Afghan, the Zulu, and the Transvaal — invaded a country with 5,000,000 of people. And now, having been successful, we were singing Hallelujah choruses all through the Kingdom. Was it not a farce to make such a fuss over it? The Prime Minister told them not three months ago that we were not at war, but only bombarding Alexandria —just a little bye-play; and he said that there was not a scrap, not a shred, not a tittle of evidence to show that Arabi had any National feeling at his back. And when we entered into this war without the slightest provocation, as far as he could make out, the soldiers who were attacked fled before us. He could not but feel it to be an anti-climax when it came to the taking of Cairo, the miserable Egyptians fleeing for their lives at the sight of an English soldier.

He believed if our troops met men as brave as themselves they would fight and overcome them. But if it came to a Vote of Thanks it was not to the English troops but to the Egyptians they should have moved it for running away. We were making just a little too much of it, and he thought that the military officers themselves were beginning to feel that they were a little overdoing it. It reminded him of a scene that had been described, in the last of the Egyptian Blue Books, how the Khedive was sitting in his palace while we were bombarding his town of Alexandria, and his Pashas were coming in and telling him about it, and some of them were in tears; but the account went on to say—" A distribution of decorations by the Khedive followed, and confidence was greatly restored." If Peerages and annuities were to be given now to our gallant soldiers, what would the country do when our Army should ever have to fight real soldiers? Why, we should be bankrupt in the matter of decorations, and there would be nothing left worthy of bestowal. They should remember that it was possible that before long we might have a war with Russia, and the Prime Minister had already given them a hint that we might have to go to the Soudan to have a turn with the False Prophet. He would ask the House whether we had not done enough in connection with this war? Were we not making ourselves a little ridiculous? We have had banquets, addresses, triumphal entries, thanksgivings in the churches, and the Prime Minister on a balcony in Pall Mall on Sunday last. And all this because, forsooth, after tremendous preparations, we had licked these miserable Egyptians. He really thought that the way in which we were going on was an insult to the British Army, and he, for one, did not want to insult it. It seemed to him as if we were expressing our surprise that the Army had been brave, hardy, and successful. Well, he should have been very much surprised if it had been otherwise. Did they know what Colonel Ewart, of the 2nd Life Guards, said, when one of the addresses that were flying about was presented to him by some ridiculous person or other in a country town? He said—" We have done what English troops are in the habit of doing—our duty." Of course they had, and they did not want these extravagant Votes of Thanks. He warned Radical Members, if there were any, not to vote for the Motion under the idea that it was a complimentary vote to the poor fellows who had been engaged in hard service, for it was nothing of the kind. The Motion was really nothing more than a homage to the military spirit and Profession which brought unnumbered evils to England, and Europe, and the world. This was the reason why he ventured to move the Previous Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Motion?

MR. STOREY seconded the Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had come down to the House prepared to vote with the Prime Minister, and he had not been convinced that he ought to take a contrary course by the speech of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). The hon. Member had stated that our soldiers had only done their duty. Well, there were so few people in this world who did do their duty that we need not grudge a Vote of Thanks to men who had done it so well and bravely as our troops had. His hon. Friend also said that the Prime Minister exaggerated when recounting the exploits of those who took part in the Expedition. But of such exaggeration he did not complain. Had our soldiers met foemen worthy of their steel, they would have given an equally good account of them. On occasions like the present some exaggeration in panegyric was undeniably graceful. He would say no more in reference to this point, except that he felt sure that the Prime Minister would agree with him that Agamemnon gained a great deal in reputation by having all the imaginative eloquence of Homer to describe his battles. Turning to the terms of the Resolution, he found that certain controversial matter had been introduced into it. He referred to the words—" the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of the Khedive." No one could deny that those words raised controversial matter, and he very much regretted that the

Prime Minister had not withdrawn them. He would point out that when we spoke of a military revolt we assumed that it was a revolt of soldiery unsupported by the wishes of the people. But it appeared to him from the Blue Books that the whole Egyptian people were on the side of Arabi and not on the side of the Khedive. He denied that it was justifiable or fair to describe what had taken place in Egypt in this insulting manner. In a rebellion against a despot, he regarded the rebel and not the despot as the patriot. He should be very sorry to give a vote that would involve the idea that he agreed with the opinion that we should interfere to support a despot against a rebel. There was another point which also caused him regret. He had been under the impression that the Vote of Thanks was to be all that the House would be asked to pass, and that it would be almost an insult to those gallant Commanders, Sir Beauchamp Seymour and Sir Garnet Wolseley, to offer them a sum of money as if the House supposed that personal interest was the spur which had induced them to do their duty. When the Vote dealing with pecuniary rewards should come before them, he should oppose it unhesitatingly. At the same time, he thought that he and some other Gentlemen on that side of the House were put in a difficulty with regard to this Resolution. They were willing to give a Vote of Thanks to the Forces, but they were not prepared to compromise their opinions by voting in favour of the proposal of the Prime Minister, so long as these words which he had taken the liberty to call controversial remained. He did not know what other Gentlemen might do, but he should walk out of the House when the division took place.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he hoped the House would forgive him for a few minutes while he made an appeal to the Prime Minister as to the form of this Resolution. When the right hon. Gentleman had been appealed to from below the Gangway as to the insertion of those words, to which he thought most just exception might be taken, as introducing controversial matter, he had replied that they did not bear that character at all, and suggested that they were in accordance with forms which had been previously used. He (Mr. Edward Clarke), however, contended that the words "military operations," which many hon. Members desired to see inserted in the Resolution, instead of the words "military rebellion," would be in more consonance with former precedents. On the last two occasions when similar Votes of Thanks were given, in 1879 and 1881, the expression "military operations" was used, and in 1840 and 1858 Votes of Thanks had been proposed in the same terms. If the Government made their present Resolution to accord with the previous ones, they would avoid putting any Member in a difficulty with regard to the controversial matter. He wished to support the Vote of Thanks to the Army and Navy; but the war was not for the suppression of a military revolt, and when the time came for a discussion upon the Egyptian policy of the Government there would be a controversy raised on that point. As the Prime Minister had stated that the words in the Resolution relating to a military rebellion were not intended to carry any sanction of the policy of the proceedings in Egypt, it was hoped the right hon. Gentleman would omit them, and so avoid all danger of division of opinion on the subject.

Mr. DAWSON said, he thought there was another feature of this question which was passed over by the House—namely, that Arabi was not only not considered a traitor by his people, but that he was not considered a traitor by the Sultan or by the Khedive. They had seen it stated that there were numerous documents in existence which would prove that he was not only in the confidence of the Egyptian people, but in the fullest confidence of his Sovereign. Therefore, he thought the suggestion of his hon. Friend was perfectly correct, and that the debatable matter referred to should be withdrawn from the Vote now before the House. Personally, he felt very little admiration for the achievements of the British arms in Egypt, and when he said he had not been in any degree influenced by the eloquent speech of the Prime Minister, the House would infer that he had formed a very low estimate of the whole transaction.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he had listened with as much attention as any supporter of the Government to the conscientious efforts of the Prime Minister to make a mountain out of a molehill. At the same time, he should protest against the attempt to smuggle the Ministerial view of the transactions in Egypt into a Vote of Thanks to the troops engaged in the recent campaign. They were told by the Premier that the concluding words of the Resolution were not binding on the House. If so, why were they introduced into the Resolution at all? They were asked in this Vote to declare that there had been a complete suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive. There was hardly a word in that clause which was not a mis-statement, at least a mis-statement from the conscientious view of those who opposed this war in the beginning as criminal, and who did not cease to regard it as criminal because it had been successful. There had been no complete suppression of the movement in Egypt. It would spring up as strong as ever to-morrow if the garrison which was holding down the nationality of Egypt was removed. The suppression of the Egyptian national protest would not be complete as long as they kept British bayonets at the throats of the Egyptian people. It was not a rebellion against the authority of the Khedive. When Sir Beauchamp Seymour bombarded Alexandria Arabi was Minister of War to the Khedive; and if the insufficient forts under his control had succeeded in beating back the assaults of the most formidable Navy in the world Arabi would have been further decorated by the joint approval of the Khedive and the Sultan. It was a mockery to say that there had been a military rebellion against the authority of the Khedive. The name of His Highness the Khedive was a mere pretence behind which to conceal the most aggressive policy that ever animated the enterprize of a British Minister. He did not desire to say a word against the bravery of the British Army in Egypt. That Army was composed of the best fighting races in the world. He supposed there were enough Irishmen in the Highland Regiments alone to carry the assault on Tel-el-Kebir. If the Premier meant that his statement should in any degree be accepted as a contribution to an impartial history of the subject, he might have mentioned a few circumstances bearing on the defence made by Egyptians to a formidable Army opposed to them. He might have mentioned that the Egyptian Army of 60,000 men did not three months previously consist of more than 10,000 nominal soldiers. He might have mentioned that long before the *Inflexible* cast her first shell into Alexandria the Egyptian Army had been practically destroyed, not by open warfare, but by the treachery of European Controllers, who had broken up the Egyptian defences, who demoralized the Egyptian Army, and who, upon a single day, cashiered 25,000 trained Egyptian officers. The reason why the Suez Canal was so easily captured was because the Egyptian people believed the statements made from the Treasury Bench, that the Suez Canal ought not to be brought into the field of warlike operations. The nationality of Egypt was not suppressed; and neither in England nor out of it did one man in a hundred believe that the uprising of the armed fellaheen of Egypt was a mere military rebellion against the authority of a contemptible Khedive, who was now the nominee of the foreign garrison who held down his country. The Premier might make statements such as those just listened to; but throughout the world a different opinion would be held from that which was the official view of the Liberal Party.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 354; Noes 17: Majority 337.—(Div. List, No. 345.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

1. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B. for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria, and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal, which aided materially in the suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the Military operations in Egypt which resulted in the Victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. MOLLOY said, he moved to leave out the words "and the complete suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of the Khedive." He had not the slightest objection to the Vote of Thanks to the Army; but he submitted that the operations of Arabi Pasha ought not to be described as a military rebellion; and he was certain that the words to which he did object had prevented many Members from voting in the last division.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out the words "and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive."—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I cannot help thinking that I will be able to show the House, and also the hon. and learned Member who has moved the Amendment, why he should not persevere with his Amendment. The first question is the true import and bearing of this description. The movement made by Arabi is described as a military rebellion, and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)—I will not say he is justified in the breadth of his proposition, but I think he is justified to a certain extent — said that most people would admit that to describe a movement as a rebellion is not necessarily a condemnatory description. It is an established historical name. The history of the war under Charles I. is known as *The History of the Great Rebellion;* but there were many Gentlemen of this House who accompanied Hampden in that rebellion, who thought it right to do so, and therefore it is not a condemnatory description. It is a description of a plain fact. [Mr. O'DONNELL: No, no!] Well, what is the use of crying out "No, no!" The hon. Member for Dungarvan will not convince me by crying "No, no!" It is a plain description of a fact that this was a rising against the constituted authority of the country. ["No, no!"] Yes; it was a rising, in which the parties who headed it forced themselves, first of all, upon the Notables, and then into the Ministry, and compelled the Khedive, under fear of his life, to accept them. That is what I call a military rebellion, and it is not a condemnatory description, but simply a matter of fact. Then comes the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Edward Clarke), who says it is contrary to precedent; but I assure him it is according to precedent. There is no doubt, in certain cases where the operations for which Votes of Thanks have been given have been operations of a more or less undefined character and object, they have been described as military operations and nothing else. I believe we ourselves described the operations of Sir Frederick Roberts, in asking for thanks for him, as military operations. How else could we have described them? They were a march to victory gained against a personage in Afghanistan, for the purpose of supporting a military occupation of Afghanistan for the time, and securing Her Majesty's Forces. There was no fixed and defined result which we could describe; but after the Battle of Waterloo you could not have thanked the Duke of Wellington for the military operations in Belgium, nor after the Peninsular War you could not have thanked the Duke of Wellington for the military operations in Spain. Where you have a definite result, as you have in this case, you describe it, and that is what has been done here. I beg attention to this, as it bears strongly on the appeal I make to the hon. Member who moved the Amendment. In 1861 a Vote of Thanks was moved to the combined English and Indian Forces in the operations in China, which terminated in the Treaty of Pekin; and here I want to point out, first of all, that the description in that case goes a great deal further towards committing the House than the description in the present case, which, I contend, does not commit the House at all; and, secondly, though there was considerable discussion and objection to the policy, no one on that occasion moved an Amendment to the Vote. On reference to *Hansard*, it will be found that the Vote contained the words—

"That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant General Sir James Hope Grant," and so on, "for the skill, zeal, and intrepidity with which they conducted the operations in the north of China, which terminated in the capture of Pekin, whereby an honourable peace has been obtained on the terms proposed by Her Majesty."

There were Gentlemen in that House who entirely disapproved of the whole proceedings, who thought it was anything but an honourable peace, but quite the reverse, and who took objection to the policy; but no Amendment was moved. These proceedings are of a solemn and rare character, in which the whole legislative authority of the country—that is to say, of Parliament—is accustomed to move together. Uniformly, the Vote of Thanks is moved to the different descriptions of Forces by the two Houses in the same terms. Let me represent to the hon. Member in what position he is asking the House to place itself. We have just voted Sir Beauchamp Seymour our thanks, and that without any opposition on the Main Question, for naval operations which aided materially in the suppression of the military rebellion against the authority of the Khedive; and now the hon. Member invites us to move a Vote of Thanks to Sir Garnet Wolseley for military operations in Egypt which are not to be described, and, in fact, to give a lower and fainter description to the services of Sir Garnet Wolseley than we have given to those of Sir Beauchamp Seymour. We cannot do that. It seems to draw a most invidious distinction. I think it will go far to involve the hon. Gentleman in an approval of the Bombardment of Alexandria, while he does not approve of the attack on Tel-el-Kebir. If the House adopts the unparalleled proceeding of two forms of thanks—one for the Army and one for the Navy—let me also observe to the hon. Gentleman that we now have it on sufficient authority that the other Branch of the Legislature has voted thanks in the terms proposed; and, therefore, the hon. Gentleman really will see that his Amendment would involve us in a strange anomaly, placing us first at variance with the House of Lords, and secondly with ourselves. Under those circumstances, I hope he will be satisfied with saying "No," if he thinks fit, when the Question is put. But perhaps he may now be disposed to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, it was perfectly true that the House was in a difficulty, and that, having passed a Vote of Thanks to the Navy, it could not now consistently refuse to pass the same Vote to those who were concerned in the military operations. He thought, however, that when the observations of the Prime Minister as to the real meaning of the words in question were sent forth to the country they would be considered rather curious. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that rebellion was the only term that could be applied to the proceedings of Arabi in Egypt; and he illustrated his contention by reference to the rebellion in the 17th century, which certainly had the historic sympathy of many Members of the House; and the House was now called upon to express its thanks to the Land and Sea Forces for doing that which might turn out to have been a most unfortunate mistake, having regard to the future and the freedom of Egypt. The Prime Minister said it was a fact that the Military Party forced itself on the Chamber of Notables, then into the Ministry, and then on the Khedive. He (Mr. Clarke) ventured to demur to those propositions. There was no evidence in the Papers that the Military Party did force itself on the Notables, and when the Khedive accepted the new Ministry in Egypt, he did so on the unanimous representation of the only Parliamentary Chamber which Egypt had to look to. As to the Khedive, and the rebellion against the Khedive, it was like the old history of the Roses of York and Lancaster—one Party took the King prisoner, and then in the King's name called the other side rebels. We took the Khedive prisoner. Practically, he had been under the control of this country; and now the Prime Minister insisted on thanking the Military and Naval Services of the Crown in a form of thanks which made them apparently officers of the Khedive in putting down simply a domestic insurrection against his power.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought it was somewhat unfortunate that the expression which his hon. and learned Friend the Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) proposed to omit should have found its way into the Resolution of Thanks, because if they adopted the Resolution as it stood it would place the House in an almost unprecedented position. The House would have done an act which it had never been called upon to do before by a Minister of the Crown, or by a Government of the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. Practically speaking, if they adopted the Resolution they affirmed by the deliberate judgment of the House of Commons that Arabi Pasha had been guilty of rebellion against the Khedive. He hardly thought that this House, or, indeed, anybody in

England, was in a position to form that judgment, because they had no evidence before them. But if they were in that position, the fact remained that this was one of the charges which at the present moment was a subject of judicial investigation before a tribunal in Egypt. The Government, therefore, placed themselves, he had no doubt, unwittingly in this position. While, on the one hand, they had taken precautions that Arabi Pasha should have a fair trial as regards the charges which had been made against him, they, on the other hand, invited the House of Commons to declare before the tribunal had investigated those charges that Arabi Pasha was guilty. He (Mr. Parnell) submitted that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for King's County had not put himself out of court by having, through an oversight, due to the confusion and noise consequent on a division, failed to propose the Amendment at an early period.

Mr. MOLLOY said, that the reason why he had not moved his Amendment on the 1st Resolution was because he understood from Mr. Speaker that he could not do so in consequence of the Amendment moved by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson).

Mr. DAWSON said, that in justice to Arabi Pasha, whose life was at stake, some Members of the Government ought to make a formal announcement that, no matter what decision the House of Commons might come to on this Resolution, the condemnation of Arabi Pasha implied in it would not be allowed to prejudice the trial about to take place in Egypt. Why was he to be condemned first and tried afterwards? He thought it was a great boast of the English nation that when a man was on his trial judgment was suspended until the trial was ended.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, according to the doctrine laid down by Mr. Justice Lawson in the case of the High Sheriff of Dublin, if the House affirmed that Resolution as it stood, the Prime Minister would be guilty of contempt of the Court that was trying Arabi, and would be liable to imprisonment by that Court. [*A laugh.*] This was not a matter to laugh about, because the two cases were perfectly identical—not quite identical, because the law was rather stronger against the Prime Minister than against the High Sheriff, because all that was done in the case of the High Sheriff was to criticize the means after a verdict had been arrived at; but in this case the Prime Minister asked them to declare positively that the prisoner at the bar was guilty of the offence of which he was charged. Therefore he submitted that the Prime Minister was bound in honour and fair play to do one of two things—either to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for King's County, or else to submit himself to the jurisdiction of the Court which was now trying Arabi Pasha in Egypt, in order that he should be punished for his contempt of Court.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 230; Noes 25: Majority 205. — (Div. List, No. 346.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

2. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the Military operations in Egypt which resulted in the Victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive.

3. *Resolved, Nemine Contradicente,* That the Thanks of this House be given to,—

General Sir John Miller Adye, K.C.B.;
Vice-Admiral William Montagu Dowell, C.B.;
Lieutenant-General George Harry Smith Willis, C.B.;
Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.;
Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B.;
Rear - Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, V.C., K.C.B.;
Rear-Admiral Sir Francis William Sullivan, K.C.B., C.M.G.;
Rear-Admiral Anthony Hiley Hoskins, C.B.;
Major - General His Royal Highness Arthur, Duke of Connaught, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C S.I., G.C.M.G.;
Major-General William Earle, C.S.I.;
Major-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.;
Major-General Gerald Graham, V.C., C.B.;
Major-General George Byng Harman, C.B.;
Major-General Drury Curzon Drury-Lowe, C.B.;
Major-General Sir Herbert Taylor Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B.;

And to the other Officers and Warrant Officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including Her Majesty's Indian

Forces, both European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services they have been called upon to perform:

4. *Resolved*, *Nemine Contradicente*, That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the gallantry, discipline, and good conduct displayed by the Petty Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, and of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native, and also the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force.

MR. GLADSTONE: There is a question of a supplementary character, and that is to move that the said Resolution be transmitted by the Speaker to Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour and to General Sir Garnet Wolseley, and that they be requested to communicate the same to the several officers and men referred to therein.

Motion *agreed to.*

5. *Ordered*, That the said Resolutions be transmitted by Mr. Speaker to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Seymour, and General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley; and that they be requested to communicate the same to the several officers and to the men referred to therein.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.—RESOLUTIONS.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [EIGHTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

In lines 1 and 2, to leave out the words "or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House."—(*Sir Henry Drummond Wolff.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'or to the Chairman of' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. LEWIS said, he rose to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth. The most important thing to be dealt with was the Obstruction which they met with in Committee, where the "monster" had been most successful and most disastrous in its results; and he claimed for himself an honest desire to participate in any measure that would really have the effect of putting down that Obstruction. He could not help thinking, however, that the particular mode in which this Obstruction was dealt with by the whole scheme of the Government was most unsatisfactory, and was likely to lead to entire disappointment and be ineffectual. Supposing that Obstruction of a most serious and absolute character was attempted by some Members of the House on a Motion that certain words be omitted from a clause, and the Chairman, by the exercise of this authority, closed the debate, did the House believe that would put an end to the Obstruction? Would it not be the cause of irritation, and rather lead to increased Obstruction subsequently than bringing things into a satisfactory state? An observation fell from the Attorney General which struck him as rather remarkable. Dealing with the question as to whether the casual Chairmen should be allowed to exercise the same power as the ordinary Chairman of Ways and Means, he made use of the remark that the Chairman of Ways and Means would not be compelled to leave the Chair to the tender mercies of the casual Chairmen, because, by the operation of this Rule, there would be an end to Obstruction, and, therefore, the necessity for those long Sittings would not arise. But what was Obstruction? Why, it might arise 200 or 300 times in the course of an evening in Committee; and, therefore, the idea of the Chairman having the power to put an end to Obstruction upon one Amendment, having a real tendency to advance the progress of the whole Business of the Committee, seemed to him entirely contrary to the ordinary experience of the House. For his own part, he believed the real remedy with regard to Obstruction in Committee was rather to be found in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) and in that of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr.

Gregory). Take that of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex. He was not entitled to discuss the question now; but he thought they might find some remedy for Obstruction in Committee by putting an end to the ridiculous power of speaking any number of times upon the idea that it was securing free and open discussion. If they were to limit the power of any Member to speak any number of times upon any Amendment, and otherwise shorten the proceedings of the Committee, it appeared to him, speaking without any partizanship whatever, that that would be much more likely to be successful than the course proposed by the Government in this Resolution. It was a common idea, especially with hon. Gentlemen opposite, that Obstruction began with his right hon. Friend the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), and the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins). He would read to the House an extract from a letter of Lord Palmerston, written in 1844, set out in Ashley's life of that statesman, page 464. He there said—

> "The experience that they" (the then Government) "had on the Irish Arms Bill must have shown them that a compact body of opponents may, by debating every sentence and word of a Bill, so obstruct it that a whole Session is scarcely long enough for carrying through one measure; and, of course, the Irish Members on our side, and all the English and Scotch Radicals, would sit from 'morn till eve and from eve till dewy morn' to prevent any more stringent law being enacted."

That showed that the Obstruction with which they had to deal had been in existence for a period of at least 40 years. He confessed that it appeared to him that the instrument they proposed to forge by that Resolution was either too blunt or too sharp, and for this reason —namely, that the probable effect of using it would be to render the Obstructionists more crafty and determined, and thus to bring about delay rather than progress. It was perfectly ridiculous to imagine that Members would consent to the Chairman of Committees stifling discussion every three or four hours. Such a power was impracticable, and would break down and appear ridiculous in the hands of the Chairman of Committees. The House was placed in a somewhat peculiar position with regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, which proposed to leave out the words "Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House." The Prime Minister had said that he intended to deal with the very question which was involved in the Amendment; but they had not heard from him how he intended to do so, and the House was not, therefore, placed in a position to deal effectually with the Amendment. He knew the right hon. Gentleman would tell them that they would have an opportunity of debating and of voting against the Resolution when it assumed its complete form; but surely they were entitled to ask for some information from the Government as to the character and extent of the alteration which they proposed to make in the part of the Resolution which was attacked by the Amendment. Was ever so distinguished an Assembly placed in a more ridiculous position by its Leader?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, perhaps the hon. Gentleman would allow him to explain. His hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had stated in his speech that he (Mr. Gladstone) had previously agreed to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), which stood next on the Paper. On reference to the reports, he found that he had made that statement; and, therefore, he was now prepared to take that course.

Mr. LEWIS said, that in that case there would be no provision for casual Chairmen. It appeared to him that they were going from bad to worse, for frequently when a casual Chairman occupied the Chair it would be more necessary than at any other time to make use of the power proposed to be given. That proved to his mind the extreme good sense of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) when he said that it was impossible, in the varying conditions of the House and Committee, to provide for these evils by one Resolution. In the case of the Speaker they had not a political official to deal with; but the Chairman of Ways and Means was usually a man of strong Party bias, who was constantly to be seen in one Lobby or the other. In the event of any great question involving heated feeling, such as the disestablishment of the Church, coming before the

Committee, would it be satisfactory for the Chairman, who might have taken a foremost part in bringing forward the subject, to exercise the new and most obnoxious power which it was now proposed to confer upon him of enforcing the *clôture* upon, perhaps, half of the Members present? The truth was that the whole of the 1st Resolution was founded upon a misconception. The circumstances attendant upon each of the *coups d' état* that had occurred in that House when Members had been deprived of the right of free discussion had been most unfortunate. It would not, of course, do to admit that the Chairman had made a mistake; but the fact remained that the Members of that House had been punished for offences which had been committed during their absence. When he first entered that House it would have been morally impossible for any man to have stood up and defied it for five minutes together, and Obstruction had arisen from the fact that new Members neglected to learn their first Parliamentary lesson—namely, that their respect was due to the remaining 651 Members. It had, however, in some instances been asserted that the object of the Government in imposing the change upon the House was not to put down Obstruction, but, as a Liberal Marquess had stated to his constituents the other day, to force through certain political nostrums which were obnoxious to the Conservative Party, and which, unless that change was effected, they did not see their way to carry. That was why they were suspicious about this measure. He doubted if the Liberals could gain any benefit or credit with their Party or the country if such were their motives. At all events, even if they were beaten in this matter, the Conservatives would have the satisfaction of knowing that they were endeavouring to support true and genuine freedom.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, complaint was made at the close of the Sitting of the previous day that the discussion on the Resolution was unfairly spun out. He did not think so. Many of the Members had come to London at this season at great inconvenience, and all, he believed, with reluctance. They had no desire to remain longer than was absolutely necessary for getting through the Business the Government had summoned Parliament to transact. There was no wish, so far as he knew, in any part of the House to beat out the debates unduly or to delay the inevitable. If they were to be compelled to swallow the nauseous draught the Cabinet had compounded for them, the sooner it was over the better. There were some points that must be discussed, and discussed in detail and with minuteness, and one of them was the Amendment before the House. It was one of the most important Amendments to the 1st Rule. He had had its importance vividly impressed upon his mind by a notable circumstance that took place earlier in the Session. During the discussion on the Coercion Bill he left the House one evening at 10 o'clock. He was accompanied by an hon. Friend of his—a Member for an Irish county. They both left unconscious that they had committed any offence against the Rules of the House. Returning the next morning, between 9 and 10 o'clock, his hon. Friend found that in his absence he had been tried and condemned at the instance of the Chairman of Committees. He had a high opinion of the fairness of the House of Commons. He did not believe that, consciously, the House would do an injustice to any man; but he must say that that transaction had left a more unpleasant impression upon his mind as to the length partizanship could be carried by an official than anything he had seen since he had been a Member. The hon. Friend to whom he was referring was condemned for proceedings that took place in his absence, and when a casual Chairman was presiding; but the punishment was inflicted upon him at the instance of the Chairman of Committees, who did not witness the conduct he complained of, and who dogmatically and decisively pronounced judgment upon facts he was unaware of. He should oppose, therefore, most strenuously the giving of the Chairman of Committees such powers as the Resolution proposed to confer. He agreed with the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) when he said that no number of Rules would ever do away with Obstruction. If the House was to assume the regular and orderly character that the Government seemed to think it had lost, it could only be accomplished by a better spirit and a higher tone pervading the entire Assembly. They did not keep order in the streets by the laws or policemen, but because the mass of the citizens knew that it was their interest and their duty to contribute to its maintenance. They gave and took in their intercourse with their neighbours, and did not punctiliously stand upon points so long as substantial justice and fair-play were observed. It should be the same way in the House of Commons. But the Rules had been enforced against a section of the Members so strictly that that feeling had been destroyed. It was by its restoration, and not by any Rules such as the Prime Minister had proposed, that the Legislature would reach that position of effectiveness that they all desired to see it attain. There were certain points respecting the Amendment on which they were all agreed. First, they all admitted that the position of the Speaker was superior to that of the Chairman of Committees. The Speaker was a semi-judicial officer. He was raised above the ordinary influences of partizanship. He could be intrusted with, and was supposed to exercise, his power with absolute impartiality. The Chairman, however, held a different position. He was a partizan. He mingled with Members in the Lobbies and in the Corridors, voted in Divisions, and performed the ordinary functions of a Party Member. It was impossible to suppose that he was not influenced by his daily contact with his Colleagues. This was admitted; and, strangely enough, the Prime Minister, when admitting it, drew from it an argument in favour of conferring upon the inferior officer the exceptional power. It was the most extraordinary reasoning he had ever listened to. The right hon. Gentleman arrived at the conclusion by contending that as the Chairman was an inferior officer he would feel his responsibility, know that his conduct was keenly scrutinized, and would be excessively careful in giving his decisions. Now, he (Mr. Joseph Cowen) supposed that tortuous mode of reasoning had its influence; but he owned that he could not follow it. On another point they were also agreed —that the Obstruction to the Business of the House took place chiefly in Committee. The subjects that were there discussed, and the Rules that obtained, supplied inducements and opportunities which did not exist in the House generally. They admitted these three points, therefore—that the Chairman was an inferior officer, that he was a partizan, and that at the time he presided Obstruction was most rife. They gave the Speaker power to close the debate by a simple majority. He said they gave that power; but it was very questionable whether that was conferred in an unqualified sense, for the Rule as it stood was a complete puzzle. Some friends of his contended that they could extract 16 different meanings from it. But, be that as it might, under the Rule no doubt the intention was that the Speaker should have the power of initiating the closing of a discussion, and to close it by a bare majority. It might be right or it might be wrong to give the Speaker that power. He thought it was wrong. He, however, was not arguing that point then. But surely it was not right to give the same power to the inferior officer and the partizan that they gave to the judicial officer. The best way to deal with the matter would be, as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, to divide the duties of the two, and make one Code of Rules for the Speaker, and another Code for the Chairman. But the Government refused to do that. He would make a further suggestion—that if the Speaker was to be empowered to close the discussion by a bare majority, the Chairman of Committees should only be empowered to close it by a majority of two-thirds or three-fourths. By that means the highest officer would have power to deal in the House in one way, and the inferior officer would deal in Committee in another. He did not know whether the Government would accept his suggestion; but he was quite sure, if they could see their way to do so, it would shorten the discussion and facilitate the passage of their Regulations.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, he thought the suggestions of the hon. Member who had just addressed the House were worthy of consideration. He was of opinion, however, that if the debate upon the Procedure Rules was to proceed at the same pace in the future as in the past two days, it was impossible to imagine when the House could get through the discussion of them. The debate had already lasted too long. It was in the power of the Government to put a stop to it, if they chose, by announcing their intention to revert to their Resolution of a few months ago, and to give up the *clôture* by a bare majority. The debate at present was unreal. They were conscious of what mystic writers called "a presence" among them which, though unseen, was felt by all—that presence was the bare majority Rule, of which they, none of them, could get rid. He would therefore suggest that the Government should give up that Rule altogether; and he believed that if hon. Members opposite who were known to dislike it would boldly speak out their opinions they would greatly assist in bringing that about. The intention of the Prime Minister to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), with the addition of certain Rules by which the House would be enabled to invest casual Chairmen of Committees with the powers of the regular Chairman, made it clear that the whole subject would have to be re-opened; in which case it would not be desirable to pass what was necessarily an incomplete Resolution. If the Chairman of Ways and Means was to possess the same powers as the Speaker, it would be logically necessary to place casual Chairmen in the same position, and, he supposed, the Chairmen of Grand Committees also—unless in Grand Committees Obstruction was never likely to impede the proceedings—otherwise they would have this "curious" spectacle, a spectacle of perfect order while the Chairman of Ways and Means was in the Chair, and should he be ill, or absent from other causes, absolute disorder under the presidency of his *locum tenens.* If on that side of the House so considerable a change was opposed, it was not to be presumed that such opposition was in the interests of Obstruction. Their desire was, not that Obstruction should continue, but that it should be put down by other and better methods. He would only add a hope that Her Majesty's Government, by reverting to the compromise agreed to by them some months ago, would remove the difficulty in which their proposals had placed the House.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means was responsible, but indefinite. At any rate, he had found no definition of it in any of the Regulations of the House, except in that which provided for the performance of his duty as Deputy Speaker. The fact was that the Committees of the House might be presided over by any Member except when the House was in Committee of Ways and Means. The Chairman of Ways and Means had no prescriptive or statutory right to preside in Committees other than those of Ways and Means. They had the highest authority for that, because the Speaker, in answer to a question on the point, had stated that—"It was arranged that ordinarily the Chairman of Ways and Means should take the Chair on Government Bills and sometimes on other Bills." And, again, in answer to another question, the Speaker said—"It has been the invariable custom of this House for many years to allow any Member of the House to take the Chair on a Bill." And the statement of the Speaker was confirmed by the Prime Minister, who said that—"It was Sir Robert Peel who first induced Mr. Greene to take the Chair on certain Committees, but not on all." The consequence was that an hon. Member below the Gangway immediately gave Notice that the next time the Chairman of Ways and Means was absent he would move that the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) should take the Chair. He did not know that the House would wish that the power of *clôture* should be put into the hands of the hon. Member for Cavan. They were asked now to consent that the most stringent Rule ever proposed in any Parliament should be intrusted to any chance Member who might be Chairman of a Committee. The Chairman of Ways and Means was always a Member of the Party in power, and looked to that Party for promotion; and on that ground alone there was good reason for rejecting the proposal of the Government, and for adopting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth.

MR. GORST said, that the debate had been singularly remarkable for silence and for ignorance—entire ignorance on the part of Her Majesty's Government of the scheme they had submitted, and persistent refusal to answer questions put by what was called "the inquiring Party." Except the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), only two other supporters of the Government had spoken, and of these, one had wisely excused himself from voting at all, because he did not know what he would be voting about; and the other, the hon. Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke), would give a hypothetical vote—he would vote for the Government if they amended the Resolution which they had put on the Paper. With these exceptions, all their other supporters, rising young barristers and others, held their tongues. And yet it was but rarely that a young politician below the Gangway got an opportunity of supporting by a speech a Ministerial proposal. He had sat below the Treasury Bench, and he knew that to be the case. Why was it that they had been thus silent? Simply because they did not know what the Resolution was. But there was another Party—the Party which usually sat behind him, but which was now apparently at dinner—whose silence was remarkable. It was simply in consequence of the exuberant and persistent rhetoric of those hon. Members that the *clôture* was demanded. It was common talk that the *clôture* was aimed, not at the Conservatives, but at the Gentlemen who came from Ireland. Their privileges of speech were to be curtailed, and they had nearly all felt the rod wielded by the Chairman of Committees. It was, therefore, wonderful that only one of their number should have spoken on the present occasion. Why had they been silent? The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) had let "the cat out of the bag" by saying that the Irish Members took little interest in the question of the *clôture* because their presence in that House would only last a short time. He would like to know how the Government had "squared" the hon. Members from Ireland. Had the Government tampered with them by promising them a separate Parliament on College Green? [*Cries of* "Question!" *and* "Order!"] He asked the Government to tell the House whether the hon. Member for Carlow had founded his observation on any real fact? [Sir William Harcourt: Question, Question!] He was not surprised at the impatience of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary——

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I rise to Order. I would ask you, Sir, whether the hon. and learned Member has yet said one word in reference to the Amendment before the House? [*Cries of* "Oh!"]

Mr. CHAPLIN also rose to Order. Was the right hon. and learned Gentleman in Order in interrupting another Member with a statement?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had made no statement.

Mr. CHAPLIN replied, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had in effect stated that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham had not said a word in reference to the Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member for Chatham is reviewing the debate which has taken place. I do not think it right to interpose.

Mr. GORST said, he felt no surprise at the displeasure shown by the Home Secretary at his line of argument. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was very anxious that he should speak within the four corners of the Resolution; but what was the Question before the House? His own supporter, the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), could not tell what it was. The Government maintained an obstinate silence. If they were all as sensible as the hon. Member for Berkshire, they would follow his example and walk out of the House, and leave the Government to settle the matter in a Commission consisting of themselves. [The Solicitor General: Hear, hear!] The Government had not told them what the power was which they were asked to intrust to the Chairman of Committees. How could the House decide to grant the power before they knew what it was to be? He understood that casual Chairmen were not to have the power. How, then, were Chairmen of that kind to preserve order? The hon. and learned Attorney General had said that when once the Rules were passed they would never see a casual Chairman. Surely that was an absurd statement. Could the Attorney General guarantee the perpetual health of the Chairman of Ways and Means? Then the Government had refused to say what was to be done in the case of Grand Committees. The House ought to be placed in possession of the scheme they were told the Government were going to produce. It was all very well for the Government to draw upon the faith of their own supporters; but they had no right to draw upon the faith of the

Opposition. What he would advise the Government to do—and he tendered the advice with the greatest possible deference and humility—was first to make up their own minds as to what it was they intended, and then to rise frankly and explain the scheme to the House.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, that the position of Chairmen of Grand Committees and of casual Chairmen could not properly be discussed in connection with the Amendment before the House. With respect to Chairmen of Grand Committees, the Government had stated that they were not to be invested with the power of closure. The leading organ of public opinion had stated that Grand Committees would be nests of Obstruction if that power were not given to the presiding Members. But it should be borne in mind that the Bills which would be referred to Grand Committees would not be measures likely to provoke Obstruction. If Obstruction should arise, the proper course would be to report the fact to the House, with the intimation that the Committee could not deal satisfactorily with the Bill. The main point now was whether the Chairman of Ways and Means should have the power which they proposed to give to the Speaker. The case sought to be made out by the Opposition in support of the Amendment had been conclusively answered from their own side of the House in the speech of the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), who had repudiated the idea that the Chairman of Committees was a political creature, and had vindicated the dignity of that high Office. The right hon. Gentleman had shown that the powers intrusted to the Speaker must be vested in his permanent Representative; and, therefore, until that speech was answered, notwithstanding the taunts of hon. Gentlemen opposite, he saw no reason why they on the Liberal side of the House should waste the time of the House in discussing the question.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was very glad that at last they had had a speech from the independent Benches on the opposite side, for if there was not a conspiracy of silence, or a confederacy of muteness on the other side of the House, there was, at all events, an extraordinary coincidence which brought forth no debate. He always heard the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) with very great pleasure on account of the great ability with which he spoke, though he did not always agree with him. He had listened to the whole course of this debate with some knowledge, and with considerable attention; and he was bound to say that, with the terms of the 1st Resolution before him, and having had the benefit of this debate in the earlier part of the Session, he never heard anything more relevant than the speeches made from the Opposition Benches. Now, bearing in mind that the Prime Minister announced at least three times since they had assembled that the House had been summoned at this exceptional and inconvenient period to resume its labours for the purposes affecting the efficiency and repute of the House, it would be reasonable to demand that they should have been summoned, at all events, to a fair debate. He did not think it was legitimate, he did not think it was wise, to indicate to the country that the Government had summoned their followers for a mechanical function of voting. He hoped that as the debates proceeded they would sometimes have an expression of the independent views of independent Members. This debate might not have taken place, or might have been shortened, if the Government had not altered their views with reference to a two-thirds' vote as a substitute for a bare majority. The powers that were proposed after the communication of the Prime Minister in May last were the powers of initiating a *clôture* on a two-thirds' majority. That was an intelligible and regulated power. That power he might have been willing to assent to, not because he liked it, but because, having regard to all the circumstances, it was a matter that could not be further contested. But the Prime Minister had thought it right to propose a bare majority; and now they had to consider the depository of this vast power of initiating *clôture* by a bare majority. They were bound to regard jealously and with the greatest possible suspicion the person to whom they gave that power. He was unwilling to give that power even to the Speaker, or to any of those who might succeed him. He recognized the logic of facts, and was aware that previous discussions had indicated that some form of power or other might be given by Resolutions of the House, and that they had passed Votes which they were prevented from challenging. Upon the question whether the power that was given to the Speaker as to the initiative of the closure of a debate should be extended to the Chairman of Ways and Means, it was necessary to consider what had been the distinction existing between those who held the high Office of Speaker and those who held the honourable, but not so high, Office of Chairman of Committees. The distinction was obvious. The Speaker was the first Commoner in the Realm. The second Commoner in the Realm, he (Mr. Gibson) believed, was the right hon. Secretary of State for the Home Department. Now, no one would put the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees in the same category. The former was given a pension to indicate that he was placed beyond the slightest obligation of looking again to Office or any public employment. In addition to that, by public usage, he was entitled to the offer of a Peerage, so that the broadest distinction was drawn between him and the Chairman of Committees. The idea that had been suggested that anyone who filled the subordinate and temporary Office of Chairman of Committees could be regarded in the slightest degree as being in a position resembling that of the Speaker struck him as nonsense. Speakers on one or two occasions had descended from their high Office and become a Prime Minister, or Secretary of State; but, as a rule, the Speaker's high Office was well recognized by himself, as well as those surrounding him, as the goal of their ambition in that House. As regarded the Office of Chairman of Committees, he had no doubt the duties of that Office were discharged in a perfectly proper and upright manner, and no one recognized more than he (Mr. Gibson) did the high character of the right hon. Gentleman who had filled the Office of Chairman of Committees; but the House knew the operation of strong political opinion. Was the power to be confined to the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means, or was it to be extended to any casual Chairman? He listened to the debate of last night, and he read the report in *The Times* of the speech of the President of the Local Government Board, who spoke with immense authority on this subject, both as a Cabinet Minister and as having himself filled the Office of Chairman of Committees. And these were the words of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "The Government felt that in a long Committee of the Whole House it might be absolutely necessary that a Chairman who temporarily relieved the regular Chairman should be able to take the initiative in regard to closing the debate. On behalf of the Government, he wished to say that if they were allowed to dispose of the present Amendment, and to reach that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston, the Government would then be prepared to make a proposal, with regard to these temporary Chairmen, which they hoped might meet the views of the House."

Was not the meaning of these words that yesterday the Cabinet were of opinion that it was necessary that the temporary, casual Chairman should be enabled to take the initiative in regard to closure? If that was the view of the Government yesterday, what was their view to-day? He was entitled to have an answer to that question. Was the view which the President of the Local Government Board expressed yesterday the view which the Government entertained now, or had they during the night changed their minds? He wanted to know whether the view which had been expressed yesterday by the President of the Local Government Board represented the view of the Government that day?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the right hon. and learned Gentleman will allow me, I will give him an answer.

Mr. GIBSON: I would prefer the President of the Local Government Board, who spoke the words, to reply.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the right hon. and learned Gentleman does not wish an explanation, I will not give it.

Mr. GIBSON said, he would yield to the Home Secretary, although he did not consider it regular for one Cabinet Minister to explain what another Cabinet Minister meant.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT complained that he had been treated with incivility, and denied that he rose to reply for another Cabinet Minister, but simply in answer to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's question as to Cabinet changes. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had charged the Cabinet with having changed their minds. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had read what the President of the Local Government said; but he did not read what the Prime Minister afterwards said. The Prime Minister stated that he was willing to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), which expressly confined this power to the Chairman of Ways and Means. The words were so expressed, and left no room for misunderstanding, and he was astonished that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should have misunderstood them.

MR. GIBSON said, he was quite ready to receive any explanation from the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he did not think that the Home Secretary had at all mended the aspect of affairs. Yesterday the Cabinet was represented by the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and the President of the Local Government Board. He had quoted from the utterances of the President of the Local Government Board, which expressed, with the greatest significance and clearness, the judgment of the Cabinet. Later on, the Prime Minister was told by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) that he had given a pledge that he would accept the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston. That the Prime Minister did not deny, and pointed out that it was intended to bring forward some simple Rules of the House with reference to casual Chairmen; but he never withdrew in terms the unqualified and open language of the President of the Local Government Board. He wished to know whether the House was to assume from the statement of the Home Secretary, that they were to hear no more as to the casual Chairman having any power whatever under this Rule?

MR. DODSON: The right hon. and learned Gentleman is quite right in saying not under this Rule.

MR. GIBSON said, that he put a more favourable construction upon the Home Secretary's words. He understood from the Home Secretary that after the Prime Minister's statement they were to be assured that no one, except the appointed Chairman of Ways and Means, could ever have power to use the *clôture.* He was now told by the President of the Local Government Board that that was not so, and that it was intended to give them their powers under another Rule. If that were so, he would like to know what was the difference between the statement of the Cabinet that day and their statement yesterday? He understood the Home Secretary to state that they had no longer the right to rely upon the statement of the President of the Local Government Board, in consequence of the Prime Minister's acceptance, in a qualified way, of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston. Now, he was given to understand that under another Rule the casual Chairmen were to have the power of closure. If that were so, then the Prime Minister accepted an Amendment, and killed it by a Rule subsequently framed. He hoped the Cabinet would think over the matter in the night, and endeavour to arrive at some conclusion which would, at all events, be capable of being easily apprehended by a moderate understanding. One word as to the statement of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) with reference to Grand Committees. He did not think the hon. Member did justice to the arguments of the noble Lord who introduced that topic. It was true that the matter was not in the terms of this Resolution; but it was a legitimate test by which to measure how this Rule would work, to see whether the Government had examined into all their operations so as to make them one coherent whole. If the Government had not until yesterday considered what was to be the position of Chairmen of Grand Committees it showed that they had not considered this matter in anything like an exhaustive way. If the Chairmen of Grand Committees were not to have these powers, then, as Bills were to be delegated to these Committees for all purposes, a large scope was left for the Obstruction which it was so necessary to check. The Prime Minister had said more than once that the Grand Committees were only a kind of experiment; but unless the Rules on that subject were presented in a more defined shape they would be likely to give rise to a considerable amount of discussion. Before the debate closed, he was bound to say that hon. Members opposite had done nothing to prevent its closing from its very opening. He would venture to suggest that it would keep up appearances better, and give the discussion more the semblance of a debate, if some representative speakers were put forward on the other side.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, that the reason for summoning Parliament at that time was the necessity of putting some check upon the licence of debate. He had always understood that hon. Members opposite were of opinion that the time had arrived when the Rules of Debate of that House should be altered. That, at all events, was the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, when he brought forward his Resolutions with regard to Obstruction; and matters had not mended since. There were now 116 Amendments upon the Paper, and if hon. Members all spoke upon this Amendment it was difficult to see when the debate would close. Yet they were taunted because hon. Members on that side of the House had not followed the example of those on the other side in discussing this Amendment at length, however much their speeches might have been mere repetition. Nothing was to be gained by useless repetition. It was of no use making speeches on this side of the House, repeating over and over again the same answers. Indeed, if the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had listened to the debate as carefully as he said he had done, he would have discovered that many of the speeches made upon his own side answered one another. For instance, they had been told over and over again that the proposal to invest the Chairman of Committees with the power of initiating the *clôture* was something terribly dangerous; but the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had that night said that it was a very harmless proposal indeed. According to his (the Solicitor General's) understanding, debate meant using argument with a view to convincing hon. Members, and answering argument which had not yet been answered. He adhered to that definition; and would say, moreover, that such arguments as had been used on the other side of the House had been fully and effectually answered on this. That might be a benighted view, but that was the view taken on this side of the House; and that was the reason they did not enter into a long discussion. With respect to the argument based on the difference in the position occupied by the Speaker and that occupied by the Chairman of Committees, on which so much stress had been laid, he did not see much force in it; for when the power was given to the Speaker to Name an hon. Member for wilful Obstruction and disregard for the authority of the Chair, the same power was given to the Chairman of Committees. [An hon. MEMBER: Subject to appeal.] The hon. Member said, "Subject to appeal." That was to say, the Speaker was called into the Chair to put the Question to the House again. Did the hon. Gentleman think there was any protection in that? If so, he would tell him that it was a protection of a most shadowy description. The power of Naming Members initiated the proceedings, for all the rest depended on the vote of the House. The same thing would take place here. Neither the Speaker nor the Chairman of Committees could close the debate. All that was proposed was that he should have the power of initiating the Motion; the ultimate decision would rest with the House. He did not think it possible to find a case of closing by the Chairman in which it would not be possible to raise the same question again before the House. For instance, if there was an undue stoppage of the discussion in Committee of Supply, the question might be raised on Report; or if, in the case of a Bill, there were no Report, then there might be a discussion upon the third reading. If there was to be a closing power at all—and the House had decided that there should be—it would be idle to give that power to the Speaker only, and to refuse it to the Chairman of Committees. He had heard the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) say that on the question of Obstruction reliance must be placed upon the spirit and feeling of the House. He wished it were possible to rely upon the spirit and feeling of the House. The time had gone by for doing so. He thought they had now arrived at a position for the determination of this question. It had been said that if the Government told hon. Members what it was they proposed to do, the House would know how to vote; but they had had the plainest intimation of what was to be done. Then, with regard to the question of the casual Chairmen, the Prime Minister had said that that question would be separately dealt with.

MR. E. STANHOPE: What the Prime Minister said was that he would adopt the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Preston. Since then he had suggested some modification, and now he has gone back again.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL): All the right hon. Gentleman said was that that question would be dealt with as a matter by itself. This question of the casual Chairmen was a sort of red herring drawn across the path for the purpose of prolonging this debate, the speeches of hon. Members opposite consisting in asking at one moment what was the use of giving that power to the Chairman unless it was also given to the casual Chairmen, and at the next moment saying what a monstrous thing it would be to give them such a power. The Government had no desire to confuse the issue, but to keep to the plain issue as it arose upon each Amendment.

MR. GIBSON asked leave, by the indulgence of the House, to read the statement made by the Prime Minister on May 1, as reported in *Hansard.* The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I will take this opportunity of stating in regard to the Notice given to-night by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), which proposes to recognize the Chairman of Ways and Means—being an Officer of the House—but to wholly exclude from the operation of the Resolution casual Chairmen—Chairmen *pro hac vice*—that it is an Amendment that I think perfectly reasonable, and one that we are prepared to accede to."—[3 *Hansard,* cclxviii. 1900.]

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY said, he yielded to no man in his desire to restore the fair fame of the House of Commons and to restrain undue licence of debate; and, therefore, he approached that question in no Party spirit, and with every wish, as far as he possibly could, to support the propositions of the Government. But he found himself very much in the position described the other day by his hon. Friend the Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), who said that the cart was now being put before the horse. Indeed, it seemed to him that the horse had been led out and was being put into the shafts without its being understood what sort of a cart, whether a light or a heavy one, it was to have attached to it; and, however inconvenient it might be to the Treasury Bench to be interrogated as to their intentions, he felt that, until he knew under what circumstances the power given by the Resolution would be vested either in the Speaker or in the Chairman of Committees, he was unable to give a vote on the particular question before the House. He could not vote with the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), because he thought there was great force in what was said as to the necessity of putting down Obstruction in Committee, and that they would be dealing with only a part of the question if they did not deal with Obstruction in Committee. He also felt that the Chairman of Committees, though undoubtedly not so high an officer as the Speaker, was yet, in many respects, clothed with much of the dignity and authority of the latter; but he asked what was to be the majority on which the *clôture* was to be put in force? And, until he knew that, he was unable to vote with respect to this proposition. On the 6th of May the Prime Minister told them that he accepted the proposition of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). That concession had since been withdrawn; but on Tuesday night the Prime Minister made a speech of apparently a conciliatory character, which left them a hope that some compromise might yet be come to on the matter. He did not even now abandon that hope, notwithstanding the attitude assumed by the Solicitor General, who, though an able exponent of the views of the Government, was not in the secrets of the Cabinet; and the Cabinet seemed not yet to have quite made up their own minds on the subject. If they would allow the question to be decided by the real judgment of the House, without Party feeling being brought to bear upon it, he felt confident that they would arrive at the decision that the *clôture* should only be applied by a proportionate majority—say, of three-fourths or two-thirds, but not by a bare majority. Then he should be willing to give that authority to the Chairman of Committee of Ways and Means. With regard to casual Chairmen of Committees, he did not think it was dragging a red herring across the path to raise that point. On the contrary, the question which had been put in regard to it was a fair one, and one which they were entitled to have answered. Casual Chairmen had to be called in to act at all-night Sittings—occasions when the *clôture* might have to be put into operation; and, therefore, it was right that the House should know what the intention of the Government was in respect to those cases. In regard to the Chairmen of Standing Committees, he did not think the matter was of so much importance, because he hardly thought the Government would propose to confer that power on them, the proposed appointment of these Committees being only an experiment. In conclusion, if the proposal of the Government was that the *clôture* was to be enforced by a bare majority, he should feel bound to vote against the Resolution, whether the power was to be exercised by the Speaker or by the Chairman of Committees. But if, as he hoped, the decision of the House would be that it should only be applied by the vote of a fair proportionate majority, then he should think that the Chairman of Committees should be clothed with the same authority as the Speaker for initiating it.

Mr. SALT said, there was a very unnecessary, though by no means unnatural, feeling on the part of many Members on the other side that the discussions on the *clôture* were being carried to an unseemly and unnecessary length. He, however, rose to put before the House no Party considerations whatever, but some very practical reasons why it was absolutely necessary that they should proceed very cautiously, and possibly very slowly. They were now dealing with a matter of the greatest importance with regard both to the past history of the House and to the future management of the House by means of Resolutions. They were, in fact, thus dealing with a matter of far greater importance than three-fourths of the Bills which were introduced into the House; and they might incautiously pass some sentence in a Resolution which, when passed, would be adopted as a Standing Order of the House, and there would afterwards be great trouble in getting it altered if its alteration should become necessary. It should be remembered that in dealing with a matter by Bill there were five opportunities on which they could challenge the principle of the Bill, and two on which they could discuss it in detail; whereas, when they proceeded by Resolution, there were only two opportunities of challenging its principle, and only one of discussing it in detail. It therefore became all the more necessary that the House should understand the mind of the Government on that subject; and it appeared to him that there were now on that particular question three minds of the Government. There was first the mind of the Prime Minister, then there was the mind of the President of the Local Government Board, and there was also the later mind of the hon. and learned Solicitor General. It had been urged by the Solicitor General that the stage of Report would still follow that of Committee; but it must be remembered that the 11th of the proposed Rules would make a considerable alteration in the stage of Report, which was to be taken without a Question being put unless there were Notice to re-commit. The House had now before it three minds of the Government; and, seeing that the question could not be raised at later stages, as in the case of a Bill, it was only fair and right that they should pause until they knew what the mind of the Government really was.

Mr. ONSLOW said, they must recollect that these Resolutions would not only affect the House of Commons for the present time, but the House of Commons in generations which were to come; and, therefore, he thought it was incumbent upon them that they should have the most ample discussion upon them, and upon every Amendment which would come before the House. He saw it stated in a newspaper to-day that the Conservative Party had already shown signs of Obstruction. That might be the feeling of some hon. Members opposite; but the Conservative Party did not care one straw, nor mind one iota, of what might be said or done by the Birmingham wire-pullers, and were not to be daunted by anything that might appear in Radical newspapers. There were two kinds of Obstruction. There might be legitimate Obstruction of a particular measure, such as the Prime Minister had offered to the Divorce Bill, or there might be an abuse of the Forms of the House, such as Irish Members had resorted to, and for which Rules should be framed to put down; but this Resolution would operate solely against legitimate Obstruction. The altered condition of things rendered it necessary and inevitable that there should be more talk in the House now than there had been in the past. It was not at present known how even the Speaker was to say what was the evident sense as to whether a debate should close; and, therefore, while objecting that the Speaker should have such power, they were still more determined in their objection to the Chairman of Ways and Means having it. The present Chairman of Committees was of a somewhat nervous and excitable temperament. ["Oh! oh!"] He did not speak in disparagement of the Chairman. He could not help being nervous and excitable; but on a question of great political significance, if the Chairman of Ways and Means lost his head, as he might do, he (Mr. Onslow) thought a great Constitutional wrong would be done to the House. The right hon. Member who preceded Mr. Playfair was of a somewhat more calm and phlegmatic disposition. ["Oh! oh!"] He did not wish to speak disparagingly of any Gentleman; but he could not help thinking that the Chairman of Committees might lend himself to the Party influences of the Prime Minister. For instance, if he had heard it said that it was desirable to get so many votes at a Sitting, and if by 12.30 sufficient progress had not been made, he might consider it his duty to put the *clôture* on a particular discussion, which might be of great interest and importance, in order to get the remaining Votes passed; and a dictatorial Prime Minister might, by a nod or a wink, suggest that the time had come for doing so. As the Prime Minister had just returned to the House after being absent some hours, and it was their duty to get some further explanation from him, he moved that the House do now adjourn.

MR. RITCHIE seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Onslow,*)—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he wished to advert to the unfortunate arrangement by which the Question was put in a form that would probably prevent the House from fully discussing, until they came to the very end of these debates, the important point as to whether the Speaker or a Minister of the Crown should have the responsibility of proposing the *clôture.* In his opinion, if they were to have the *clôture* at all, it ought to be put into operation by the open and direct initiative of a Minister of the Crown. Nothing could be more grossly unfair than the action of the presiding authorities in the French Chambers towards minorities. Hon. Members ought to consider the possibility, and even the probability, of the Chairman of Committees being a Party man, whose main object would be to pass Government measures and to suppress criticism hostile to the Ministry of the day. It was impossible to consider the working of the power of the gag placed in the hands of a Ministerial nominee without taking into consideration the other changes with which they were threatened under the subsequent Rules to be proposed by the Prime Minister. It was a pity that this important question of the *clôture* had been placed in the forefront of these Rules, for without a due consideration of the changes to be introduced by the subsequent Rules, they could not be in a position to judge of the alterations which would be introduced in regard to the Offices of the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means. For example, the proposed Grand Committees, each consisting of 100 Members, would be picked and packed in order to represent the policy of the Minister of the day. After a Bill had passed through a Grand Committee, and came under the scope of the Chairman of Ways and Means, or some other functionary dependent on the will of the majority, what was the position which independent Members would occupy? They would have been excluded from the Grand Committee by the Government Whips, and subsequent discussion in the House would be prevented by the apposite application of the gag by the Ministerial nominee in the Chair. Yet the Government would endeavour to escape the responsibility, for they would pretend that they had nothing whatever to do with the application of the gag and the suppression of hostile criticism. Independent Members would be at the mercy of the Government. It would be in the recollection of every Member of that House that during the course of the present Session the Government snatched a division on the Bradlaugh Question by issuing a four-line Whip on the Lords' Inquiry to the Land Act. The supporters of the Ministry attended in force, and the Bradlaugh Question was unexpectedly brought forward. It was a very pretty stratagem; but it was not serious, because in the present state of things, when liberty of discussion still existed, independent Members were able to speak against time, until the Opposition could muster their ranks. But, under the New Rule, the *clôture* would be applied whenever it was needed for the purposes of the majority. It was not Irish Obstruction which would be put down, but the right and power of free discussion. Irish Obstruction had thoroughly done its work. He had long since denounced the weapon of Obstruction, which ought only to be resorted to as a remedy for unendurable wrong and in case of urgent necessity. Obstruction, as the weapon of a small Party, was a chimera and a delusion. Already, Irish Obstruction belonged to a museum of fossils; and such Obstruction could be put down by a two-thirds, or even a four-fifths or nine-tenths majority. But an unscrupulous Minister and an unscrupulous majority, if that power were intrusted to a Chairman of Ways and Means, who was always a Government nominee, would thereby bring about an exaggeration of all the evils inseparable from the system in the case of the proposed Grand Committees. Independent Members would be excluded from those Grand Committees, and then gradually from the House itself. If he were a member of a revolutionary party —of such a party as had supported Mazzini and Garibaldi—he would be glad to see the establishment of the *clôture*, because it would inevitably tend to the destruction of the powers of Parliament in this country; it would reduce the people of this country to the condition of those nations which had no free Parliaments, and would make Parliament the creature and the minion of the most powerful demagogue of the day.

Question put, "That the words 'or to the Chairman of' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided* :—Ayes 202; Noes 144: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 347.)

Mr. RAIKES moved to amend the 1st Resolution by inserting in line 2, after the first "of," the words "Ways and Means in." The object of the Amendment was to exclude from the exercise of the somewhat invidious powers and privileges which it was proposed to confer upon the Chairman of Ways and Means such amateur and temporary Chairmen who might be called upon at a late hour of the night to take the place of the official Chairman. In his opinion, the Chairman of Committees had very important and responsible duties to fulfil, and occupied in Committee a position analogous to that held by the Speaker in the House itself; and there being no appeal, as some appeared to imagine, from the decision of the Chairman to the Speaker, it was necessary that the temporary Chairman, who was freed from all responsibility on leaving the Chair, should not be intrusted with powers which might, perhaps, be conferred without much danger upon the official Chairman, whose salary was dependent upon the annual Vote of the House. He hoped that they would hear from the Prime Minister something which would re-assure the House with regard to various suggestions which had been thrown out from the Treasury Bench during his absence as to the course which the Government proposed to adopt, and which, so far as he understood it, amounted to taking away the substance, while granting the form of this Amendment. When they had sanctioned the principle of this Amendment, it would be hard that on a subsequent day they should be asked, practically, to reverse the principle by creating some new personages clothed with more or less indefinite powers for presiding over a more or less indefinite body, and armed with the authority which this Amendment sought to remove from amateur Chairmen. The right hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, in line 2, by inserting after the first word "of," the words "Ways and Means in."—(*Mr. Raikes.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the right hon. Gentleman correctly understood that it was the intention of the Government to assent to this Amendment without any qualification or condition whatever. It was, however, only just to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr.

Stanhope), whose recollection of his utterances on this subject he provisionally accepted yesterday, that he should say that, having had an opportunity of referring to the debate, the exact purport of which had escaped him, he now finally adopted the hon. Member's statement of what he had said as accurate. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) appeared to be labouring under an impression, or an apprehension, which he (Mr. Gladstone) hoped and desired to be able to remove from the mind of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman was under the apprehension that the Government intended to introduce in connection with this scheme of Resolutions, or during the present Sitting of the House of Commons, some new plan by which they would again propose that whatever power of closing debate might be given to the Chairman of Ways and Means should also be given to a casual Chairman. Now, the Government had no intention whatever of making any proposal during the present Sitting on the subject of casual Chairmen. They did think, however, that it had been felt by the House that the present provisions for the appointment of casual Chairmen, and the absence of any special qualification, were not quite satisfactory; and it would be proper, and he hoped it would not be found difficult, to improve those provisions. During the next Session, or at any future period, the question of making better provision might be considered. But there was not the slightest intention of mixing up that subject with the present debates, or to make any proposal upon it in connection with the present Resolutions; and, so far as casual Chairmen were concerned, hon. Members might banish them from their minds. He had no wish to speak disparagingly of casual Chairmen, for some of them had been found extremely valuable and useful, and even distinguished upon occasions; but he proposed to banish them altogether so far as this Autumn Sitting was concerned. He hoped he had now removed all apprehension on the subject; but, before he sat down, he wished to give in his distinct adhesion to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had said with reference to the position of Chairman of Ways and Means. The right hon. Gentleman held that position himself with ability and distinction; and he (Mr. Gladstone) must bear his testimony to the fact that, although the right hon. Gentleman out of the Chair was as stout a Party man as any in the House, yet in the Chair he would as soon have his case judged by the right hon. Gentleman as by anybody. He wished to remind the House, after the very disparaging remarks which had fallen from different hon. Gentlemen in the course of the debate, of a fact which was indisputable—namely, that, although it was perfectly true that the Chairman of Ways and Means did not preclude himself from voting in the ordinary divisions of the House, yet that nothing was more rare than for the Chairman of Ways and Means to be seen taking a share in any Party debate. He often assisted the House upon the consideration of Private Bills; but he most rarely assisted the House by his judgment in a Party discussion. He had been conversing on this subject with a right hon. Friend, and he had stated that he had a difficulty in recollecting a case in which the Chairman of Ways and Means had interfered in a Party debate. He was reminded of a case which very much strengthened his argument—the case of Mr. Massey, a highly respectable Member of the House, who filled the position of Chairman of Committees some years ago. On one occasion, Mr. Massey did take part in a Party debate on the Reform Bill; but he took part in it by speaking against the Party with whom he usually acted. This fact, he hoped, would do something to mitigate any disposition which might exist in any quarter to disparage the impartiality of any hon. Member who might happen to occupy the position of Chairman of Ways and Means. He hoped that the House, having regard to prior experiences, and not to speculation on the future, would have no apprehension as to the impartial judgment of the Chairman of Ways and Means; and he had spoken these few words because he was convinced that the House of Commons had a great interest in maintaining the high position of that officer—an interest he would not say equal to that which it had in maintaining the position of the Chair itself, but one only second to the interest it had in maintaining the position of the Chair. He concurred with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston in the general view he entertained of the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, and he also concurred with the right hon. Gentleman in the Amendment he had proposed.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, as a Member of the Tory Party, looked with some suspicion upon the interchange of flattering compliments between the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) and the Prime Minister. They had seen the right hon. Gentleman, as a leading Member of the Tory Party, getting up to propose an Amendment, and making flattering observations upon the Prime Minister and the Government; and immediately afterwards they found the Prime Minister getting up to accept the Amendment, and making flattering observations upon the right hon. Gentleman who had moved it. Of course, if that sort of thing was to go on much longer the Autumn Session would not be of very long duration. He thought that the Amendment of his right hon. Friend was undoubtedly a great improvement on the Resolution, now that the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had been rejected; but he thought that even the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman was itself susceptible of improvement, and, with the permission of the House, he would suggest how that Amendment might be improved. It was quite unnecessary that he should take any part in the shower of compliments which had fallen upon the Chairman of Ways and Means. He would certainly say nothing against him; but he was unable to say anything in favour of him. No doubt, there was a good deal of conventionality in what had taken place; but he and other hon. Members who sat below the Gangway in that part of the House were not accustomed to exchange compliments with each other. As to the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means, there was no doubt about it whatever; and the public knew perfectly well, and the House knew perfectly well, that the Chairman of Committees was always a partizan. The great effort usually made by the Chairman of Ways and Means was not that he should avoid appearing to be a partizan, but that he should not appear to be too much of a partizan. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "No!"] At any rate, that was his (Lord Randolph Churchill's) opinion, and he believed that to be the great effort of the Chairman of Ways and Means. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members said "Oh!" but it was a well-known fact that the success of a Chairman of Committees was that he had not appeared too much of a partizan. The Prime Minister appeared to hold a very extraordinary opinion in regard to the Chairman of Committees. If he had understood the right hon. Gentleman rightly, he had praised the late Chairman of Committees (Mr. Raikes) because he constantly voted against his Party. ["No, no!"] If that was not so, he begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon for having misrepresented him. If, however, it really were so, he would advise the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to recommend his own Chairman of Committees to take the same course on some occasions. What he wished to suggest to the House was that they should add to the end of the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston these words, "after consultation with Mr. Speaker." ["Oh!"] Hon. Members opposite might cry "Oh!" but there was more in the suggestion than appeared at first sight. They knew that in all well-regulated public schools the power and the privilege of flogging were always reserved for the head master, and were never intrusted to the usher. He thought, therefore, as the Prime Minister appeared to him to be very much inclined to treat the House of Commons of the present day as Dr. Keats used to treat his boys in the public school of Eton in olden days, the House would act very wisely if it took some care to provide that this extreme power of punishment should only rest with the highest authority in the House. If the Chairman of Committees noticed that Obstruction was going on in the House, he would be able at once to suspend the Sitting of the Committee, but for so long a time only as would enable him to consult the Speaker upon the matter, and to inform the House that he had the support of the Speaker in any action he felt it desirable to take. Curiously enough, he was reminded of a circumstance which happened only two Sessions ago. The House would recollect that on the occasion to which he referred the Chairman of Committees gave a decision which was one of the most extraordinary ever arrived at in the House of Commons. The Chairman imagined that it was in his power to put to silence a very highly-respected Member of the Tory Party; but some hon. Members sitting below the Gangway on that side of the House imagined that he had no such power. They disputed the ruling of the Chairman. The Prime Minister did not happen to be in the House at the time, and in the end the Chairman of Committees left the Chair and proceeded to consult the Speaker. When he returned, he came back with the knowledge that he had not the power to do what he thought he had a right to do. In that case there was no inconvenience and no considerable delay of the proceedings. The Committee was only suspended for a very few minutes, and it had, therefore, been demonstrated that it was perfectly easy for the Chairman of Committees to consult the Speaker without interfering in any way prejudicially with the Business of the House. There was this further advantage in such a course—that if the Chairman of Committees, in consulting the Speaker, gave him a report as to the state of affairs in the House which might not subsequently turn out to be one which fairly represented the nature of the proceedings, the Speaker would be very chary how he gave his sanction to the closing of a debate in Committee in future. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) could not help thinking that the House would feel very much happier and more satisfied upon the question of closing a debate in Committee if there was in every case to be an appeal from the Chairman of Committees to the Speaker. His right hon. Friend the Member for Preston had already pointed out that there was the very strongest difference between the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means and that of the Speaker. There was one difference which had not been pointed out before, and which he was obliged to his right hon. Friend for having reminded him of. His right hon. Friend said that the conduct of the Chairman of Ways and Means could always be called in question, because it was necessary that the Vote for payment of his salary must be moved for every year in Committee of Supply. That was a fact which he thought was very well worth remembering. But what did it come to? It came to this—that the Chairman of Committees was paid by the House; but, of course, if the Government were in any way annoyed or displeased, or put out by the conduct of the Chairman of Committees for not sufficiently enforcing the *clôture*, they would take steps which would practically enable them to get rid of the offender. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members opposite appeared to object to that statement. "Am I dog, that I should do this thing" was always said by the person who did the deed; and it was perfectly certain that there were persons in that House, connected with the conduct of Public Business, who might be capable, under provocation, of visiting the Chairman of Committees with their displeasure. Without, however, insisting that such a course would be pursued, he simply desired to point out that the Chairman of Committees was absolutely dependent upon the Government of the day, and that without the assistance of the Government of the day he would find it difficult to get his salary voted. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "No!"] It was no good saying "Oh, oh!" and "No, no!" Nothing annoyed the Prime Minister more than when the Irish Members did that, and he did not see why other hon. Members should be subjected to the same kind of interruption which the Prime Minister in his own case disliked so much. He had no wish to detain the House longer; but he submitted that the Amendment he proposed to move would be a great improvement upon this most extremely defective scheme of Her Majesty's Government, and he hoped the House would accept it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Amendment of the noble Lord would, I think, come in properly after the word "House," in line 2; but the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) is complete in itself. It would then read in this way—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the Whole House—after consultation with Mr. Speaker."

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH rose to Order. He had given Notice of an Amendment after the words "a Committee of the Whole House," to insert the words "not being the Committee of Supply." If the noble Lord's Amendment were adopted and inserted in the place suggested by the Speaker, it would, he apprehended, be impossible for him to move his Amendment.

MR. O'DONNELL rose; but——

MR. SPEAKER, interposing, said: I apprehend that even if the House were to adopt the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) might still follow.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL then moved to further amend the 1st Resolution, by inserting, after the word "House," in line 2, the words "after consultation with Mr. Speaker."

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, by inserting, after the word "House," the words "after consultation with Mr. Speaker."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE (after a pause) said, he had been waiting for some indication from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), who was his Leader on this occasion, and whose Amendment it was proposed to amend, as to the light in which he regarded it. If the Amendment of the noble Lord were agreed to, he (Mr. Gladstone) should propose further to amend it by the introduction of a Proviso—

"That inasmuch as it is essentially necessary that Mr. Speaker, in order to review in a satisfactory manner the decisions of the Chairman of Ways and Means, should be acquainted with the merits, it shall hereafter become the duty of Mr. Speaker invariably to be present during all debates in Committee."

MR. O'DONNELL remarked, that the observations which the Prime Minister had just made threw a new light on the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, and he did not think that it was a reassuring light. It now appeared that the kind of Obstruction to be put down under the New Rules was not that kind of Obstruction which was so notorious and general that it would come to the ears of the Speaker in the ordinary course of events; but it seemed to be the intention of the Prime Minister and of Her Majesty's Government to put down any appearance of delay which might not have reached the proportions of Obstruction, or even have gone beyond the proportions of legitimate discussion. The conduct of the Government in the matter confirmed the worst suspicions that had been expressed. Assuredly if there were a case of real Obstruction requiring the application of the gag, it would come to the ears not only of the Speaker, but of much less important persons; and it was that kind of Obstruction the House believed the Resolutions to be directed against. But now they had it from the Prime Minister himself that he contemplated a state of things in which it would become possible for the Chairman of Ways and Means to interfere in all sorts of minor provocations, and against whoever it might please the Chairman of Ways and Means to silence, even although no Obstruction had occurred such as would call the attention of the Speaker of the House to what might happen to be going on in Parliament. As he had said already, this was a confirmation of some of the worst suspicions which had been given expression to in the course of the debate that evening. He felt compelled to say that, unless the Chairman of Ways and Means were required to consult with Mr. Speaker, there would be very little guarantee indeed that the limitation proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), and accepted with suspicious readiness by the Head of the Government, would be any guarantee at all. It was all very well to talk about the conduct of the Chairman of Ways and Means being brought before the House if he were guilty of any misdeed. That was a mighty theoretical possibility; but he (Mr. O'Donnell) entertained a strong opinion that the worse the conduct of the Chairman of Ways and Means happened to be, if that conduct were committed in furtherance of the Business of the Government, it would receive their hearty and thorough support. As for the idea of the annual recurrence of the consideration of the salary of the Chairman of Ways and Means being any guarantee for the fair play of a Ministerial Chairman of Committees, he thought, on the contrary, that the knowledge that the getting of the salary was dependent upon the goodwill of the Leader of the Government would make the officer in question a more subservient tool of an unscrupulous Prime Minister. He did not think that any misconduct on the part of the Chairman of Ways and Means, when committed in defence of the Government policy, would result in anything else than the enthusiastic support of the Government majority. Although every man who went with the Government into the Lobby to support the Chairman of Ways and Means would be quite ready to admit in private conversation that the conduct of the Chairman was indefensible, nevertheless every one of them would give his vote in defence, and, if necessary, in laudation of that conduct. The House was blindly following the lead of the Prime Minister, and before the dozen Commandments the right hon. Gentleman had invented were completed, the House of Commons would find itself in a position in which the most Bismarck-ridden Assembly on the Continent would find nothing to envy.

Mr. GORST said, he should like to say one word before the House came to a decision upon the Amendment of his noble Friend. He really found himself unable to take the view which seemed to be favoured by the Front Benches on both sides of the House, that the Chairman of Ways and Means was a person possessed of such extraordinary impartiality that he was, in point of fact, in a similar position to that of the Speaker himself. The Amendment of his noble Friend was intended to provide a security, not that the Speaker should sit in the House of Commons during all Committees, in order to review the conduct and decisions of the Chairman of Ways and Means on every particular point, but simply to secure that before the Chairman of Ways and Means exercised the extraordinary powers which it was proposed to confer upon him, and which they were told were only to be exercised in cases of Obstruction, they should in such cases have the security of the approbation of the Speaker before the extraordinary powers were put in force. When he heard the Prime Minister speaking of the extreme impartiality of the Chairman of Ways and Means, he could not help recollecting an incident which occurred two or three days after he became a Member of the House. He well remembered the present Lord Cairns, who was at that time a distinguished Member of the House of Commons, speaking from the Front Opposition Bench, use this language—that from the Chairman of Committees nobody in the House of Commons expected impartiality. All that was expected of him was that he should exhibit a decent appearance of impartiality. He supported the Amendment because it would give the House the security of a consultation between the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Speaker.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the discussion which had taken place furnished another illustration of the inconvenience to which he had drawn the attention of the House yesterday. He had then pointed out the difficulty that might arise when the House was sitting in Committee without the Speaker in the Chair; and it seemed to him that it would have been very much more convenient to have followed the practice of which the Speaker gave the House an example last year in regard to the Rules of Urgency, and to have dealt with these two matters separately. It had, however, been otherwise decided by Her Majesty's Government, and the House was now engaged in the middle of the discussion of the 1st Rule. They had arrived at the point when it became necessary to give the initiative for some purpose or other yet to be defined. They had already come to the conclusion that the initiative was to be given to the Speaker when the House was full, and the right hon. Gentleman was in the Chair, and also to the Chairman of Ways and Means; but to no other person when the House happened to be in Committee. He did not think they could get beyond that; and if they attempted to make distinctions, they would only find themselves landed in confusion. For this reason he did not think they ought to entertain such a proposal as that which had been made by his noble Friend. He felt that there ought to be a distinction between cases when the House was in full possession of its faculties; of course, he used the word "faculties" in its proper sense, and it was a perfectly accurate word to use. There ought to be a difference when the House was in full possession of its powers and faculties, and when it was in the less perfect condition it assumed when in Committee. He had no doubt they ought to place in the hands of the Chairman of Ways and Means powers of a disciplinary character, and that he should possess ample means for securing order and putting a stop to wilful Obstruction; but it would tend, he thought, to confuse rather than to improve the Resolution if they were to attempt to introduce into it any further discretionary power such as that which had been proposed by his noble Friend.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that if the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) went to a division he would certainly vote with him. The Amendment merely provided for an appeal from a man who must necessarily be to some extent inexperienced, who found himself placed in a position of great difficulty, and to whom very considerable powers had been given. The Speaker was the natural person to whom the Deputy Speaker should refer. It would cause no official delay. At the outside 20 minutes would be sufficient to enable the Chairman of Ways and Means to consult the Speaker, and to reconsider any step he might have taken. The Prime Minister maintained that the Speaker, not being present at the Sittings of the House in Committee, would not be in a position to judge of the merits of the question upon which his advice was asked. He attached very little weight to that argument. It would equally apply to the decisions of the Judges of Appeal. Every Judge of Appeal was accustomed to overrule or support the decision of the Court below, although he had not heard the case in the first instance, and all his knowledge of it was derived from the report made to him of the facts. In the same way the facts of the case would be reported to the Speaker by the Chairman of Ways and Means. He was sure that the statement made by the Chairman to the Speaker would be accurate, and that the Speaker would experience no difficulty in giving his assistance and advice to the Chairman.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 56; Noes 204: Majority 148.—(Div. List, No. 348.)

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought they had now arrived at a time when it was desirable to move the adjournment of the debate. They had reached the important Amendment which his right hon. Friend the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had placed upon the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out that no such Motion could be made at the present moment, seeing that there is no Question before the House.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I was about to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the next Amendment has a claim to be heard.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: If it would not involve the loss of my right to move the Amendment, I should like to ask the Prime Minister if he does not think the time has now arrived when the adjournment of the debate or of the House might be agreed to?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the hour (12.15) is quite early, and I think the discussion may be continued a little longer. There are an enormous number of Amendments upon the Paper, and the ordinary Business of the Session is continued until a much later hour. Perhaps, in three quarters of an hour from the present time, it may be advisable to adjourn.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH then moved, as an Amendment to the proposed 1st Resolution, in line 2, after the word "House," to insert the words "not being the Committee of Supply." The right hon. Gentleman said, he had not asked the Prime Minister to consent to the adjournment of the House because he was not prepared to go on with his Amendment, but because he thought there was a general feeling that the adjournment should now take place. If he had been mistaken, it showed, at all events, how difficult it was to ascertain what the general feeling of the House was. He hoped, in the few observations he was about to make in introducing the Amendment to the House, that he should not repeat himself, or give occasion to any other hon. Member to repeat any of the arguments or representations which had been placed before the House that day and yesterday. He would assume, for the purposes of his argument, that there was to be an initiative of the *clôture* by the Speaker and also by the Chairman of Ways and Means; and what he contended, and sought by the Amendment to secure, was that the initiative by the Chairman of Ways and Means should not be permitted in Committee of Supply. It was one thing to prevent or to put an end to wearisome debates by means of a new, a strong, and, he had almost said, a violent process; but it would be quite another thing to extort the public money by means of the same course of procedure. He believed that there was a Constitutional and a very serious practical objection to the use of this instrument for closing debate in Committee of Supply. It would be altogether inapplicable to the proceedings of the House in Supply. It was entirely inapplicable to such proceedings; and he thought that no hon. Member who took the trouble to read the Resolution would fail to come to the conclusion which he came to when he read it some months ago—that it was not drawn with a view to its being applied to any proceedings in Committee, much less to the proceedings in Committee of Supply, but that it was drawn with the view of putting a stop to those protracted discussions which had been going on from day to day and from week to week, and of which they had had for several years so much cause to complain bitterly. Any hon. Member who remembered the remarkable speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) in the early part of the Session would recollect that that was the burthen of the song of the noble Marquess, and that the noble Marquess pointed out that it was to debates of that character that the Resolutions were to be applied. The noble Marquess even went still further, and named certain hon. Members whom he supposed would be the first victims of the New Rules. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was of opinion that the *clôture* was entirely inapplicable to the proceedings in Committee of Supply. Everybody knew what the proceedings in Committee of Supply were. They came on generally at a very inconvenient hour—at an hour of the day, sometimes, when the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. W. M. Johnson) declined to make a speech or address the House at all. This was not from any fault on the part of those who were interested in the discussion of the Estimates, or who desired to take part in their discussion, but from the fault of the Government, who preferred other and more interesting Business, or the fault of Members who allowed interminable Motions to intervene before the House was allowed to go into Committee of Supply. The House at 9 o'clock, when it went into Committee of Supply, was very often in an empty condition; and how was the proposed new Rule to be worked with the House in such a state, if it should appear to the Chairman, under such circumstances, during any debate, that sufficiently rapid progress was not being made? The position of the House would be this. The great majority of hon. Members would have gone to dinner. The few who remained in the House desired to address themselves to the Business before the Committee; but there were only one or two Members on the Treasury Bench, and none at all on the Bench opposite. Was the conversation which ensued on the Question being put from the Chair in any sense debate? He thought not. The Question put to the Committee was that a certain sum of money be granted to Her Majesty, whereupon hon. Members, who felt it their duty to do so, moved Amendments or asked questions, to which they expected replies from the Treasury Bench. But if this Resolution were adopted it would be easy in Committee of Supply for the Chairman to hold that the debate had gone on to an unreasonable length, and the general sense of the two divisions of the House might seem to sanction the adoption of the *clôture;* and in that way an important Amendment, which might have come before the Committee, had time been given, would be shut out, and the money would be obtained without further discussion. But what was the evident sense of the House which the Chairman had to ascertain? His hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), for instance, might get up in his place to oppose the salary of the Lord Privy Seal; and, perhaps, a number of Gentlemen of the same way of thinking, who intended in the course of an hour or two to return from the Lobby or the Dining Room to give their vote in favour of his Motion, might be absent. It was clear, then, that the sense of the House, as represented by these Gentlemen, might be quite different from the real sense of the House at the time. He said, therefore, that the procedure by way of *clôture* was entirely opposed and inapplicable to the Business in Committee of Supply; moreover, he held it to be unnecessary. It was chiefly the second readings of Bills that were opposed in an Obstructive manner — certainly, as far as his experience served him, it was not discussion in Supply that required to be dealt with in the manner proposed by the Resolution. Again, there were other directions in which procedure in Supply might be greatly improved; and they already had an intimation of the views of the Government on this subject, because they proposed to extend their system of progress in Supply to other than Government nights. If it were not irrelevant he should be inclined to object to the very limited opportunity for discussion on going into Supply which the Government proposed to afford, and he would rather say that when once a Class of the Estimates had been opened no intervening Motion should be admitted until that Class had been completed. That plan he hoped the Government would adopt in preference to the stringent and limited expedient which they had indicated; and, further, he would remind the Committee that there were other Resolutions on the Paper which would greatly facilitate procedure in Supply. But his strongest objection was to the highly unconstitutional character which the application of the proposed power might assume. Hon. Members were aware that at certain times nothing could exceed the anxiety of a Government to get money; and there were many conceivable circumstances under which, if the *clôture* were in force, he did not think a Chairman of Committees would refrain from endeavouring to assist them in this respect. Anything more unsatisfactory to the people at large could hardly be imagined than that the Government of the day should be able, by means of this stringent Rule, pointing a pistol, as it were, at the head of the Committee to obtain money in Supply, and at the same time to silence those who desired to express their grievances in a Constitutional manner. This was neither an exaggerated nor a fanciful view of what might take place, and he asked hon. Gentlemen to say whether his anticipations were not likely on many occasions to be realized? It was on Monday, the 13th of March last, that the Army Estimates were taken in Committee of Supply, and on the evening of the previous Friday the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War came down and stated that on the following Monday the first Vote must be passed—an announcement which in that House he had never heard paralleled. It was not, however, so bad as what followed, for the right hon. Gentleman, on the Monday, did not begin to make his very important Statement until 1 o'clock in the morning, and having taken ample time in its delivery, the Committee were then and there required to pass a Vote of £4,000,000 for the Army. He would not go back into all the circumstances, but peculiar reasons were alleged for the desire on the part of the Government to press for a Vote on that occasion — reasons, however, which were not well founded, inasmuch as they proceeded on a too scrupulous estimate of the time required for the progress of a Money Bill through Parliament. Knowing, then, the desire of the Government and the natural wish of the Chairman to facilitate the progress of Government Business, no one could doubt that had this weapon of the *clôture* been available at the time it would have been put into operation, and £4,000,000 would have been extorted from the Committee of Supply without any discussion, and with a precipitation which hon. Members on that side of the House, having knowledge of the mode in which financial Business should be conducted, believed to be entirely unnecessary, or who, at all events, felt that the conduct of the Government was overstrained. He believed he had made out—first, the want of applicability of the *clôture* to the usual course of Supply; secondly, that it was not required in view of the other improvements proposed for the conduct of Business which would probably be adopted by the House; and, thirdly, that the proposal was unconstitutional. Under these circumstances, he believed the House would pause before accepting it. In submitting the Amendment of which he had given Notice to the consideration of hon. Members, he expressed a hope that if the other Resolutions should not find favour with the House, the Government would endeavour to find out some other means of facilitating progress in Supply. Without any wish to prolong the present discussion, he mentioned that expressions of encouragement were frequently given to hon. Members in criticizing the Estimates from the Front Benches on both sides of the House, and Members of the Government were accustomed particularly to point out that full and ample discussion was desirable. His own view was that, since the time when full and detailed explanation of the Estimates was given to the House weeks and months beforehand, the right of discussion and criticism should be as free as possible, but that it should be used as little as possible by Members of the House. He did not think that much practical good arose from the conversational inquiries across the Table of the House upon matters which, after all, were to be found set out on the pages of the Estimates, and he was not one of those to encourage discussion of that kind. It was, no doubt, one of the Constitutional functions of the House that it should vote in Committee of Supply with absolute freedom. He believed, however, that the proposed application of the *clôture* to procedure in Supply might be made great use of, he would not say by an unscrupulous Government, but by a Government pressed with regard to its finances; and he thought they ought to obtain from the present occupants of the Treasury Bench a distinct declaration that they would not make use of any such means of pressing forward their financial Business. The attention of the Government had probably been called to this point, although, in the earlier part of the Session, no allusion had been made to it. It seemed to him that the idea of the Government should be more clearly framed, and that much more stringent Regulations should be introduced if the *clôture* were intended to be made applicable to such a Constitutional right of the House as the voting of public money. For these reasons he begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, by inserting, after the word "House," the words "not being the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. Sclater-Booth.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'not being the Committee of Supply' be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the question which had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman opposite was one that it was perfectly fair to bring to the special attention of the House; but it was also one upon which it appeared quite clear to his mind that the balance of the argument was altogether against the Amendment proposed. He might say, in the first place, that he saw no advantage in bringing into this discussion a reference to the "£4,000,000 night." It was to be deplored that they found themselves obliged to go into Committee of Supply, as they did on that occasion, at 1 o'clock in the morning, and that a most important statement of the Minister of War should have been made at an hour when it was too late to be reported, and when it was impossible to have a proper attendance. That the Government should be compelled to take that large Vote of money under those circumstances was certainly a strange proceeding, the recurrence of which they would do their utmost to prevent. But this was wholly due to the precedence given to preliminary Motions; and so far from its being supposed that the Government had, on that occasion, any reason to complain of the House, or of any disposition on the part of the House to prolong the debate unduly, they were very thankful for the assistance rendered them in their endeavour to act in conformity with the law; and, therefore, he could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the occasion in question afforded the slightest opportunity for the application of the proposed Rule. The right hon. Gentleman had advanced several arguments in support of his Amendment. He said, in the first place, that Supply came on not infrequently in the more early hours of the evening, and at a time when there was a limited number of Members in the House. But they had made an absolute provision to prevent the stoppage of debate at a time when, owing to the very limited attendance of Members, the Government might have an undue preponderance, by the Rule embodied in the 1st Resolution, which absolutely required that whatever might be the number of Members opposing, there must be, at least, 100 Members as a minimum supporting the application of the Rule. The idea, therefore, that this was to be done by a handful of Members in a

House, comparatively speaking, empty had no foundation. The right hon. Gentleman then said there was nothing to justify the application of the Rule to procedure in Committee of Supply. He was sorry to differ from him on this point; but there had been frequent occasions of difficulty in Committee of Supply, and it would be in the recollection of the House that "All-Night Sittings" had to be held in consequence of the disposition which had been shown to retard Business. But was there any reason for exempting a particular class of Committees from the Rule which it was proposed to apply to Committees in general? He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that they should be most careful of the Privileges of the House in regard to Supply; and, anxious as he was to see efficiency restored to their Procedure, he should be most jealous of limiting the right of any Member of the Committee to speak as often as he thought necessary. Let the House consider whether they should, on that ground, exempt the Committee of Supply from the operation of this Rule. So far from its being the fact that in Committee of Supply there were fewer opportunities of moving Amendments than in Committee on a Bill, their number was very much greater; and for this reason—when in Committee on a Bill, if, after an Amendment had been disposed of, another Amendment, not identical with it, but approximating to it, were proposed, the Chairman would probably rule it out of Order; but if an approximate Amendment were proposed in Committee of Supply it could not be so ruled. If, for instance, it were proposed to reduce a Vote by the sum of £600 and the Motion were negatived, an hon. Member could then move a reduction of £550, which might be followed by another proposal to reduce the Vote by £500, and these could not be ruled out of Order by the Chairman, because each Motion was specifically different from the others. Therefore, while the power of speaking in Committee of Supply was unlimited, and he hoped would remain so, the power of moving Amendments in Supply was far greater than it was in Committee on a Bill. But what was the procedure which followed Committee on a Bill? The Bill was reported, and no Question was put from the Chair but "That the Bill be now considered."

Members who desired to raise questions must themselves frame their Amendments and make their references to particular parts of the Bill. But what was the case in Supply, where every Resolution of Committee must be cited from the Chair, and a distinct opportunity of amendment must be open to all Members of the House? For these reasons, he believed it was essential that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman should be rejected. Supply was the most important Business of the House; and, therefore, it ought to be the last to be submitted to gagging laws.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he could assure hon. Members that he had had some experience of this question in Committee of Supply. He had heard with some surprise the statement that after an Amendment to reduce a Vote of £600 to £550 had been moved and rejected, Motions to reduce it to £500, £450, and so on *ad infinitum* could be made. He did not think it possible for such Motions to be made. When he had ventured upon that course he had always been quickly stopped by the presiding authority; and he really could not say that the presiding authority had been very wrong in stopping him. He was afraid the Prime Minister was unacquainted with the later practice of the House. There was strong reason why the Committee of Supply should be free from the operation of the Gagging Clause, and that was that Supply was the main Business of the House of Commons—the Business which, above all other Business, should be protected against Ministerial interference or the arbitrary action of Ministerial nominees or placemen. If the experiment was to be tried, and the gagging laws were to have application, they ought to be applied to other Departments of the Business of the House, and they ought to see whether Supply could not be left unaffected by this Resolution. The only result of applying the gagging laws to the Business of Supply would be that the Government, knowing they had power to shut up discussion, would put off Supply to the last moment, when, under the plea of Urgency, they could manufacture as much "evident sense of the House" as they needed.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he would not detain the House more than a moment or two in supporting the Amendment of his right hon. Friend. With regard to the Navy Estimates for the last two Sessions, for a variety of reasons they had been introduced at a period of the year which hon. Members on both sides of the House had recognized as extremely inconvenient. With regard to these Estimates, there were a limited number of naval officers and others in the House who possessed special information on these subjects—certainly not 40, which number was necessary to make the quorum which had been alluded to as necessary to support the discussion. Under this New Rule, then, the discussion on the Navy Estimates might be put a stop to at any moment. The Prime Minister, having other things to attend to, was seldom present during the discussion of naval subjects. Many others were usually absent; and it might be difficult to make a quorum. The right hon. Gentleman himself, however, would admit that the subjects discussed—involving, as they did, the expenditure of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000—were subjects which should be adequately discussed in the House. But, seeing that the presence of 140 Members would be necessary to close such a debate, if the discussion of the Navy Estimates was being taken in August, and the Government found it inconvenient to allow it to continue, they could easily bring down 100 Members to silence the 40 who were discussing those Votes, and shut up the debate. The result of that might be that they might have £10,000,000 voted without discussion at all. During the time he had had the honour of a seat in Parliament he had known only two Speakers; but he had sat under seven Chairmen of Committees; and he was sure, from the way in which subjects in Supply were disposed of, that in the future the Navy Estimates would be shut out of discussion unless this Amendment were agreed to.

MR. SALT said, they must consider the operation of the *clôture*, not with regard to hon. or right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Ministerial or the Opposition side of the House, but with regard to the position and action of some Government at some future time, and possibly at a very near time. They must remember that every future Government would not only apply the Rules that existed in the House of Commons, but be guided and be trained up by the Rules they found in existence when they acceded to Office. They might be tempted to use the Rules they found in existence in a manner that was not intended when the Rules were first framed. He did not wish to make too much of this; but, at the same time, it was a point they should not lose sight of throughout the whole of those discussions. There was one other thing he wished to say on this matter. As to Supply, it was extremely important, both for the sake of the House and the country at large, that there should be, not only no real interference with the freedom of discussion in Supply, but no apparent interference with it. It ought not to be possible to interfere with it; but, more than that, it ought to be impossible for anyone, either inside or outside the House, however hostile to the Government of the day, to be able to say that the Rules of the House had been so framed that it was possible to interfere with the freedom of Supply. With regard to the application of this Rule to Supply, he would observe that if it were once applied to it, it would be extremely difficult to withdraw it afterwards; and, on the other hand, if it were not applied to Supply, and were found to work exceedingly well in those cases in which it was applied—which it might do, for he was not at all prejudiced in the matter one way or the other—it would be very easy indeed to extend it to Supply. He should say in all business matters, large or small, and especially in matters of great Constitutional importance, such as those they were now discussing, it was very much wiser to go below or within what they wished rather than above or beyond it—it was not only wiser, but very much safer, and better for the House and everybody concerned. It was the wise and business-like way of acting. If they abstained from applying this Clôture Rule to Supply, if it was found to work well in other cases, there would be no difficulty at some future time in extending it to Supply.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It is to be regretted that any necessity at all should have arisen for the adoption of Rules for the limitation of debates. Everyone knows it would be much better if Members were willing universally to bow of their own accord to the general sense of the House, and to refrain from prolonging debates when the general sense of the House that they should terminate had been manifested. All, however, must now acknowledge that the time has gone by for us to expect that. There is a certain section of Members who are not disposed to allow such manifestations to guide their course of conduct, and it is generally admitted that some restrictions on the liberty of debate are necessary. That being so, I would ask the House to consider whether it is wise to exclude any class of debate from the operation of the Rule the House may think it necessary to adopt? If the House should ever—I trust that the necessity may not occur—but if the House should ever at any future time have again to enter into a contest with organized Obstruction, hon. Members may rest assured that every weapon at the disposal of the House will have to be made use of to put a stop to it. It would be, in my opinion, the height of folly to pass Rules restricting debate on certain subjects, and yet, by the omission of Supply, acknowledge that Obstruction in that important Business may take place. The right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment said he did not know that Obstruction had taken place in the Business of Supply. Well, perhaps it has not taken place so frequently in Supply as on other occasions; but I can recollect during recent years several occasions on which large majorities on both sides have been reluctantly compelled to sit up the best part of the night at the will of a small minority to pass some Irish Votes. That kind of thing has not only occurred during the existence of the present Government, but I find that in 1877 a precisely similar case occurred—during a period when the late Government were in Office. On the 2nd of July, 1877, on the Army Estimates, at half-past 12 o'clock, the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) moved to report Progress, and he did so for the purpose of calling attention to the absence of Irish Volunteers from the English Volunteer Vote. The Government protested against the course that was being taken, and entered into a long contest with a small number of Irish Members. The usual course was followed—namely, Motions to report Progress, followed by Motions that the Chairman do leave the Chair, and various attempts to count out the House. Several scenes, so common on those occasions, took place, and all I would call attention to is the concluding observation of the remaining Member of the Government (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), who was then the sole occupant of the Treasury Bench. He said that—

> "The probable result of the course pursued would be an alteration of the Rules of Debate, and a curtailment of the privileges of Members."

Notice was then taken that there were not 40 Members present, and the House stood adjourned at a quarter past 7 in the morning.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the remarks of the noble Lord who had just sat down were very interesting, and threw some light on the intention of the Government as to the further progress of the proposition now before the House. He understood the noble Lord distinctly to state—and he heard it with great satisfaction—that in the proposals Her Majesty's Government had submitted with a view to restrict debate, they had had in their minds only the fact that there was a certain section of Members in the House who were unwilling to defer to the general opinion of the House. No one would for a moment venture to suggest that that could be truly stated of the whole of the Members who sat upon that (the Opposition) side of the House, or of the minority of one, whatever Government might be in Office. He hoped, therefore, that they might have some further statement, when they came to the proposal of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), which would show that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to adopt that proposal to meet the evil they really desired to put down. The noble Lord had gone on to say that he would give them an example of the way in which Votes in Supply had been obstructed under the present system. The noble Lord had not ventured to suggest that Votes in Supply had ever been obstructed by the general body of the Opposition in that House. The noble Lord had simply quoted instances where, both in the time of the present Government and in the time of their Predecessors, the Irish Votes had been resisted by a very small minority indeed. The noble Lord had gone on to say that the hon. Gentleman who was Secretary to the Treasury (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) on one occasion, when Obstruction in Supply was practised, expressed his opinion that the privileges of Members in debate must in some degree be restricted. That was undoubtedly true, and it was proposed to restrict the privileges of Members in debate in Supply precisely on those points on which Obstruction then proceeded; for what did he find in the 2nd Resolution that the Prime Minister had placed on the Paper? He found there certain provisions laid down that, if adopted, would render it absolutely impossible for any small number of Members to defer a Vote taken in Supply by the means adopted on the occasion referred to. And, again, he found that Obstructive Motions of the kind mentioned, and which he had no doubt had been made use of on many occasions, were to be put down by the authority of the Speaker, or Chairman of Ways and Means, without appeal of any kind to the House. He certainly must say that, looking at these proposals of the Government, it seemed to him that everything that was necessary to enable the House to proceed fairly and properly with the consideration of Votes in Supply was met by the other proposals which Her Majesty's Government had placed on the Paper, and that, in pressing the application of this particular Rule to Supply, they were pressing a Rule not required to deal with the topic they were discussing, and likely to be understood—as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had said—by the country as limiting the privilege of debate in Supply, which was the proudest privilege of the House.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had sat patiently three-quarters of an hour which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had said would enable the House to dispose of the Amendment, and yet the discussion had not terminated. They were in the middle of a most important debate with reference to Supply; and the Prime Minister himself, knowing the importance of the discussion, and knowing the time that had elapsed, would not, he would venture to say, further object to adjournment. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am very sorry the hon. and gallant Baronet has moved the adjournment of the debate. [Sir Walter B. Barttelot: Why?] Because it appears to me to be a pure loss of time. In my opinion, the question is a very fair one to raise; but it is one of limited scope. ["No, no!"] Yes; I think so. We have discussed it and sifted it tolerably well. I have a high opinion of the ingenuity of several hon. Members of the House; but it seems to me that even they must be unable to discover new topics for discussion on this Amendment. However, as this is the first night of the debate, I will assent to what appears to be the general wish of the House—namely, to the adjournment of the House.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he would withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 27*th October,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Edinburgh City, *v.* James Cowan, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

QUESTIONS.

LAND REVENUE—THE CLAREMONT ESTATE.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the recent sale of the reversionary interest of the Land Revenue in the Claremont Estate to Sir Henry Ponsonby has not caused a permanent addition to that revenue of nearly £3,000 a year; and, whether, in view of such advantage, the Office of Woods and Forests will be prepared to receive and to report with equal favour upon similar offers for the purchase of all saleable lands in charge of that Department?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, this is a very argumentative Question; but I will endeavour to answer it in a short compass. My hon. Friend asks whether the sale of the reversion of Claremont has not caused a permanent addition of nearly £3,000 a-year to the Land Revenue. My answer is, No. There has been an immediate increase of revenue at the cost of a reduction on the amount which would hereafter have been receivable if the present lease had been allowed to run out. The rest of the Question thus proceeds on an imaginary advantage; but I may add that even if the Crown farms were now to be sold, the proceeds could not, under the existing law, be invested permanently otherwise than in real property. It is impossible to sell them and invest the money in any other way except temporarily.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—RETURN OF CETEWAYO.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there is any truth in the statement of the Natal Correspondent of the "Daily News" that Cetewayo will not return to Zululand for at least six months?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, I hope, and I believe, that no such long time will elapse as that named in the Question before the return of Cetewayo to Zululand. The Colonial Office has been in constant communication with Sir Henry Bulwer, with reference to the details of the arrangements to be made; and my hon. Friend knows well that there are very complicated interests and circumstances to be considered. But in the last communication from Sir Henry Bulwer, he informs us that a despatch from him is on its way to England containing the final details and provisions which he proposes; and he adds that if these proposals are approved by Her Majesty's Government, he believes that arrangements may be made for Cetewayo's return before the end of the year.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether the hon. Gentleman would lay the Papers on the Table?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that he could not say at present.

Mr. Arthur Arnold

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RULE 27—ORIGINATING NOTICES.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that while power has been taken under the Land Act to allow landlords to serve writs and ejectments by registered letter, tenants are compelled to effect personal or house service of originating notices (Rule 27) under the Land Act, and of ten days notices under the Arrears Act, thus causing a poor class of persons much needless trouble and expense; whether instructions can be given affording tenants in such cases the same facilities as are given to landlords in case of ejectments, &c.; and, whether the Rules framed under the Arrears Act have been presented to Parliament?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, no power was taken under the Land Law (Ireland) Act to allow landlords to serve writs or ejectments by registered letter. The Act gave no such power, and none was assumed. Possibly, this Question has in view a Rule of the Land Commission presented to Parliament in March last, by which service of notice by an execution creditor, bankrupt's assignee, or personal representative of deceased tenants, of intention to sell or purchase a tenancy in a prescribed district was authorized to be made by registered letter. This Rule has ceased to be operative with the expiration of the Protection Act, and landlords and tenants are precisely in the same position as regards the service of notices under the Land Act and Arrears Act. There was a Rule under the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act which authorized service in prescribed districts by registered letter of all writs of summons issuing out of the High Court of Justice; but that Rule has also ceased to be operative with the expiration of the Protection Act.

Mr. HEALY said, he would give Notice that on Monday he would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, Whether, in many cases, tenants were obliged to travel long distances, sometimes 20 and 30 miles Irish, on foot, in order to serve notices under the Arrears Act, which could be served as well by registered letter?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON), in reply, said, it was obvious that the answer to that Question could not be satisfactory, as it would be impossible for the Land Commissioners to ascertain the distance travelled by tenants, or whether the journey was performed on foot; but if the hon. Member supplied him with the Question in writing, he would communicate with the Land Commissioners to see what could be done in the matter.

EGYPT—BURNING OF ALEXANDRIA—INDEMNITY.

MR. J. HOLLOND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received any communication from the Government of the Khedive as to the mode in which it is proposed to raise the money required to indemnify the sufferers from the burning of Alexandria for the loss of their property; and, whether it is proposed that a new loan shall be issued for the purpose; and, if so, whether any such fresh addition to the indebtedness of the Country would meet with the approval of Her Majesty's Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the mode of raising the money which may be required for the indemnification at Alexandria has been under consideration; but no agreement has as yet been come to as to the precise mode of providing the funds.

SIAM—MISSION FROM CHINA.

MR. FITZ-PATRICK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Evening News" of Tuesday, that a Chinese Embassy arrived at Bangkok to treat for the resumption of the Suzerainty of China over Siam; whether, as stated in a telegram of the "Central News," from Nagasaki, dated October 22nd, a difficulty is apprehended between France and China; and, whether the troops of both Countries have entered Annam?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General in Siam reported, in October of last year, the arrival of a Chinese official with proposals for the renewal of relations between Siam and China on their former footing. These proposals appear to have been declined by the Siamese Government. We have no information that a difficulty is apprehended between France and China. A small French force entered Annam some months ago; but we have no report of the Chinese having done so.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—BREAKDOWN OF THE ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

MR. FITZ-PATRICK (for Colonel MILNE-HOME) asked the Secretary of State for War, If, as lately announced in the Public Press, he has instituted an inquiry into the organization of the Army Medical Department; if he is in a position to state its nature; and, if it has any special reference to the maladministration of the Department during the recent Egyptian campaign?

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he considers the organization and working of the Medical Department during the late campaign in Egypt to have been satisfactory; and, if not, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made with a view to ascertaining the causes of the alleged very serious breakdown of the medical arrangements for the treatment of the sick and wounded, and to the remedying of those causes in the future?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I am very sorry that the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Milne-Home), whom we all wish to congratulate on his safe return from Egypt, where his gallantry was so marked, should, on his first appearance among us, have assumed that his medical comrades were guilty of maladministration, instead of merely asking whether the allegations about some of them had been, or would be, the subject of inquiry. In answer, however, to his main Question, I have to say that, without assuming the accuracy of many of the complaints made, some of which have been shown to be greatly exaggerated and others altogether unfounded, I have arranged to refer all these matters to a Committee which I had appointed in the summer to inquire into the organization of the Army Hospital Corps, and the Reference to which I have enlarged so as to include all hospital arrangements in the field and on board ship. I have, therefore, greatly enlarged the Committee over which Lord Morley presides, including in it for that purpose persons unconnected with the Department concerned. In justice to that Department, I think I ought to add that Sir Garnet Wolseley has greatly praised the medical officers generally in Egypt. In reply to the hon. Member for North Yorkshire (Mr. Dawnay), I have to express my hope that he will be good enough to assist the inquiry by giving evidence in support of the statements on this subject which I understand that he has made in print.

Mr. FITZ-PATRICK: What are the names of the Committee of Inquiry?

Mr. CHILDERS: The Earl of Morley (Chairman), Admiral Sir William Mends, K.C.B., Major General Hawley, C.B., Major General Sir H. Evelyn Wood, K.C.B., Mr. Thomas Crawford, M.D., Sir William MacCormac, F.R.C.S., and Mr. George Lawson.

Captain AYLMER asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would also make inquiry into the Transport and Commissariat Department?

Mr. CHILDERS replied that, if the hon. Gentleman would give Notice of such a Question, he would tell him what was being done.

FRANCE AND TUNIS — COMMERCIAL TREATY OF 1875—THE CAPITULATIONS.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, since the Treaty of 1875 with the Bey of Tunis provided that the British Consuls, Vice Consuls, and Consular Agents shall enjoy all privileges accorded to those of the most favoured nations, and further for the "exclusive" civil and criminal jurisdiction of the British Agent and Consul General over British subjects, and that the 7th Clause provided that

> "the Bey shall not prohibit the importation into the Regency of any article of produce or manufacture of the dominions and possessions of Her Britannic Majesty, from whatever place arriving, and that the Duties to be levied upon such articles shall in no case exceed one fixed rate of eight per cent. ad valorem;"

further, in that Treaty, which came to an end on the 19th of July 1881, there was a special proviso, that at the expiration of the Treaty either party to it might ask for a revision, but

> "that until such revision shall have been accomplished, by common consent, and a new Convention shall have been concluded and put into operation, the present Convention shall remain in full force and effect;"

if the capitulations with Foreign Powers were not explicitly ratified in the Treaty of 1881, made between the French and the Bey of Tunis, and by repeated assurances from M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have since received any communication from the French Government announcing their project of abolishing these capitulations by virtue of a vote of the French Chambers establishing French tribunals in Tunis; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to maintain the mercantile and other advantages secured by these capitulations?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, before replying to my hon. Friend's Question, I think it well to point out that he is mistaken in supposing that the Treaty of 1875 provides for the "exclusive" jurisdiction in all cases of the British Agent, the words of the Treaty being "between British subjects exclusively." He is also mistaken in supposing that the Treaty expired on the 19th of July, 1881. The seven years, for which the Treaty was originally concluded, expired on the 19th of July, 1882; but by the terms of Article 40, as no new Convention was concluded, that of 1875 remained in full force and effect. The French Government have frequently, and lately in express terms, disclaimed any wish to interfere with the mercantile advantages secured to England in Tunis by the Treaty of 1875. As regards the establishment of French tribunals in Tunis, Her Majesty's Government would not be unwilling to consent to the abolition of Consular jurisdiction, reserving all the other rights, commercial and otherwise, guaranteed to them by Treaties. The institutions which have grown up under the Capitulations with Turkey have been found essential for the protection of foreigners under the peculiar circumstances of the Ottoman Empire, and the necessity for them disappears when tribunals organized and controlled by an European Government take the place of the Mussulman Courts.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY said, he wished to ask a Question of his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, arising out of an answer which he had given. He understood his hon. Friend to state that Her Majesty's Government were willing to abolish the Capitulations, when they had received assurances from the French Government of the continuance of the mercantile advantages secured to British subjects by Treaty. That being so, he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman, whether those advantages were secured at present only by the promise of the French Government, or whether it was proposed that there should be a Convention between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government to give the same security as existed by the present Treaty?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that they had not at present received any distinct proposal as to any change, and the Treaty was in force at the present moment. With regard to the future, he did not say that Her Majesty's Government were willing to consent to the abolition of the Capitulations. What he said was that Her Majesty's Government would be not unwilling to consent to the abolition of the Consular jurisdiction, and he gave his reason for it.

EGYPT—ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is now able to state the result of the inquiries which he has made into the treatment of the political prisoners in Egypt?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Colonel Sir Charles Wilson reports that, since the 17th of September, he has visited the prisons in Cairo frequently, that he saw and spoke to M. Ninet on three occasions, and that, if any of the prisoners had been treated with cruelty, he would almost certainly have heard of it. M. Ninet always expressed himself as satisfied with the treatment which he and his fellow-prisoners received, except that they were too crowded. Sir Charles found the prison authorities ready to adopt any suggestions which he made to them from time to time. He states that the cleanliness of the prisons and the treatment of the prisoners are in very marked contrast to what prevails in Turkish prisons, and he does not think the prisoners have any reasonable ground of complaint. There are 140 political prisoners. Sir Charles has heard of no cases in Cairo of the application of thumb-screws, and, except condemned criminals, he has seen no men in chains. Sir Charles knows nothing of the Provinces. Cherif Pasha informed Sir Edward Malet a short while ago that there were very few prisoners in the Provinces. Sir Edward is awaiting answers to his Circular to Consular authorities on the subject. Consul West reports from Suez that there are only two political Prisoners there. M. Ninet was liberated from prison at Sir Edward Malet's request. Sir Charles Wilson and Colonel Stewart visited the prisons yesterday before drawing up the above Report.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked, whether his hon. Friend had seen the statement in the morning papers that some of the prisoners had been spat upon, threatened with death, beaten with slippers, and treated with contumely in other ways?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, several weeks ago a distinct statement was made about an insult said to have been offered to Arabi Pasha. The alleged insult is being made the subject of an inquiry, and I expect explanatory despatches shortly. Perhaps I may be in a position to give more explicit information on Monday, if my hon. Friend will ask me.

EGYPT—COMMAND OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY—APPOINTMENT OF BAKER PASHA.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether His Majesty the Sultan was consulted about the appointment of Baker Pasha as General of the Egyptian Army; whether it is true that Baker Pasha abandoned his post, and left Constantinople without the permission of the Sultan or his Military superiors; and, whether Baker Pasha is now, in fact, a deserter from the Turkish Army?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have no concern with any question which may have arisen between the Turkish Government and Baker Pasha with regard to his employment in Egypt, or as to whether he is a deserter or not.

MR. O'KELLY: The hon. Member has not told us whether or not the Sultan was consulted in the appointment of

Baker Pasha to the command of an Army which is supposed to belong to the Sultan.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We consider, Sir, we have no responsibility at all in the matter. We have not taken any steps to inform ourselves in regard to it, because we disclaim all responsibility in the proceeding.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does the hon. Gentleman mean to say that the Egyptian Government acted independently of the English Government?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I stated so yesterday.

EGYPT—THE TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will give the names and the antecedents of the members who compose—1st, The Commission of Inquiry now taking evidence in the case of Arabi Pasha; and, 2nd, of the Court appointed to try him; whether the names of the persons constituting these two Courts have been approved by Her Majesty's Government; whether Her Majesty's Government have approved the employment of M. Borelli as Government prosecutor; and, whether he is the same M. Borelli who was convicted of fraud and embezzlement before a criminal court in France?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not know whether the hon. Baronet wishes me to read the long catalogue of Turkish names?

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: We want to see what sort of people they are.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the members of the Commission of Inquiry are:—Ismäil Eyoub Pasha, President; Ali Ghaleb Pasha, Youssoof Choudi Pasha, Mohammed Zéky Pasha, Saad-ed-Dine Bey, Mohammed Hamdy Bey, Moustapha Ragheb Bey, Soliman Yousry Bey, Moustapha Khouloussi Bey, and Mohammed Moukhtar Effendi. The members of the Court Martial are:—Mohammed Réouf Pasha, President; Ibrahim Pasha el-Ferik, Ismäil Kamil Pasha, Hussein Assim Pasha, Kourchid Pasha, Soliman Niazi Pasha, Osman Latif Pasha, Ahmed Hassanéin Pasha, and Soliman Nadjati Bey. Her Majesty's Government were not consulted by the Egyptian Government with regard to the constitution of these Courts, and they are not in a position to give information as to the antecedents of the members of them, or as to the identity of M. Borelli.

Mr. BOURKE: Can the hon. Baronet tell us what Arabi Pasha is to be tried for? ["Hear, hear!"] I ask the Question for this reason. Her Majesty's Government, on a former occasion, gave the House to understand that all captured rebels were to be treated as prisoners of war.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am at a loss, Sir, to understand how my right hon. Friend can imagine that such a Question can be asked without putting it on the Notice Paper. If he likes to give me Notice of his Question, I hope to be able to answer it.

IRELAND—APPOINTMENT OF ROMAN CATHOLICS.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that since the appointment of Lord Spencer as Viceroy, fewer Catholics have received appointments in Ireland even than heretofore; whether it is the fact that out of the seventeen Court Valuators recently appointed under the Land Act, there is not a single Catholic; and that, of the thirty-six jurors who returned verdicts in capital cases in the Special Commission Court, the whole were Protestant; and, if he will call the attention of the Irish Government to the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the hon. Member, he must admit, was accurate in part of his statement in the Question. But he (Mr. Gladstone) wished to correct an error in it, for he wholly objected to the Question, because he thought that anybody looking at it would suppose that Lord Spencer had acted unjustly towards Roman Catholics in Ireland. After first having laid down the doctrine that, by Lord Spencer, something less than justice had been meted out to Roman Catholics, the hon. Member then proceeded to give a couple of instances of that want of justice. He (Mr. Gladstone) would answer parts of the Question separately. He entirely declined to admit that the patronage of Lord Spencer was administered with anything less than justice to Roman Catholics. His business was, and no man knew it better, to appoint the fittest men;

and it was within his (Mr. Gladstone's) knowledge that, under the circumstances of Ireland, he would take special care that no person, being a Roman Catholic, who might appear to him to be the fittest man would be overlooked. He must, therefore, take issue with the hon. Member on the matter of fact, and could not admit, as regards these appointments in the gift of the Lord Lieutenant, that it was a fact that fewer appointments had been given to Roman Catholics since Lord Spencer had been appointed than formerly. Then, with regard to the two instances given by the hon. Gentleman, not 17, but 16, Court Valuers were Protestants; and he need not observe that he had to make the same observations with regard to the motives of the Land Commission that he had made with regard to Lord Spencer, and that they were not in the slightest degree influenced by any consideration adverse to the Roman Catholics. But he wished to observe more particularly that they were entirely and absolutely independent of Lord Spencer in the exercise of their functions, and that he had no more to do with these appointments than the hon. Member himself. With regard to the jurors who had been appointed, as the hon. Member said, in capital cases —he did not know why the hon. Member confined his attention to capital cases—the three out of 11 juries which were selected. It was quite true that the selection of juries was made under the responsibility of the Officers of the Crown; but the hon. Gentleman knew that it would be a very unusual practice for the Lord Lieutenant to interfere in such a matter, and a very mischievous practice too. He had no doubt that, if the Lord Lieutenant thought things had been indiscreetly done, he would be extremely sorry. It was not within his knowledge, and it was not for him to say, whether they had been discreetly done or not. But this he would say, that the statement of the hon. Member, although accurate so far as it went, did not, by any means, convey the whole truth. For example, he knew that a man named Laurence Kenny was sentenced to penal servitude for life for firing a revolver at a soldier—an offence of a most serious kind. There were six Roman Catholics and six Protestants on the jury, and the man was found guilty. In another case of a charge of arson, he found that there were seven Roman Catholics——

MR. HEALY: And for horse stealing you will give us plenty of Roman Catholics; but my point is——[*Cries of* "Order, order!"]

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman's point is, that he selected these cases out of——

MR. HEALY: Agrarian cases.

MR. GLADSTONE: Well, Sir, I cannot conceive that an agrarian case is a bit more delicate than this of firing a revolver at a soldier, with intent thereby to injure or to kill him. Surely that is an offence of the very highest and most serious character; and it is impossible to conceive anything so ridiculous as that the Crown officials should determine that, for agrarian cases or charges, they would have none but Protestant jurors, and that they would allow Roman Catholics to sit and try men for firing at a soldier. The real state of the case is this—that there have been 132 jurors summoned upon the jurors' list, and of these 103 have been what are called Protestants in Ireland—that is to say, members of the ex-Established Church, and 29 Roman Catholics. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, that is a disparity; but viewing it from the different distribution of the numbers in the different ranks of life in Ireland, although it is a disparity, and although I give no opinion whatever upon the selection of these men, yet it is by no means a gross disparity, or, still less, approaches the state of things that the statement of the hon. Gentleman would suggest without explanation.

MR. GRAY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that, in the cases tried with change of venue under the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act, that, in cases of crime committed in country districts brought up to Dublin for trial, in every one of these cases, every single Catholic was excluded from every single jury; and, whether he is aware that the proportion of Catholics to Protestants on the jury panel was about 80 to 120; and that at least 70 Catholic jurors—some of them of the very highest position, or of very high position at least in Dublin—were excluded, and that not one single Catholic was permitted to serve upon any single one of these cases in which a change of venue had taken place under the Prevention of Crimes Act?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would be kind enough to give Notice of the Question?

Mr. DAWSON: With regard to the last part of the Question, I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that appointments to the magistracy in Ireland are given in exact proportion to the unpopularity of the persons appointed?

[The Question was not answered.]

Mr. HEALY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he would have any objection—[" Oh, oh!" *and* "Order!"] If I am not in Order, I will soon put myself in Order. The New Rules are not passed yet. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any objection to give a Return showing the number of the jury panels called under the recent Special Commission, and giving the names of the Catholics and Protestants on the panel, and the number of Catholics and Protestants who were told to stand aside by the Crown?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that, considering the hon. Gentleman asked for names, he would rather take time to judge as to the practicability of granting the Return desired by the hon. Member. He certainly thought it was right that a Return showing the religious professions of the jurors should be given.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—OFFICIAL VALUATORS.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, taking into consideration the fact that, on the 15th July, 1881, when the Land Law (Ireland) Bill was under discussion, this House rejected without a Division an Amendment moved by the Member for West Surrey, "To appoint valuers of knowledge and experience in the value of land," the Government will cancel the appointments of seventeen official valuers at expiration of first three months; whether, in the course of the Debate, he is reported to have said—

> "These words, if added to the Bill, would lead to the conclusion that it is intended to employ a staff of official valuers who are to be valuers and nothing else. I believe that it is extremely doubtful whether official valuers chosen by any one in connexion with the Government would or ought to attract confidence, and I should consider it a most doubtful experiment;"

and, whether he has had any reason to change the conclusion at which he then apparently arrived?

Mr. HEALY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him, Whether he is aware that the hon. Member who asks this Question brought forward a Bill last Session to provide for the very thing which he now objects to; whether, in the Land Law (Ireland) Amendment Bill, which was prepared and brought in by Mr. Findlater and Mr. Dickson, it was provided that, in all cases of application under the Act, two valuers should be appointed who should return to the Court a report which should be entered on the record?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I think that it is unnecessary to reply to the hon. Member for Wexford as concerns the matter to which the hon. Gentleman has referred. Indeed, it appears to me to be a matter of public record, of which he is already in possession of evidence so much superior in kind to anything I can state from my fallible recollection that I should rather decline to enter on the subject. In reference to the Question of my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. T. A. Dickson), I have to say that the quotation that he has made from the report of my speech, is, I have no doubt, substantially correct. It was a very important question which arose during the discussion of the Land Bill; and I certainly then preferred investigation by the Commissioners, who were the responsible Judges, to investigation by valuators, which I thought might have had a different effect. But this is to be borne in mind, that whatever may be said of the proceedings of the Commissioners—and we on this Bench have been very well satisfied with them—whatever may be said of the proceedings of the Commissioners, there is this undoubtedly to be said of them, that their strength was not equal to the work they had to do, and this was shown—first of all, in the difficulty lately they had in overtaking the enormous mass of applications sent in during the early period of the Act; and, secondly, in the rather considerable number of appeals. My noble Friend (Lord Spencer), when he went to Ireland, and my right hon.

Friend (Mr. Trevelyan), when he joined him in the Administration of Ireland, were very desirous, indeed, to find a remedy for the state of things, and to accelerate the business of the Court. It was with a view to that acceleration that they thought it wise to try the experiment of valuators for three months. It was done with a single-minded view to that result, and no other whatever, for we had every reason to believe that the judgments of the Courts had been thoroughly judicial in their character, according to our persuasion, and I am only speaking now of our persuasion. When, under these circumstances, the Irish Government applied to the Treasury for the experimental appointment of valuators, and when they gave it as their opinion that the business, without being injured in its quality, would be very considerably accelerated in its rate, which was an object of great public importance, it was determined that a certain number of valuators should be appointed for a term of three months. Of that three months a few weeks—I believe not more than four or five—have elapsed, and it is evident that every additional week improves our means of judgment. I should be glad, having explained the motives of our proceedings, not to enter further into the subject at present; but probably my hon. Friend will take counsel with my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in order to form his own judgment upon the propriety of putting any further Questions.

MR. GIBSON: With reference to the answer which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman, I would like to ask him whether the appointment of these valuers was the act of the Executive Government, or the act of the independent Court of the Land Commission?

MR. GLADSTONE: It was connected with the Executive Government through the medium of the Treasury, and without the agreement of the Treasury no proceeding of the kind could take place. I am obliged to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for putting the Question to me, because it reminds me to mention what I had omitted to mention before—namely, that a strong recommendation in favour of these appointments proceeded from the Land Commission.

MR. T. A. DICKSON: I may be allowed to say, Sir, in reply to the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), that my name was on the back of the Bill to which he referred. The object of the Bill was to provide that where a tenant and a landlord agreed upon a valuation in order to facilitate the working of the Act, a valuator should be appointed.

EGYPT—MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether any further information had been received touching the deaths of Professor Palmer and his Colleagues; whether Mr. Blunt had not offered his services to make inquiries in the matter; and, whether the Government had not declined to accept them? He also wished to ask, whether Professor Palmer's mission was purely to purchase camels, or with a diplomatic object?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, he was sorry to state that no further information had reached the Admiralty, or, he believed, the Foreign Office, with respect to Professor Palmer. As to Mr. Blunt, it was not the case, as the hon. Member had suggested, that the Government had received an offer from him of his services in the matter. With respect to the third part of the hon. Member's Question, as to the object of Professor Palmer's mission, he thought it would be better that Notice should be given by the hon. Member of the Question, in order that he might be certain of the precise facts.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AND SIR BEAUCHAMP SEYMOUR—VOTES OF MONEY.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether he intends to bring forward the Vote, during the present Session, of money to Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Beauchamp Seymour; and, if so, whether full Notice of the day on which the Vote is to be taken will be given?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will take care, Sir, that if any proposal of that kind is made before the close of the Session, of which I cannot speak positively at present, we shall give full Notice.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—CASUAL CHAIRMEN.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would be able to put down on the Paper the proposed Regulations relating to the Appointment of casual Chairman?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; we have no intention at present to make any proposal on that subject. On the contrary, it would be a contravention of the distinct understanding which we have entered into with the House. That matter will, I think, properly and, I would almost say, of necessity, as far as we are concerned, after what we have stated, have to stand over till a future period.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE MONTHLY RETURN OF APPLICATIONS.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can say how soon the Return of applications under the Land Act, down to the end of the month, will be in the hands of Members?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Return up to the end of September will be laid before the House almost immediately. As regards the Return up to the end of this month, I do not think it would be ready before the 5th or 6th of November; but I will see that it is laid on the Table as soon as possible, and with that view I shall communicate with the Irish Office.

NOTICE.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON gave Notice that, on the resumption of the discussion on the Rules of Procedure, he would move to amend the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), so that, when amended, it should read as follows:—

> "When it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that the discussion is being prolonged for the purpose of obstruction, he may so inform the House or Committee."

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the Select Committee do consist of the following Members:—Mr. Gladstone, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Whitbread, Sir John Mowbray, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Attorney General, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. Plunket, Mr. Parnell, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Dillwyn, and Mr. Healy:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I trust I may not be considered captious if I take exception to the list of names just read; but on looking over the names I find there are five——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is too late. I have put to the House each name as it was proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, and no objection has been taken to any single name.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: May I not move to add two names?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member could not add any name without giving Notice.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: Cannot the hon. Member object to the last name?

Mr. SPEAKER: I called every name, and no objection was taken.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I beg your pardon, Sir; I was on my legs the moment you read the name of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy).

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member objects to the name?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I only wish to suggest to the Prime Minister that it would be a graceful act on his part, as it seems to me, if he were to recognize the existence of certain constituencies North of the Tweed and their Representatives in this House. In doing so, Sir, I do not underrate or ignore in any degree the position of the Prime Minister himself as a Scottish Representative, nor do I forget his nationality; but we are accustomed to regard him in North Britain more in the light of the Leader of this House, and of Her Majesty's Government, than as the Representative of any particular district. In fact, we regard him somewhat as an exotic in Scotland—or, if I may apply to him a somewhat musty quotation, we look upon him as

> A creature all too bright and good
> For human nature's daily food.

Therefore, it is in no sense of captious criticism that I venture to move an Amendment to this Resolution; and I beg to move that the last name, that of Mr. Healy, be omitted, and the words "Admiral Sir John Hay" inserted.

MR. SPEAKER: It will be open to the hon. Member to move the omission of the name of the hon. Member proposed; but he could not propose any other name without giving Notice.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I beg to move the omission of the last name.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Healy be omitted."—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Before the Motion is put I venture to address a question of some importance to the Prime Minister—namely, whether he will undertake, before the Prorogation takes place, that we shall have an opportunity of discussing the Report of this Committee? The other night, when the Committee was moved for by the Prime Minister, he pointed out the obvious impropriety of a general discussion upon the facts of this unhappy incident. The House recognized the propriety of that suggestion and abstained from discussion; but the discussion was only postponed, not abandoned. I take it that this Committee will have to report to the House whether the circumstances under which the alleged contempt was committed justified the imprisonment of a Member of this House. I apprehend that the Report will necessarily provoke considerable discussion and differences of opinion. I think the question of the imprisonment of a Member of Parliament is quite as grave a matter as the Procedure of Parliament itself. Whatever our opinions may be, I carefully abstain from expressing any, although I feel very strongly upon it; but I venture to ask the Prime Minister whether the House will have an opportunity of discussing the Report, which, I venture to think, will be one of the most important ever presented with reference to the imprisonment of a Member of Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: I venture to suggest to the hon. Gentleman that the question he has put had better stand over until probably the very early period at which this Report will be presented. He will understand the difficulty in which we are placed for the moment. I make the same admission to him which I made to the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) the other night, that there are certain questions which it may be the desire of the House to discuss before the Prorogation, and I likewise agree with him in the observation that the arrest of a Member of this House, if there be any matter in it which seems to call for attention, constitutes one of the subjects which must be considered; but the time is not yet come when any more positive answer can be given, and I hope my hon. Friend will allow the matter to stand over until the time does come when the Report is presented, which must come in a few days. I need not say that the Government having agreed to the list of names as they stand, of course, we shall vote upon the affirmative on the Motion which is now made of striking out the last name.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I venture to suggest to the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) a more satisfactory way of dealing with the matter—namely, that he should give Notice that he will move on Monday that the Committee should consist of an additional number of names, and that two additional names, the choice of Representatives of Scotland, should be added to the list. I think that will be a preferable course to the one proposed, to strike out the name of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy).

MR. O'CONNOR POWER: In reference to the important point to which attention has been drawn by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), it occurs to me that unless the wording of the Resolution appointing the Select Committee be amended, we have no guarantee whatever that the Select Committee would make its Report before the close of the present Session. I do not know that it is in the power of the Government to exercise any pressure on the Select Committee. It will be a matter for the Select Committee itself to report or not before the close of the Session. Of course, looking at the names which it is proposed should constitute this Committee, there are undoubtedly names on the Committee over whom the Government might naturally be expected to exercise influence; but they are not obliged to do that. If we are to have a discussion upon this very important subject, we ought to insert some words in the Resolution appointing the Committee requesting them to report before the close of the Session. I am not aware that that is usual; but really that must be done if we are to be assured of a discussion upon this important subject. In reference to the Amendment which has been proposed, I would ask the hon. Baronet who moved it whether it is worth while to press the Amendment to a division? I am not aware that the right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay), who sits near me, has any particular desire to inquire into this question of Privilege. I am not aware that he considers that the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) is a bit less qualified to pursue this investigation than himself; and, looking at the matter from that standpoint, and feeling that it is the general desire of the House that this Committee should be appointed without delay, and that we should have the result of its investigations as soon as possible, in order to afford us an opportunity of considering them, I hope the Amendment as to the list of names will not be pressed.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I beg to withdraw my Amendment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I beg to give Notice that on Monday I shall move that the name of Sir John Hay and a Scotch Liberal Member be added to the Select Committee.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.—OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before proceeding to the Orders of the Day, I think it may be for the convenience of the House that I should state that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), which stands third on the Notice Paper, will be out of Order, and cannot be put. It will be observed that the 1st Resolution relates to the closing of debate, while the Amendment concerns the discipline of individual Members—a matter which forms the subject of the 5th Resolution. It is true that the Amendment of the hon. Member comprises some provisions differing from the terms of that Resolution; but they could be more properly and conveniently discussed as Amendments to that Resolution, to which they are germane. To the 1st Resolution they are not relevant, and cannot be entertained at this stage of the proceedings.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he did not intend for a moment to resist the ruling of the Speaker; but as this decision would place many of those who sat on this side of the House in a position of sudden and unexpected difficulty, he ventured, with great respect, by the permission of the Chair, and, he hoped, with the indulgence of the House, in a very few words, to state some of the consequences which must ensue from this ruling—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—and which, he gathered from the Speaker's observations, had not, perhaps, yet attracted his attention. He should not presume against the Speaker's wish in making any observations; but he concluded from his silence that he had permission.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will be more in Order in raising any question of this kind on the Order of the Day being called, and when the question comes on. The hon. Member now proposes, as I understand him, to question the ruling of the Chair. Of course, that would involve a matter of argument and debate; and it is plain, I think, to the hon. Member that at the present time it would be inconvenient, if not irregular.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he would defer his observations.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether there were any other Amendments which it was the intention of the Speaker to rule out of Order?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am persuaded the House would consider it a most inconvenient course if the Chair were to go through the whole of the 42 Amendments to the 1st Resolution *seriatim*, and state to the House whether each one of them was regular or irregular; and I must observe to the House that hon. Members, if I did so, might form very incorrect conclusions, because Amendments which might be in Order at this Sitting might be out of Order at a subsequent Sitting, in consequence of the course the House had taken in the interval.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.—RESOLUTIONS.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [NINTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Main Question, as amended,

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."

And which Amendment was,

To insert, after the word "House," the words "not being the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. Sclater-Booth.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'not being the Committee of Supply' be there inserted."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. CHAPLIN said, he desired to call the attention of the Speaker to some consequences of his ruling which appeared to have escaped his attention. The Amendment he had placed on the Paper was by no means the same as Rule 5. That gave the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees the power of silencing Members; but his Amendment placed the power in the hands of the House. In the second place, the Amendment was proposed not as an addition to the 1st Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, as was Rule 5, but it was proposed as an alternative, or, as a substitute for it. It was quite true that the 1st Resolution dealt with the question of *clôture;* but there was a difference between the *clôture* proposed by the Government and the *clôture* proposed by his Amendment. Many Members, while they did not yield to the Government in their desire to restore efficiency to the House, had said that the 1st Resolution, while it would prejudice seriously the liberties of the House, would not be effective in checking Obstruction, and it was only by some system of individual *clôture* that that object would be accomplished. If the ruling of the Speaker were to prevail, the unfortunate result would be that they would be precluded from taking the sense of the House on the question of individual *clôture* as a substitute for general *clôture.* At the beginning of the Session, when the Leader of the Opposition called attention to Amendments on the Paper and asked whether they would be shut out by the form of putting the Question, the Speaker said the Question was put in a particular form for the purpose of not shutting out other Amendments. He trusted the Speaker's ruling in this case would be modified by a consideration of the facts.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the question he rose to discuss was one of very serious importance to both sides of the House. That was the question of Committee of Supply. It was the peculiar Business of the House to go carefully into the Committee of Supply and see that the Votes were proper and right; and if he understood the argument of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) on the previous night, which was replied to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), the noble Marquess admitted that he had never known the Opposition pure and simple, as distinguished from the Third or any other Party, wilfully and knowingly obstruct Committee of Supply, and that he should think it was only a very small section of the House that had at any time obstructed Committee of Supply. This Obstruction to the Committee of Supply commenced about the year 1877. If he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) recollected right, the present Prime Minister having given up his position as Leader of the Opposition, was never at that time in the House. He was never there to raise his voice in support of the then Leader of the House, with a view to prevent the very same kind of Obstruction which he was now endeavouring to put down. If abuse could have been put down with a little firmer hand at the commencement by the then Leader of the House, and if the then Government had had the assistance of those now sitting on the Front Bench, which they never had, things would never have arrived at their present position. The fact was that some of the most flagrant cases of Obstruction were aided and abetted by three right hon. and hon. Gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Bench. He ventured to say that when the Prime Minister aimed at putting an end to freedom of speech in Committee of Supply, he was doing the most mischievous thing which a Prime Minister had ever done in the House of Commons. Could the Government show that the Conservative Opposition had ever wilfully prevented the progress of debate with regard to any Bill or Vote of Supply? [" Oh, oh!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] He should be glad if hon. Gentlemen opposite would follow him, and name the occasion on which the Conservative Opposition had wilfully obstructed the Business before the House. But there was something far more serious; the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had pointed out, in the pleasantest manner, what he intended to do with Committee of Supply. One of the main things he proposed to do was to take away Tuesdays from private Members and devote it to Committee of Supply. [" Oh, oh!"] He saw the Prime Minister shake his head; at all events, the right hon. Gentleman said he meant to take Morning Sittings on Tuesday much earlier than heretofore—perhaps in February, if the House would allow it, but certainly in March. Thus, if Members allowed it, they would have early Morning Sittings for Supply, and the *clôture* as well. What chance, he should like to know, would a private Member have of bringing forward a subject or a grievance on Tuesday evening after a Morning Sitting which had, perhaps, succeeded a late and exhaustive Sitting on the Monday night? After a late Sitting on Monday and a Day Sitting on Tuesday, the House would be counted out at 9 o'clock. That deserved the serious consideration of the House. The Prime Minister had pointed out a way in which Committee of Supply might be indefinitely obstructed by moving successive reductions of different amounts in the Votes, and there was nothing to prevent that being done; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) did not think that even the Irish Members below the Gangway would attempt to put those tactics in operation, if they were not provoked to do so by the application of the *clôture.* He had attended Supply as much as most Members, and he unhesitatingly affirmed that the last portion of the 1st Rule would defeat the object of the Prime Minister. If ever there was a time when this subject should be carefully considered and discussed it was the present. There was, indeed, a way out of the difficulty; and it was strange that the Prime Minister, knowing the feelings of his own supporters on the subject, would not afford the House some indication whether he intended to give way in the slightest degree on the 1st Resolution. He hoped everyone had read the leading article in the leading journal of that morning. [*Laughter on the Ministerial side.*] It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen opposite to laugh; but the leading journal placed the matter exactly as it stood. He was himself, he confessed, against the *clôture* in any form; but it was certainly a very different thing whether it was applied by a large majority of both sides of the House, or, as now proposed by the Government, by a majority of 1. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had refused to discuss this question, and had left the Government to flounder, as they did yesterday and the day before, stating different things at different times, and meaning different things at different times; but their supporters were quite willing to swallow anything the Government chose to offer them, absolutely forgetting that this was a question which ought not in any sense to be a Party question, but that it was one which involved the well-being of the nation as well as of that House, and that if they did not give careful consideration to every one of the questions raised by these Resolutions, they were gravely neglecting their duty to their constituents. They had received warning from that discussion of what would happen, or might happen, if the *clôture* was in force. If a Prime Minister who had determined to pass a particular measure could command the silence of his followers, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed at present able to do, then there would be a one-sided debate. The Opposition would lay their views before the House without any rejoinder from the independent Members, whose duty it was to consider these momentous questions; and the result would be that it would be said that the "evident sense of that House" was in favour of terminating the debate, and the *clôture* would at once be applied. The House was now about to lay down that which would for years, and, perhaps, for generations, be the rule for their guidance, and that because some things had been done which would not have been tolerated in former days. They were going to sacrifice more than they could possibly gain. They were going to sacrifice that freedom of speech and that freedom of debate which the Speaker demanded in their names at the commencement of every Parliament, and which was asserted to be the right of every Englishman. It was particularly important that they should enjoy this freedom of speech during the proceedings in Committee of Supply; and it was his clear and decided opinion that if they did not exempt the proceedings in Committee of Supply from the operation of the *clôture*, they would be found to have done a most mischievous piece of work, unless the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government would give way in reference to the majority by which the *clôture* was to be imposed.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, as the hon. and gallant Member had made a personal charge against him, he wished at once, with the indulgence of the House, to meet it, though he would not now rectify what he had said on the subject of Committees, but would reserve to a future occasion his remarks on that subject. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had asserted that he never attended the House during the late Parliament to give any support to the proposals of the Government about Obstruction.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT explained that he did not say that. ["Oh, oh!"] What he said was, that the right hon. Gentleman had given up his position as Leader of the Opposition, and that he had neglected to come down and support the then Leader of the House, and to discharge in his high position any of those onerous duties which he would have had to discharge as Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that if that were the charge, he would remind the hon. and gallant Gentleman that he did support distinctly the proposal of the late Government with regard to Obstruction. But the hon. and gallant Gentleman charged him with being a negligent attendant in the House during the last Parliament. Upon that he would only say one sentence, and that was that, when the hon. and gallant Member had sat for 45 years in that House, perhaps he would consider that he had a right to give himself a little relaxation.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was sorry that the hon. and gallant Gentleman should think that the Government would not endeavour to meet his argument. He claimed to repudiate what the hon. and gallant Gentleman had said—namely, that the present occupants of the Treasury Bench did not, when they sat on the other side of the House, assist the Government in resisting Obstruction. He himself sat up night after night doing all he could to assist them in resisting Obstruction when it first developed itself in the celebrated fight on the South African Bill, and also on the Army Discipline Bill. He then did his best to assist the Government in getting through the Business which he deemed essential to the welfare of the country. The hon. and gallant Gentleman was extremely dissatisfied because hon. Members did not talk enough on the Ministerial side of the House. Let him consider arithmetically how the matter stood. Upon that side of the House he believed there were 10 speeches made on one Amendment on a single line. If that did not satisfy the hon. and gallant Gentleman, how many did he wish for? If he was not satisfied with 10 speeches on that side and 20 on the other, what was his opinion of the number of speeches that would be necessary for each Amendment? Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman said, "Your argument is a bad one." If that were the case, so much the better for the hon. and gallant Gentleman, who had twice as many arguments, which were twice as good as those of his opponents. Then there was the accusation that the independent Members on that side of the House had spoken, not in favour of the propositions of the Government, but against them. Again, he said, so much the better for the hon. and gallant Gentleman. Then the hon. and gallant Member charged against them the worst thing of all—namely, the silence of the Irish Members. How in the world could the Government be responsible for that? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The Kilmainham Treaty.] It seemed to him (Sir William Harcourt) that it was a very one-sided Treaty, for he found that in the remarkable division of last night the greater part of the supporters of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock were those very Irish Members. Therefore, the argument seemed to be that the Irish Members were to be silent in favour of the Government, and were to vote with hon. Gentlemen opposite. That was not an arrangement of which his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Shea) would have been proud. He (Sir William Harcourt) expected, though he had to speak delicately on a matter of which he knew nothing, that perhaps the Irish Members might be sitting in amused silence, astonishment, and admiration at finding that in the Conservative Party they had got their superiors in debate; and, perhaps, they wished the country to see that they could be excelled by others who understood the arts of debate better than themselves. He thought that that was a very obvious policy, and it might turn out to be a very wise one. He would now say a few words on the Amendment. If the *clôture* were good at all, it was, above all things, necessary in Committee of Supply. To prevent by Obstruction the passing of measures of legislation might, no doubt, cause injury to the nation. But Supply stood on a different ground. It was not only important; it was essential and vital. If Supply were stopped, the whole machinery for carrying on the Business of the State would be destroyed. Supply was the life-blood of the State. The Amendment took no notice of proportionate majorities. Obstruction in Committee of Supply would be absolutely unlimited and unrestrained on the part of a minority, however small. If they obstructed the Votes for the Army and Navy, what would become of the strength of the country? And if they stopped the Votes for the Civil Service, what would become of the police in England and Ireland, and all the machinery for the safety of the country? Supply must very often be passed by a particular day; but supposing there were a small minority who were determined to obstruct the Vote of men for the Army, how long could they go on? Why, as long as they liked, and their Obstruction could only be put an end to by a *coup d'état*. In the case of a great emergency, on which a Vote of Credit was required, in the present state of things an extremely small minority might indefinitely postpone the Vote, and bring the country into imminent peril. There was an extraordinary inconsistency in the proposal that in the Whole House a debate should be summarily closed and a decision arrived at for the carrying out of which a Vote of Supply should be absolutely necessary, while in Committee of Supply a small minority might prevail over the voice of a majority and prevent the execution of the policy which had previously been determined upon by the application of the *clôture*. It was in Committee of Supply, above all, that Obstruction was to be feared. Wilful and malignant Obstruction was far more injurious there than in any other part of the Business of the House. A Bill might be lost owing to Obstruction, but it might be brought in again. But the loss of Supply could not be repaired. It was monstrous that the purse-strings, which were held by the House of Commons, should, as they would be if that Amendment were carried, be placed under the control of a minority which chose to abuse its power. [Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Getting the money in is the first thing.] But the right hon. Gentleman opposite had had experience of the enormous importance of the question of giving the money out. The Parliamentary phrase for keeping in the money was "Stopping the Supplies;" and it had always been considered a very strong thing, even for a majority, to stop the Supplies. What would be the case if such a power was given to—say, 20 Members? The argument might be stated in another way. A minority might desire to stop a Government Bill. Obstruction during the debates in the House would be put down by the *clôture*. But the same object would be attained by indefinitely prolonging the debates in Committee of Supply, so that the Government should have no time left for its Bills. The Amendment was like locking the back door and leaving the front door wide open. It was perfectly impossible to make an improvement in the transaction of the Business of the House unless an effectual restraint upon Obstruction were applied in Committee of Supply; and all the objects of Obstruction could be accomplished in Supply in a manner far more injurious to the public interest than in the House itself.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that he had never heard an argument more boldly and skilfully stated for depriving the House of Commons of the power and the duty to carefully consider the proposals of the Government with regard to that question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of keeping the money in. It was not the duty, nor was it in the power, of the Opposition or any minority to propose the expenditure of public money. But it was precisely the duty of Parliament, and of the Opposition in particular, to criticize with the greatest possible care the Government proposals for the expenditure of public money. The question was whether there was any present necessity, from what had passed during the last two or three years, for a change in the nature of a grave limitation of the liberty and power of the House of Commons to discuss Supply. What had occurred last year? The Secretary of State for War came down at 1 A.M., and asked for a Vote which he said was of the highest importance to the Public Service. The Vote was given. The present Irish Secretary had asked for Votes in a precisely similar way, and had got them; and on no occasion did he remember, after a considerable experience, that a Vote had ever been refused or delayed if it was shown that that Vote was necessary for the Public Service. No doubt, there had been delay and Obstruction; but he had come deliberately to the conclusion that, on the whole, it was a saving of time to bear patiently with occasional Obstruction, when that Obstruction did not bring itself within the Rules which many of the Opposition were prepared to enact as against those who made use of the Forms of the House with a view to obstruct Business of all kinds, and to bring the House itself into contempt — men who were rebels against the system of government under which we lived. Such were the men who were to be dealt with under the Rules. But it would be most inexpedient, and would tend to the waste rather than the saving of time, to repress men having strong opinions with regard to a particular policy of the Government, but who had no such motives, merely on the ground that they were guilty of repetition and prolixity, and because their arguments became, perhaps, intolerable, and the loss of time a serious injury to Gentlemen who sat on the Government Benches. What had been the experience of the last seven or eight years? There had been Obstruction. But Obstruction, like a fire, burnt itself out. But the real Obstruction had been in Public Business, which had prevented Supply from being put on the Paper early in the Session. It was certainly the case that less time had been occupied in the consideration of Supply during the last two Sessions than at any former period within his experience of 14 years of that House. Was this, then, the time to take away opportunities from Members of considering Votes in Supply? He could not imagine anything more likely to increase delay than the operation of that Rule. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had taken the illustration of a Vote of Credit, upon which might depend peace or war.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT explained that what he said was that after the question of peace or war had been decided in the House, there might be Obstruction by a small minority.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that, no doubt, such a thing might occur; but he should like to know whether anything of the kind had ever occurred? He thought they ought to legislate from the experience of what had happened, and from what they believed to be necessary to meet the circumstances of the case at the present time. He believed that the proposal before them was totally unnecessary. Instead of discouraging discussion in Supply, it was the duty of the Government to encourage it. He believed that the Secretary to the Treasury would far better discharge his duty if there were more discussion than there had been. In his opinion, the result of checking these discussions would lead to a larger waste of public time than was at present the case. If a discussion was closed on one Vote it would provoke retaliation on others, for it was not in human nature that men should have their mouths closed without finding some other opportunity to bring forward their grievances. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India referred, during the previous Evening Sitting, to a case where his hon. Friend the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had occupied the Chair until 7 o'clock in the morning, when the House was counted out. Perhaps, if an appeal had been made to the good sense of the House, a better result might have been produced. But what would the *clôture* have done in that case? Was it to be supposed that at any time there were 100 Members present? The occasions on which that number of Members was present in Committee of Supply were exceedingly rare; and, therefore, this Rule could only be put into operation by sending out for Members, who would have to come in and vote on a question the discussion of which they had not heard. Any procedure of that sort would be a scandal. He still felt that the old ways were better than the proposed new ones, and that personal influence and authority and appeals to the good sense and responsibility of Members would tend much more to facilitate the discharge of Public Business than an attempt to enforce a law which, because it was a law, would have excluded from its operation everything which did not come strictly within it.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that the right hon. Gentleman concluded his remarks by referring to the good sense and good feeling of the House in these cases. But surely the right hon. Gentleman must remember the frequent occasions on which appeals after appeals had been made by both Front Benches and many independent Members, without any effect whatever having been produced. There was one fallacy which seemed to underlie the argument of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Conservative Party—namely, that the intended or actual operation of the proposed Rule was to stifle and prevent discussion. That, he need hardly say, was not the case. The evil they had to deal with was this. It was not that there was not ample discussion, but there was exaggerated discussion on minor points, so that really important matters were neglected. Frequently in Supply a lengthened debate took place on the 1st or 2nd Vote, and the remaining Votes were passed without discussion. He was disposed to think that Secretaries of State for War and other Ministers were not thoroughly displeased with that proceeding; but it was obvious that in such cases many Votes were passed over that ought to be discussed. He believed that the effect of the Rule would be that there would be a more equal distribution of discussion over important subjects, and that protracted and wearying discussion on minor points would be avoided. The Conservative Party could not think that the Liberal Party were likely to stifle discussion in voting public money. [*Ironical cheers from the Opposition.*] Under the excitement of the moment, it was possible that hon. Gentlemen opposite might work themselves up to that belief; but it seemed to him absolutely incredible that the bulk of the Liberal Party would allow Votes to be taken without discussion. [An hon. Member: Last Session.] If it was done last Session it was because the Government and the majority were driven into such a corner by Obstruction that it was impossible for them to escape. The object of the Rule was clearly not to stifle discussion, but rather to encourage fair and proper discussion of the different Votes. He believed that if the closing power were not applied to Committee of Supply, the effect would be that the whole of the Obstruction would be concentrated upon those Committees.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the right hon. Gentleman asked whether they really could be of opinion that the Liberal Party would ever interfere so as to stifle discussion on the expenditure of public money. He hardly ventured to stand up and say what the Liberal Party were capable of, or what they were not capable of; but, so far as his own experience went, he was inclined to say that the question must be answered with reference to the side of the House on which the Liberal Party were, for the time being, seated. It was certain that some distinguished Members of the Liberal Party—notably the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands)—when they sat upon the Opposition Benches, had criticized with much severity the Estimates of the Conservative Government; and they ought, when they sat, as they now did, upon the Ministerial Benches, to be criticizing the Estimates of a Liberal Government, though they failed to do so. He could quite understand that the Members of the Liberal Party drew a distinction, satisfactory enough perhaps to themselves, between the Estimates of the one Government and of the other. They would say, perhaps, that when a Conservative Government proposed pernicious measures, their Estimates ought to be severely criticized; but that when a Liberal Government was in power, everything was sound and right, and that there was no necessity for them to exercise the powers of criticism which they had so freely exercised when that Party was in Opposition. Indeed, the line taken up by the Liberal Members on this point reminded him of what was said of the Highlanders in an amusing sketch of the Highlands that had been recently published, that whenever any accident happened to others they called it a judgment, but that whenever it happened to themselves they called it a trial. Thus, whenever any expenditure was proposed by a Conservative Government it was characterized as monstrous extravagance, but when a much higher expenditure was proposed by a Liberal Government it was described as judicious and praiseworthy. Therefore, it was impossible, with regard to such matters, to place implicit reliance upon the instincts of the Liberal Party even as it existed now, and still less could they trust to that Party as it might be constituted in the future. The late Mr. Hume, whose name was still highly honoured in that House and would be regarded with respect by the Prime Minister, would have been unable to have continued his valuable efforts in favour of economy if the provisions of this Rule had been enforced against him by an impatient majority, and it must be recollected that the results of his efforts were felt not so much in that House as throughout the country. Under the provisions of this Rule, however, the country might be precluded by the majority from hearing arguments which, if uttered, might have a most important effect upon the national mind. He must remind the House that these Rules would give the Ministry who possessed a majority in that House an enormous advantage over their Predecessors in bringing forward their Estimates. Thus they would be able to go into Supply without being delayed by previous Motions, continued Motions to report Progress would be prevented, and precautions would be taken against Obstruction. Surely the Liberal Party ought to be content with achieving such advantages as those without seeking to prevent free discussion in Committee of Supply. He had certainly been surprised—although people were ceasing to be surprised at many things now—at the action of the Government in this matter; and until he had seen the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) actually walk into the other Lobby he should still trust that this Amendment would have his support.

MR. DODSON said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that the Liberal Party were perfectly aware that these Rules might be used against them whenever they were in the minority, and that they were not so short-sighted as to propose Rules as applicable to others which they were not prepared to abide by cheerfully when they were applied to themselves. Reference had been made to Mr. Hume, but Mr. Hume was a friend to economy in days when economy was less popular than now. He (Mr. Dodson) did not say that economy was exceedingly popular in these days. Mr. Hume fought an up-hill battle in its favour, and fought it with firmness, courage, and pertinacity, no doubt; but neither he individually, nor yet the small body with whom he acted, had ever carried on the fight by means of that system of Obstruction which the House had witnessed in recent years. There was a marked and sensible difference between *bonâ fide* resistance, however protracted, obstinate, and pertinacious it might be, to a measure or a Vote, as long as it was carried on with a reasonable hope of amending the proposal, of convincing opponents, or even of making a sufficient protest in the face of the House and of the country, and resistance which was carried on after all such hope was extinguished, merely for the purpose of delay, of annoyance, or of self-display. It was against Obstruction of the latter kind that these Rules were framed. The present Rule provided that after a subject had been adequately discussed the House should not be prevented from coming to a decision in regard to it, and the necessity for arriving at a practical conclusion with regard to a subject was just as clear in the case of Committee of Supply as it was in that of any other Committee or Sitting of the House. By a subsequent Rule the Government had provided the greatest possible opportunity for discussion in Committee of Supply, because they had proposed that the House should be able to go into Committee of Supply without being stopped by antecedent Motions. It had been said that the Rule would not be efficacious for its purpose. If so, it could not be so dangerous as hon. Gentlemen supposed; and as to the argument that accepting it would be laying down a Rule which would be binding, and making a precedent which could not be reversed, the real fact was that it was nothing more than a Resolution adopted by the House of Commons, and only binding within these four walls; it was not even an Act of Parliament the repeal of which would require the assent of the other Branch of the Legislature. If, therefore, it was found to be abused, to require amendment or repeal, nothing more was required than another Resolution of the House. Under these circumstances, he trusted that the House would not be prepared to accept the Amendment, which would weaken the Rule by taking the check away in Committee of Supply, where it was so legitimately necessary.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had heard with a good deal of astonishment the question of the Estimates argued simply as if it were a question of the "ins" and "outs" of Party, losing sight of the fact that it was the country which was interested in the due discussion of the Estimates that were laid before the House. Suggesting that it would be the turn of the Conservatives at some time to be in power was a very inadequate and low way of looking at the matter. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government and many speakers had said that the Rule was aimed at Obstruction; but he failed to find any internal evidence in the Rule itself to support that assertion. As a matter of fact, it would put an end to all discussion by a bare majority; and private Members must recollect that such a Rule would bear far more hardly upon them than upon official Members of the House. If the Prime Minister really aimed at putting down Obstruction, he should consent to accept the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), which would effectually dispose of anything of that character. He confessed there was much in the speech of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) with which he agreed, for he had seen very considerable Obstruction in Committee of Supply; such, for instance, as, on one occasion in the last Parliament, of a night being devoted to the question whether a charwoman in a public office should have 2*s*. 6*d*. or 2*s*. 9*d*. a-day. Due discussion of the general Estimates might be and had been interfered with by prolonged debates on such trivialities. That was the opinion, he was sure, of everyone on the Conservative Benches. The only difference, therefore, between the two sides of the House was how such Obstruction should be put an end to. He regretted that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), which would have dealt with the difficulty as an alternative measure to the proposal then before the House, had been ruled out of Order. If his hon. Friend was not permitted to propose his Amendment, he would be debarred altogether; and, therefore, it was to be hoped that the decision of the Speaker would be reconsidered. While acknowledging the Obstruction, the Conservative Party appealed to the Government to take care that in remedying one evil they did not create another and far greater evil—that of closing discussion by a mere majority. That Rule would be especially liable to abuse in a most important class of Business in which, as a rule, few Members took part—he referred to the Business in Committee of Supply. If free discussion was to be precluded by the bare majority Rule, the confidence of the constituencies in the discharge of their duties by Members of Parliament would be greatly shaken. He was surprised that right hon. Gentlemen opposite did not see the matter in that light, or understand how they would throw discredit on the financial arrangements of the Government. Late in the day as it was, he would even now venture to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government to reconsider his decision and consent to abandon *clôture* by a bare majority; and he would also appeal to hon. Members opposite to break the silence they had maintained and avow their disapprobation of it.

Mr. BORLASE said, he was quite willing to accept the challenge of hon.

Gentlemen opposite; and, although he thought enough had been heard on the subject, he would ask leave to intervene for two or three minutes before the division, which he hoped would soon take place. Members who, like himself, sat behind the Ministry had been twitted with their silence, and their silence had been misunderstood. He would tell hon. Members opposite the reason of their silence. They had been silent, because the issues of this whole matter were so distinct and so plain, and because the necessity for the *clôture* was so obvious to all who had sat in the House only for the last three years as he had. For example, what could be plainer than the issue just raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith)? He stated that there was no necessity for the *clôture* in Committee of Supply. Did an argument such as that really require a serious answer? Supposing there was *clôture* in the other Departments of the Business of Parliament, what would become of Supply? Why, the floodgates of Obstruction would be opened upon Supply? The most important portion of all the Business of the House would be subject to the greatest amount of Obstruction. If there was any part of the Business of Parliament in which there ought to be *clôture*, it was in Committee of Supply, and for two special reasons—first of all, because that was the occasion, above all others, when persistent Obstruction could do the most serious damage to the nation at large; and, secondly, because that was the very occasion when the Chairman would be most unlikely to feel bias of any sort or kind. It was becoming clearer, as these debates proceeded, that the central point on which the discussions had been focussing themselves was this—the amount of confidence and trust which they could place in the presiding authority of the House. It was among the Opposition that mistrust of the Speaker and the Chairman had been shown, and not upon the Liberal side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), in introducing this Amendment, argued that the initiation of the *clôture* should not be allowed to the Chairman of Ways and Means; because, with the aid of the Government of the day, "money might be extorted thereby." He copied these words down as they were spoken. He begged the House to mark the indirect insult to every independent Member of the House. No one, except a Member of the House and a Representative of the people, could be Chairman of Committees. [Mr. Warton: Hear, hear!] Did the hon. and learned Gentleman believe that there could be imagined a Government so base, or that there could breathe in the House a man with heart so base as to be guilty of such portentous perfidy? Hon. Members opposite had a far worse opinion of the individual honour of their fellow-Representatives in that House than he (Mr. Borlase) had. Outside those walls hon. Members of that House, in virtue of their position, were often called on to preside at public meetings. Was their fairness then called in question? The hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had alluded to the present Chairman of Committees in terms which must have been most painful to all who heard him. What would the hon. and gallant Member's conduct have been had he occupied the Chair? Would his temper have been equal to the occasion? He (Mr. Borlase) thought not, if the hon. and gallant Baronet's recent speeches supplied any indication. The hon. and gallant Baronet said there was no Obstruction on his side of the House. If that were so, there must be another split on the other side, and the hon. and gallant Baronet must have disowned "the Fourth Party." He (Mr. Borlase) never could forget that, during his first Session, it was "the Fourth Party," under the Leadership of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), which was most engaged in the manipulation of the tactics of Obstruction, which had done so much to render this measure necessary. ["Oh, oh!"] He believed the measure was necessary, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would be able to pass it in its entirety. If there was one thing more than another he would say about these Rules—if there was one objection he had to them—it was that they were not strong enough. He believed that that was the best measure that could at the present moment be devised, although he only wished he thought it would have any real effect in stopping Obstruction, which he candidly told the House he believed to be an impossible task.

Mr. DILLWYN said, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, referring to him, had stated that he should be much surprised to see him walk through the Lobby against the Amendment. The reasons why he should certainly do so were very simple. He having watched the course of Supply for many years, when both Parties were in power, was impressed with the necessity of adequately discussing the Estimates. As things were, the most trifling matters were often discussed at inordinate length in order to secure the postponement of more important questions; and the result was that Votes of the utmost consequence were frequently passed without debate at the end of the Session. He believed that if the power was granted that was now asked for such waste of time for the purposes of Obstruction could be prevented, and a more full discussion of the whole of the Estimates could be secured.

Mr. REDMOND said, some allusion had been made to the silence which had been observed by the Irish Members during this discussion. On that side of the House it was accounted for by the supposed existence of a mysterious Treaty between the Irish Party and the Government, and the explanation given of it from the other side was not much better. To his mind the silence of the Irish Members was to be accounted for by the fact that they looked with a mixed feeling of indifference and amusement upon the debates in which the House was now engaged. Their indifference proceeded from the confidence that though the New Rules were evidently aimed at the Irish Party, they would not succeed in suppressing its Parliamentary energy and influence. But the feeling of amusement was still stronger, because of the spectacle of the Liberal Party attacking freedom of debate and the Conservative Party endeavouring to uphold it. He had endeavoured to recognize the fact that the Rules were aimed against the Irish Members. He believed that was not denied; but he did not think the Irish Members need have the least apprehension of the result. He believed, in spite of any Rules they might make, the Irish Members would always find it possible to discuss adequately all matters in which they were interested, though to deal with Obstruction they did not need Rules at all. It had been proved already that when Obstruction was carried on in the House, it could be dealt with without any Rules at all. He would endeavour to look at the matter, not from an Irish, but from an impartial point of view. If he looked at the matter from an Irish point of view, he could hardly be partial when he said that the Rules were aimed at his Colleagues. There were two things which were aimed at in the original Resolution. Not only would it strike against Obstruction, but it would strike against persistent and legitimate criticism. The late Mr. Hume was never guilty of Obstruction; and yet his mouth would have been closed if such a Rule as the one under discussion were in force in his time. There was a difference between legitimate persistent criticism and Obstruction. As soon as persistent and legitimate criticism passed into wilful Obstruction, then the House was able to deal with it by a power which had been exercised more than once by the Chairman of Committees and the Speaker to summarily suppress any individual or bodies of individuals who were guilty of the offence. The paper of *clôture* which was now contended for in Supply could only be required in order to put an end to criticism which, though it was not obstructive, was inconvenient to the Minister in charge of the Estimates. The President of the Local Government Board had said that if the Rules were unjust the Ministers now in Office would suffer when they got into Opposition. But he did not think that was the idea that hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House had. They believed that with the assistance of the *clôture* Rules they would be able to pass the franchise measure, and thus obtain a permanency of Office. There was nothing so good as discussion of the Estimates. In every Department of the administration of Irish affairs it was admitted that there was abuse at the present moment. How were the Irish Members to bring home to the Legislature and the country those grievances if not by continued discussion? He regarded the Rules they were about to make with indifference. For himself and his Colleagues he could say that they intended to support this and every other Amendment which sought to curtail the monstrous and tyrannical powers the Government were about to confer on the Chairman of Committee of Supply. There was no means whereby the Irish Representatives could bring home to the House the grievances of their country so effectual as the discussion of the Estimates. He was not so dishonest as to pretend that he supported this Amendment out of a desire to support the dignity of the House or the Chairman of Committees. He had no such feeling in his heart. The feeling there was very different, and although it was not strong enough to induce him to vote against the Amendment, still he could not help saying that he felt no little satisfaction at finding that, in attempting to strike at the Irish Members and Irish representation in that House, they were obliged to strike down those Privileges which had been the proudest boast of the British Constitution.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, if he thought the Government were going to accept the two-thirds' majority, he should feel bound to vote for the Amendment of the right hon. Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth), because then the surest guarantee for the minority would at once and for ever be gone; but, assuming that they adhered to their proposal as to a bare majority, he could not support the Amendment. They were all aware, as a matter of fact, that there was but a very limited number of Members who took part in discussions in Supply; and the Amendment to which he had referred would, if there were 60 Members present in Committee, enable 40 to close the mouths of the other 20. But under the Rule, as proposed by the Government, small minorities in Supply had an amount of security guaranteed to them which would practically render it impossible for the *clôture* to be put in force against them, except in case of persistent Obstruction. There was no part of the duties of the House discharged in a more mechanical manner than the voting of Supply, and none in which a mechanical majority would have greater force. Therefore, the guarantee of the Government that where there were fewer than 40 Members there should be 100 on the other side, and where there were more than 40 there should be 200 on the other side, before the discussion could be closed, was a good one. As for the objection that Liberal Members did not discuss Votes in Supply when a Liberal Government was in Office, the fact was that of late years the House had practically been denuded of its functions of Supply. That Votes taken in Supply might be challenged on Report, and that when the Appropriation Bill was passing through Committee any Member might move to strike out any item in the Schedule, were additional guarantees so far as Supply was concerned. He could not see why Committee of Supply should be left as a sort of Land of Goshen for Obstructionists. The result of exempting Committees of Supply from the operation of the Resolution would be that all the forces of Obstruction would be concentrated in such Committees. For the reasons which he had given, he should vote against the Amendment.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he did not think that the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was right in attributing wholly to Obstruction the fact that Supply came on for consideration so late during the present Session. His right hon. Friend would recollect that, during the time he was First Lord of the Admiralty, Supply was often very late owing to the legislative measures of the Government. It had been pointed out that Chairmen of Ways and Means were Gentlemen who looked for promotion to the Party in power; but he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) wished to remark that, in addition to dependence on the Members of their Party, they were peculiarly dependent on the constituencies, as they generally held uncertain seats. The three last Chairmen had all lost their seats. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) sat for East Sussex when he filled the Chair. He then removed to Chester, and, finally, owing to circumstances with which the House was familiar, had to take refuge at Scarborough. He was preceded by a very courteous Gentleman (Mr. Bonham-Carter), who lost his seat for Winchester, and disappeared from the scene. His right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had been driven from Chester by Liberal corruption. He would cordially support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth).

Mr. HICKS said, that although the Committee of Supply was usually conducted with a small attendance of Members, yet there was nothing to prevent an unscrupulous Minister bringing in a large number of Members and applying the *clôture.* He hoped the Government would consent to make separate arrangements for the control of Committees. They would then know whether the right of independent Members to criticize Votes in Supply was to be maintained in its integrity.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, it was but a few months since the Conservative Party in that House gave their aid and assistance to the Government to pass a Coercion Bill for Ireland. It had come to their turn to have a little coercion applied to themselves now, and they did not seem to like it. They believed that the honour and dignity of Parliament were involved in this matter, and that if these Rules were passed the prestige and position of that ancient Assembly would be lowered. In that contention he entirely agreed. The Home Secretary, in defending this new arrangement, drew an alarming picture of the perils to the Constitution and to the Legislature that were possible under the existing state of things. No one saw better than the Home Secretary the absurdity of that argument, because if they examined the whole scheme of the British Constitution they could discover unnumbered possibilities of danger and peril under it; but it did not follow that these were to occur. They were asked to trust to the impartiality of future Speakers and Chairmen of Committees; but the British Constitution went on the very opposite principle, and he certainly should object to trust to the impartiality of any Chairman or any Minister. A powerful and unscrupulous Prime Minister was one of the possibilities of the future, and one day he might make the House regret that they placed in the hands of one man the power of stifling discussion and destroying liberty. The House would yet regret this work. and in its day of degradation it would have but the poor consolation of remembering that—

> "'Twas self-abasement paved the way
> To villain bonds and despot sway."

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 102; Noes 166: Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 349.)

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he rose to move an Amendment to the proposed 1st Resolution of the Prime Minister by adding, after the word "Debate," the words "not being a Debate on Privilege or the Business of the House." His main object was to prevent the application of the gag, supposing it to be adopted, to the discussion, in the first place, of the remaining Rules dealing with the Business of the House; and, secondly, of debates upon Privilege. He thought it would be extremely dangerous for the House, when approaching discussions of such importance, to have the "evident sense of the House" manufactured by Her Majesty's Government at any opportune or inopportune moment. Powers of this description should not be intrusted to any Ministry, whether Liberal or Conservative. Suppose a question of Privilege should arise with regard to the introduction of a Member whom the majority considered to be disqualified, but who happened to be a favourite of the Liberal Party, and suppose the Ministry had the power of cutting short a debate, then, when they had their numbers fully arrayed, they might snatch a vote from the majority unawares, and thus a false vote would be obtained. Not long since a four-line Whip was sent out for the Government ostensibly for the purpose of summoning Members to consider the Lords appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the Land Act, when in reality it was intended to be used to secure support in the Bradlaugh debate; and in that case if the *clôture* had existed the consequences would have been very serious. Again, the proposed innovation of Grand Committees was one which required to be very carefully and thoroughly discussed; and it should be remembered that they had not yet before them even the substance of the Ministerial proposals in regard to those Committees, which might be "packed" by the Whips. He objected to any Government, whether composed of Liberals or Conservatives, applying the *clôture* to an innovation of that character. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "not being a Debate on Privilege, or the Business of the House."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would not answer the speech of the hon. Gentleman at any length, because it consisted of a resort to his usual method of describing in the most offensive language the actions of those who differed from him, and imputing to them motives of fraud and dishonourable conduct.

MR. O'DONNELL: I rise to Order. I imputed no motives of fraud or dishonourable conduct to the actual Ministry, but applied what I said generally to any Ministry, whether Liberal or Conservative.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that was not a point of Order. The hon. Member had employed his usual tactics, and had risen to a point of Order where he only desired to contradict. He had no doubt the hon. Member believed he had risen to Order, or what he believed to be Order. He (Mr. Gladstone) had not referred to that portion of the hon. Gentleman's speech, but to his cool reference to the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), who, he said, had untruly inserted in his four-line Whip one motive for calling the House together when his real motive was to bring them together for another purpose. He would, however, deal with the Amendment on its merits, and without reference to the speech which introduced it. The House had already determined that it would not except from the proposed Rule the Business of Supply, which undoubtedly touched the most important privilege of the people—namely, that taxes should not be laid on them without the fullest opportunity for discussion. He contended that the fullest opportunity for all reasonable discussion would be preserved unimpaired under that Rule; and, that being so, the House could not consistently exclude from the operation of the Rule discussions on Privilege or on the Business of the House. There was no greater difficulty in regard to debates on Privilege and on the Business of the House than in regard to other debates, and there was no ground for establishing any such special distinction in respect to them as that which the hon. Member sought to draw. He must, therefore, meet the Amendment with a direct negative.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not know the exact meaning that would be attributed to the words "Privilege" and "Business of the House" in connection with the consideration of the remainder of the Rules on the Paper; but he thought it of great importance that the House should be given clearly to understand whether or not the 1st Resolution, if passed, and immediately it was passed, would be made to apply to the discussion of the remaining Resolutions. He thought it very advisable that they should insure for these discussions the most perfect freedom of debate. He did not know whether the Prime Minister had been discussing the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) with reference only to the effect of the Resolution on future debates, or whether he had present to his mind the point which he (Mr. Gibson) had present to his, and whether he thought the Rule under discussion would, as soon as it was passed, become applicable to the remaining Resolutions as to the Procedure of that House. If this was meant, it was, of course, for the right hon. Gentleman to give effect to that view; but this was certainly a view in which he (Mr. Gibson) could not agree, and which he should feel bound to contest. He therefore hoped the Prime Minister would state exactly what was the view he held on this matter.

MR. GLADSTONE, interposing, said, that was a matter on which it was no part of his duty or that of the Government to come to any special conclusion. He believed that, according to the general Rules of the House, a Resolution, when arrived at, took special effect. He did not believe that if that Resolution took special effect it would have any influence at all on the subsequent Resolutions; but it would be open to the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, if he pleased, to raise any discussion as to the time when that Resolution would take effect.

MR. GIBSON said, he held that this was a point of very considerable importance. The distinction pointed out last night by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) between proceeding by Resolution and proceeding by Bill was worthy of their attention. In dealing with matters by Bill they had repeated opportunities of discussion, and if mistakes were made they could be corrected; but, in the case of Resolutions, they had only one opportunity of considering never intended that such action should be taken under it. It was because of such interpretations as that that it was important that no words having a double signification should be left in a Resolution of that kind. He believed it to be the case that, at any rate during the last 20 years, Obstruction had never been carried on by a very large body of Members. But the Resolution proposed that whenever there was a majority of over 200 they should be able to silence any minority whatever. It was a remarkable fact that during the whole of the last Parliament, when the Party now in power were in Opposition, they were never able to muster 200 votes in condemnation of the foreign policy of the late Government, which formed the chief object of their attack at the last General Election; and it was quite conceivable that many Members of the then Conservative majority might have been tempted to enforce with stringency the provisions of this Rule if it had been in force against those who so persistently attacked the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield. Why should the House put it into the power of a few persons to declare the evident sense of the House by making a noise? Let them depend upon it that if they allowed the noisy few to interrupt a debate, the so-called "evident sense of the House" would not comprise the common sense of the House. He put forward this Amendment in a spirit of conciliation, and he trusted that the Government would accept it, because then the Speaker would not be compelled to yield his better judgment to mere noise, while the amended Rule would carry out the exact intentions of Her Majesty's Government. If his Amendment were adopted, the Rule would read as follows:—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in Committee of the Whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that the discussion is being prolonged for the purposes of obstruction, he may so inform the House or the Committee."

He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

> To leave out the words "it is," in order to insert the words "the discussion is being prolonged for the purposes of obstruction,"—(*Lord George Hamilton,*)

—instead thereof.

Lord George Hamilton

Question proposed, "That the words 'it is' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that it was remarkable that the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentlemen who acted with him should only have thought of this Amendment that afternoon. But although the Amendment might have come by surprise upon some Members of that House, it had not come by surprise upon the Government, because they had already fully considered the propriety of adopting some such words as those proposed by the noble Lord, and had come to the determination to reject them, for the reason that they considered that in accepting the words "that it has been adequately discussed" they had really secured the object they had in view. The noble Lord's Amendment introduced, besides adequate discussion, the idea of motive; and the Government thought that to adopt these words would be imposing upon the Speaker a duty which he had no means of performing—of diving into the minds of Members in order to discover what was their motive in going beyond adequacy of discussion. To his mind, moreover, the motive which dictated a course of Obstruction was entirely beside the question, because Obstruction might result from motives of personal vanity or of spite, and not merely from a desire to delay the debate being brought to a conclusion. If Obstruction existed from whatever cause it ought to be put down; and, therefore, he thought that the Amendment of the noble Lord would weaken the effect of the Rule, and ought to be rejected.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down that it would not be desirable to impose upon the Speaker the duty of diving into motives; but he thought that the real reason that the present Amendment was not accepted was owing to the absence of the Prime Minister. He greatly regretted that the Prime Minister had not been in his place to hear the very convincing arguments of the noble Lord, because, whatever conclusion the Government might have come to, he presumed that they were open to reason and would adopt an Amendment if it were clearly shown that it was an improvement upon the Rule as it stood. He thanked the noble Lord for having brought forward this Amendment, because it clearly showed that the Opposition were as sincere as anyone in their wish to put down real Obstruction. Hon. Members opposite were in the habit of accusing those who sat near him of saying that they wished to put down Obstruction, while their actions showed that they did not want to do so; but the action of the Opposition, in assisting the Government to put down Obstruction on former occasions, had shown that they were really desirous of putting an end to it. It was clear, however, that the Government, under colour of wishing to put down Obstruction, had something else in their minds. He believed that a very large majority of the country would feel more acutely than almost anything else the stifling of legitimate discussion in that House. Now, the noble Lord said, take away all suspicion of any such thing. If the Government really desired merely to put down Obstruction, why would they not write down clearly what their meaning was? The Government, however, knew well enough that their object was not to put down Obstruction, and that they were making the abuse of the Rules of the House by the few the excuse for punishing and putting to silence the many. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the subject had been considered by the Cabinet; and it was clear that the Government had rejected these words, not because they would not put down Obstruction, but because they would not bring about the something else—the evident sense of the House, when it was fatigued, perhaps, or wearied at the end of the Session—which the Government desired should be brought about. It was that something else to which the Conservative Party objected, and which they would oppose by all means in their power. They were perfectly willing to do away with Obstruction, but they would not have the proper functions of a Parliamentary Opposition destroyed. They therefore said—"Insert these words in the Resolution and make the duty of the Speaker in regard to the *clôture* a judicial one." The Government were not prepared to do that, because they wanted the noisy sense of the House and crying for divisions to weigh with the Speaker; and they knew perfectly well that if cheers and pressure came from below the Gangway they would back it up with their own cheers and almost compel the Speaker to interfere. Let them leave the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees to exercise the judicial Office which they now held, and then their dignity and impartiality would not be questioned. Mr. Frederick Harrison, a gentleman who had the confidence of a large portion of the working classes, and who had studied that question, and had very carefully discussed it in a leading periodical, had not hesitated openly to espouse the *clôture;* but he had also fully accepted the natural conclusion which, in his opinion, must come from it. In his article Mr. F. Harrison said that under it they must bid farewell to all the judicial Speakers they had heretofore had; and they would find, though he deeply regretted it, that the Speakers for the future would lose their judicial position, and would rapidly become political partizans more than judicial officers. That result Mr. Harrison held to be inevitable; but he was prepared to face it because of the advantages he expected to get from the *clôture* in other ways. If the object of the Government really was to put down Obstruction, let them adopt the words proposed by his noble Friend. If they rejected those words the inference would be drawn that they had ulterior objects beyond that of putting down Obstruction. Did they mean by the present form of the Resolution to take advantage of the noisy clamour that might be made in some parts of the House during a debate to press the Speaker or Chairman to apply the *clôture* so as to put an end to legitimate discussion? The Home Secretary said that the words suggested by his noble Friend, or words substantially the same, had been carefully considered by the Cabinet, and rejected; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman asked how was the Speaker or the Chairman to dive into the motives of Members? The right hon. and learned Gentleman represented that it would be practically impossible for the Speaker or the Chairman to give effect to those words if they were inserted in the Rule. He would remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary that in the Rules placed on the Table by the Government those very words to which that objection was taken actually occurred.

The 10th of the proposed New Rules ran as follows:—

> "That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair;"

So that the words which the Home Secretary said the Cabinet had carefully considered and rejected, because it was impossible that they could be carried out, appeared in another of their own New Rules. He should like to know how the right hon. and learned Gentleman could reconcile that fact with his present argument?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had indicated in his speech that there was something or other from which the Government could not escape. The right hon. Gentleman had attributed to him, as the organ of the Government, something totally contrary to what he had said from first to last on that matter. Now, in introducing those Rules to the House, he had plainly stated that there were two matters which were perfectly distinct to be dealt with. One of them was wilful Obstruction made use of absolutely for the purpose of impeding the House in the transaction of its Business with that motive present to the mind of the man who committted the offence; and the Speaker, perceiving an act of that character, would recognize the motive of the Member, and bring his judgment to bear on it before the House as a penal offence, and as a penal offence it would be dealt with. Had the Government ever said that their sole object was to deal with that penal offence, for which, indeed, they proposed a different Rule? The right hon. Gentleman opposite played upon the double sense of the word Obstruction. Obstruction might be wilful, being practised with the desire and for the purpose of impeding the Business of the House. Obstruction, again, might simply be the act of a man who spoke vainly, foolishly, idly, and opposed himself to the will of the House; willing to please his constituents, or from any other light and frivolous motive. The Government wished to provide for the future, and had always been of opinion that it was not enough to deal only with the offence of wilful Obstruction; but that preventive measures were necessary in order to check that idle prolongation of debate which had become so serious an evil. Otherwise, if he adopted the construction placed by the right hon. Gentleman upon the words before the House, he should have a great deal to escape from and retract. The case being as he had stated, it was obviously impossible for him to accept the Amendment of the noble Lord. The Amendment implied that no other evil had to be dealt with but wilful Obstruction, and his contention was that many other evils and abuses had to be swept away. In fact, the whole position had been well described by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) a night or two ago. As the hon. Member had said, the House had undergone an unhappy change. Formerly there was an unwritten law of the House which gave an ample power to bring a debate to a close, because such was the reverence in which each individual Member held the House that he did not care to oppose himself to the informally but intelligently expressed will of the House as to the prolongation of a debate. Much of that reverence, he was glad to think, still remained; but the change was so great as to call for the proposals that the Government now made. It had been said that the House had ceased to exercise its old power of informally closing debates; but the House had, as a matter of fact, made many attempts to put down frivolous speaking, but without success. When a Gentleman was reminded that it was the will of the House that the debate should cease, he, generally speaking, folded his arms and assumed an attitude of ease and tranquillity, said he could wait; and, in fact, the more the House expressed its disinclination to hear him the more determined he was to inflict upon it every word he could possibly screw into the debate. That was the present position of affairs, and, as he had endeavoured to explain, he invited the House to consider whether the quantity of debate on certain subjects had not reached such a point as to make judicious measures necessary to restore to the House its capacity for legislative and executive work. The Amendment of the noble Lord struck at the very root of the whole proposal, and was altogether unacceptable. Besides, as there was already a penal scheme for dealing with wilful Obstruction, he failed to see why a rival and a contrary plan should now be introduced. Serious as were the changes proposed, the evil itself was still more serious. He had even read that a certain Member of the House was chosen to be a candidate for the constituency which he now represented, on the strength of the singular faculty he was known to possess of inflicting suffering on any audience he might happen to address, or on any Assembly of which he was a Member. That was a quality against which the House had a perfect right to defend itself. All he asked was that the House would exercise its right of self-defence. It was perfectly true they could not say that any one of the particular forms of mischief which they were now suffering under was fatal to the discharge of their duties. It was the aggregate of them which was fatal. The House had already often done its best with its existing weapons to counteract those evils; but the obstinacy of the offenders had been too strong for the mere expression of collective opinion, and it was now a question whether the House would allow its time to be wasted or would regain its old efficiency. It had been stated that no Vote in Supply had ever been refused when it was asked for. That might be perfectly true; but what had it to do with the matter? The unfortunately altered position of the House had brought about a double evil —in the first place, it had thrown the Business of the country into the most discreditable confusion; and, in the second, it had imposed the penalty of silence and of apparent failure to do their duty to their constituents on many of the best and ablest men in the House. He emphatically re-echoed the assertion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that Gentlemen interested in political economy had not been afforded the opportunity which was their due of urging in the House the views they entertained. As for the Business of the House, while a monstrous length of time had been occupied by certain Business, many important measures had been shuffled through the House in the most indecorous manner. Thus the work of the House was neglected, and not only one or two measures, but the great mass of legislation required for the practical purposes of the country remained undone; and if the House ever made an effort to do special justice to a special want, as was done last year in the case of Ireland, it was a cruel consequence of the act that the other parts of the United Kingdom had to wait till their needs could be supplied. When evils of such magnitude had to be redressed, the inconvenience suffered by hon. Members who wished to deliver unnecessary speeches ought not to deter the House from its purpose. At the same time, the substantive and positive interference of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees would probably be rare. He relied more on the preventive effect of the Rule, and that was the main benefit which he expected to gain from its adoption. As he had said before, the Rule was aimed, not specially at wanton Obstruction, and not at all at legitimate debate, but rather at that needless prolongation of discussions which had now become notorious in the face of the whole country.

MR. CHAPLIN said, it was impossible not to perceive, in the extreme animation of the right hon. Gentleman, his sense of the force and justice of the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman had stated at the beginning of his speech that Obstruction of a penal kind was invariably suppressed by penal measures; but that was scarcely a correct assertion, considering the length of time that had elapsed on a recent celebrated occasion before resort was had to penal regulations. But penal Obstruction was not the only offence for which provision was to be made. Some hon. Members were foolish enough to wish to please their constituents; and theirs, he supposed, was the misconduct that had lessened the deference formerly paid to the collective sense of the House as to the closing of debates. The right hon. Gentleman's argument, in saying that a vast majority of Members still paid deference to the unwritten law of the House, was destructive of the reason he assigned for his proposal. By his own showing there was only a small minority to deal with, and yet he proposed to deal with it by a measure by which he proposed to silence the whole Party which was in a minority in that House. The right hon. Gentleman drew a picture of Gentlemen who stood with folded arms defying the House, and threatening that if they were not heard they would keep the House up all night. That was an evil which was admitted; but the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was not fitted to deal with it. They were agreed as to the evil, but differed as to the remedy. The right hon. Gentleman, on first introducing his Resolutions, spoke of the great increase of speeches and the want of power to control individuals. But now the Government was trying to control, not individuals, but a whole Party. Suppose there was individual Obstruction, was the Government going to close debate because some individuals persisted in obstructing? And yet that was what was proposed. The great merit of the proposal, said the right hon. Gentleman, was that it would be preventive. But how? By silencing a whole Party.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was glad to hear the noble Lord declare that the use made of some of the Rules passed against the Irish Members was not such as was originally contemplated by their framers. A very important moral was to be derived from that circumstance—namely, that if Rules be employed against a minority, however unfairly, they would be further stretched by the majority. They learned now that these Rules were to be employed in putting down not merely Obstruction, but the needless prolongation of debate. The right hon. Gentleman would be reminded hereafter of the pledges implied in these words. The attitude of Irish Members would be very much modified if they thought that Government would honestly make use of the Rules they were to get. What the Irish Members feared was that these Rules would be used not for the purpose of facilitating legislation, but of putting down a weak minority. If the Rules were going to be used for facilitating legislation for all parts of the country, the course which Irish Members would take with regard to them would be made very easy. He feared, however, that the Rules in their present shape would not give the right hon. Gentleman that power. They were told that formerly there was less discussion in the House. The reason of that was because discussion then was almost monopolized by Ministers and ex-Ministers. The franchise was limited, and Members did not think it necessary to speak so frequently in the interests of their constituents. The change which had taken place marked the greater interest which the people took in the political affairs of the country, owing to the extension of the franchise. The House might be right or wrong in shouting down Members. But there was no sacredness in the shouts of the House. There were some who were shouted down because they made idle or frivolous speeches, others because they spoke against "the evident sense of the House." Edmund Burke spoke against the evident sense of the House on the American War, and he was shouted down; but Burke was proved to have been right and the evident sense of the House wrong. With regard to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), he thought the Prime Minister had "smashed and pulverized" the first part of it; but he thought the noble Lord brought forward very fair arguments in favour of the second part. The noble Lord had asked this very pertinent question —What was the evident sense of the House? What was the organ of the evident sense of the House? The loud throat of some individual. The evident sense of the House must, as the noble Lord had said, express itself by noise. In other words, they were to be ruled by clamour. That was the *reductio ad absurdum* of this proposition. It was not always the most sensible Members who were most impatient of the speeches of others. He had seen the Prime Minister listen with patience and forbearance, while some howling nobody behind him was shouting at the Speaker. The Gentlemen who signalized themselves as the organs of the evident sense of the House were the men of irritable temperaments, of narrow mind, of intolerant disposition, the men who waited for the omnipotent smile of the Prime Minister, and these would be made the masters of the House if this proposal about the evident sense of the House were retained.

Captain AYLMER said, that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had thrown a great light upon the Resolution before the House; and if it was passed they would be in great difficulties indeed as regards the general conduct of debate in that House. It had been said that the Resolution would be seldom in force; but even if that were so, the "evident sense of the House" would, at any rate, be frequently brought to bear upon discussion.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not understand that to be at present under discussion at all.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON explained that he proposed to amend the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) by leaving out the words "it is," in order to insert the words "the discussion has been prolonged for the purpose of Obstruction," and with the intention of subsequently proposing to omit the words "the evident sense of the House."

MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the only Question now before the House was that of the omission of the words "it is."

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he would not, in that case, pursue the subject at present, but support the Amendment. The Prime Minister, it was true, had declared that nothing but Obstruction and frivolous debate was to be touched. But if the Speaker were to interpose, and make use of the Resolution in such a case, he would be bound at the same time to stop all debate, although there might be present many hon. Members perfectly ready and willing to address the House with great advantage to Parliament, and thus the services of those hon. Gentlemen would be lost, merely because they had not been so fortunate as to attract the Speaker's attention. It should, therefore, be considered whether the Government wished to stop debate, or, by accepting this Amendment of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), that they only desired to put down Obstruction. Indeed, in future, the whole system of debating would be altered. He had often watched with approval the practice now adopted by the Leaders of the House of allowing the younger Members to address the House first; and then, when they had finished, and the Whips of the Parties had arranged that a division should shortly take place, themselves to wind up the debate, which had often strayed somewhat from its starting-point before coming to a decision. That plan would now have to be changed, and the Leaders on both sides, who would naturally wish to speak on a question under discussion, must, for fear of being gagged in consequence of some frivolous Member rising, speak in the early part of the debate. For these reasons, he could not approve the Rule which the Government proposed to adopt.

SIR RAINALD KNIGHTLEY said, he had had some experience in the House, and had witnessed with great regret the very great change which had taken place for the worse in the manner in which debates were conducted in that House, and fully agreed with what the Prime Minister had said, in respect to the great change for the worse which had gradually taken place in their mode of transacting Public Business. He fully admitted that something must be done; the only point was whether what the Government proposed was the proper way of proceeding. He thought not, and should cordially support the Amendment of his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). He thought a wide distinction ought to be drawn between frivolous and factious Obstruction and legitimate debate prolonged to a considerable extent, to enable the public out-of-doors to form and to express its opinion upon some subject of great public importance. He would give an instance of what he meant. In 1860, Lord John Russell introduced one of his Reform Bills. Many hon. Members on both sides of the House disapproved of that Bill, but did not like to vote against it, as they did not know what their constituents thought about it. It was therefore determined to prolong the discussion to enable them to ascertain that point. The debate was adjourned for some weeks, no Amendment was moved, and the Bill was read a second time without a division; but their object was attained. The more that measure was considered the less it was liked. There was no feeling whatever expressed for it in the country, and Lord John Russell wisely withdrew it. Now, that could not have happened with the *clôture*. In future, measures of the greatest importance would be hurried through the House at the bidding of the Minister. That was no gratuitous assumption on his (Sir Rainald Knightley's) part. That very Session the Prime Minister told them that one night's debate on the Arrears Bill was sufficient; and if they had had the *clôture* with a bare majority, and an accommodating Speaker, that was all that would have been vouchsafed to them. It was often said from the other side—"Oh! but you will be sufficiently protected by the action of the Speaker; the Speaker will never do anything unfair." He admitted that so far as the present Speaker was concerned; but Speakers were not immortal any more than anyone else. Indeed, they were much more mortal, as they generally committed suicide; and he feared it was very likely that before long the present Speaker would follow the example of so many of his Predecessors. Whenever that event occurred his retirement would be cause of great regret under any circumstances; but their regret would be increased ten-fold if the *clôture* was passed, for in that case he would be the last of the long line of Speakers who had adorned the Chair by the dignity and impartiality with which they had presided over their proceedings. For many years past Speakers had been selected not only on account of their high personal character, but their presumed impartiality; but under the *clôture* they would be chosen because they were well known to be thorough-going partizans of the Government of the day, who would help them in a difficulty, as was the case in nearly all Parliaments on the Continent and in the Colonies where they had the *clôture*. And he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that Liberal Governments were not immortal any more than Speakers. It was true, they did not voluntarily put an end to their own existence, but that was done for them by a vote of that House; and if the present Government were able to maintain their position on the Treasury Bench, after an appeal to the country, it would be the first time such a thing had happened in the whole of his Parliamentary experience. For the last 30 years there had never been a Dissolution of Parliament which had not been almost immediately followed by a change of Government. In 1852 Lord Derby was turned out within a few weeks of the meeting of the new House. In 1857 Lord Palmerston appealed to the country. It was true, he obtained what appeared to be a good majority; but at the commencement of the next Session he also was defeated and had to retire. In 1859 Lord Derby again dissolved, and was beaten almost the first night on an Amendment to the Address. In 1865 Lord Palmerston again dissolved. He died before the House met; but the Government, of which he had been the head, was turned out the first Session; and since the last Reform Bill the retribution attending a dissolving Minister had been even more sudden and more striking. In 1868 Mr. Disraeli appealed to the country; the majority against him was so overwhelming and so crushing that he did not dare to meet Parliament. Precisely the same thing happened to the right hon. Gentleman opposite in 1874, and again to Lord Beaconsfield in 1880. Whether that long string of precedents would be followed next time he could not say; but it was probable they would, and he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that the *clôture* was even a more formidable weapon in the hands of a Conservative Minister than a Liberal one. He referred, of course, to the action of the House of Lords. As a rule, the Lords passed nearly all the Bills they sent up to them; but why did they do so? Because those Bills had been amply and fully discussed in that House, the country had had time to express its opinion, and if that opinion was favourable the Lords did not oppose it. But that would not be the case with the *clôture*. The Lords would say with truth—"We do not resist the will of the people; but we do not yet know what that will is. We will therefore postpone the consideration of the measure for a year to enable us to ascertain it." Whether their Lordships would be equally sceptical with a Conservative Administration he could not say; but he thought it a matter well worthy the consideration of independent Members sitting on the Benches opposite.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that one great value of the Amendment of his noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) was that it was a practical test of the intentions of the Government in proposing the Resolution to the House. Was this Resolution intended to defeat Obstruction, or was it not? It was only justice to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to say that, from the first, he had stated that the 1st Resolution was not intended to meet Obstruction, but that it was intended to deal with it by a subsequent Rule. His followers, however, throughout the country had taken up the cry for putting down Obstruction; and nine-tenths of the Members of the Government, and every Liberal Association, had assumed that the object of the 1st Resolution was to put down Obstruction. Was the Resolution intended to put down Obstruction or not? If it were intended to deal with Obstruction in the ordinary sense of the word, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) could not understand why the Government did not accept the Amendment. The Prime Minister had informed them that the Rule was only intended to deal with Obstruction in a certain sense of the term. He had instanced the cases of determined individuals persisting in making themselves heard when the House was not disposed to listen to them. But if those were the cases to be dealt with, there was no necessity for the *clôture* by a bare majority; those cases could be as well dealt with by a *clôture* of two-thirds. But that was not all. They had a definition of Obstruction given by the Prime Minister himself, in his first speech on the subject. The definition was almost exhaustive in its terms; it defined Obstruction as "a disposition either of a minority of the House, or of individuals, to resist the will of the House otherwise than by argument." It would be of inestimable value to put the term "Obstruction" in the Resolution, as the Speaker or the Chairman would know what he had to deal with. Without the use of that word in the Resolution he would not know when it was that he was to take the evident sense of the House that the debate should be brought to a close. A case might occur where a Chairman, after a three or four nights' debate on an important question, because a Motion for Adjournment was defeated by a considerable majority, might consider it was the evident sense of the House that he should at once bring the debate to a conclusion. But if the Amendment were adopted, he would know that he ought not to act, unless he were dealing with Obstruction. It was impossible for any Chairman to misunderstand that the force at his command was only to be called into operation for the purpose of putting down Obstruction. But the House knew perfectly well that it was not the object of the Resolution to put down Obstruction. Hon. Gentlemen opposite did not disguise the fact that the Resolution was aimed at the minority; and, as a Member of the Tory minority, he resisted it. No one would have been more anxious than himself to assist the Government to put down Obstruction, if the advice of the House had been asked as to the best means of effecting that object. The House, however, had not been consulted, and when those who sat on his side of the House endeavoured to argue the case, they were told that they were offering unjustifiable opposition and obstructing the Government. The object of the Government had not been to win the House to discuss the matter from a non-Party point of view. Their legions were ready, and the Government were determined to lead them to the attack, and to have their proposals forcibly carried into effect. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had been good enough to tell the Opposition that "it would be sometimes their turn." What a nice way of speaking of what was supposed to be the best means of upholding the dignity of the House! He (Mr. E. Stanhope) was anxious to uphold the dignity of the House; but he was by no means desirous for himself, and he hoped earnestly that the time might never come when those who sat on his side of the House should look forward to having their turn at the exercise of the proposed power. He had marked the temper already exhibited below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, and its exhibition had determined him more than ever to offer a stern resistance to the Resolution. He felt certain that the sole object of many hon. Members was to endeavour to crush the Tory minority; and that being the case, the Tory minority would struggle with all their strength to achieve what they held to be success.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, that as reference had been made to some proceedings in the last Parliament in which he had participated, he wished to refer to the proceedings very briefly. He thought an argument might be founded upon them against the restriction of freedom of speech. He believed it was the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) who first directed attention to the fact that in 1877 the Vote for the maintenance of the Volunteer Force was met with considerable opposition on the part of the Irish Members, and who credited him (Mr. O'Connor Power) with a very important share in the obstructive proceedings with which it was resisted. He wished to confirm the historical accuracy of the noble Marquess, and to state what was his motive for the action he took on that occasion—a motive which, he believed, was shared by the few Irish Members who sustained him in recording a protest against that Vote. The noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook) was then Secretary of State for War, and it was between 12 and 1 o'clock in the morning when they reached the Volunteer Vote. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) ventured to call attention to the fact that, though the people of Ireland did not possess the right to enrol themselves in any Volunteer organization, they were yet subject to the tax imposed alike on all parts of the United Kingdom. In the mildest possible tones he ventured to ask for an explanation of that state of things. He did not want to disparage the manner in which the distinguished statesman to whom he had referred transacted Business here or "elsewhere." The Tory Party had reason to be proud of his magnificent abilities; but a conciliatory disposition was not conspicuous amongst the qualities of that Nobleman, and in reply to the question he simply declined to give any explanation whatever. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) mentioned this fact because he thought it bore out what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) that a great deal of the unpleasantness in the House arose from the want of a spirit of conciliation on the part of those who on both sides were responsible for the conduct of Business. He felt at the time that whatever title the Nobleman had established on the consideration of the House, he had established no title which justified him in refusing a straightforward answer to a straightforward question. He did not say that the noble Viscount wished to be disrespectful to him or to his countrymen; but for some reason he declined to give any explanation. That moment the question of the importance of the Volunteer Vote was absorbed in the greater question of the right which belonged to every man, of having an explanation of any Vote in the Estimates which he felt called on to challenge. It was then that Irish Members moved the omission of that Vote. On that Motion being disposed of, they moved alternately that Progress be reported, and that the Chairman leave the Chair. It was past 7 o'clock on a bright summer morning that they walked out of Palace Yard, a night having been wasted which would have been better occupied if the Ministry had condescended to give to a mere Irishman an explanation he had a right to demand. The reasons which made him (Mr. O'Connor Power) disposed to minimize, as far as possible, the proposals which the Government had made for the purpose of restricting liberty of debate were too numerous to be at present stated; but, in his observation of political action in Great Britain and Ireland, he had noticed a tendency towards the destruction of all deliberation, and a tendency towards mere "counting of heads." Deliberation was disparaged, and appeals were made to public feeling and passion, and to the promptings of popularity and temporary expediency for the settlement of questions. Where should they find a refuge for deliberation if not in the Legislature? It appeared that if, being a Member of a political Party, one now took an independent attitude, it was at the peril of one's influence and popularity, and at the peril of misrepresentation even from political friends. Where should they find, then, in future a platform on which questions could be examined on their merits, and with liberty of discussion? Certainly not in the House of Commons, if the proposals of the Government were accepted in the form in which they appeared on the Paper without any restriction. They were encouraged by various arguments to accept these proposals. They were told by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department that at present it was quite possible for a small obstructive minority in the House to use its powers effectively to prevent the Executive Government from getting the Supplies necessary to carry into effect a determination to make war against some foreign Power. That might be so; but the argument was of little value, for the right hon. and learned Gentleman, when asked for a reference to any ocasion when such an extreme course was taken, was obliged to acknowledge that he could not point to one. Reference had been made to the Mutiny

Act. They were told—and great stress was laid upon the point—how necessary it was that it should pass every year; but the Gentlemen who talked about this were the very same Gentlemen who appealed to the electors of Great Britain two and a-half years ago successfully, because of what the Irish Obstruction had accomplished in amending the Mutiny Act by abolishing flogging in the Army. He was sorry that the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), who, for 15 or 16 years before the abolition of flogging in the Army, had devoted his attention to that question, was not in his place, because he (Mr. O'Connor Power) recollected his publicly apologizing to the Irish Members, because he had begged them to modify their opposition to the Mutiny Bill. That hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have been working 15 or 16 years to obtain the abolition of flogging; but this would not have been possible within any reasonable time had it not been for the protracted discussion on the Army Discipline Bill, commenced by a few determined Irish Members, and carried on by the assistance of some of the most prominent Members of the Liberal Government, and pertinaciously persisted in, until the abandonment of that system of discipline was wrung from the common sense of the House."

Those were advantages which might be referred to as having accrued from the pertinacious prolongation of discussions. He did not deny that even that action might be pushed too far; but he recalled these circumstances to show how much remained to be said on the other side of the question, which hon. Gentlemen were disposed to forget. They had been reminded that a time would come when the Liberals would be in Opposition, and would feel the effects of the stringent regulations they were now making. Unquestionably that day would come. They were not making temporary Regulations. They were assenting to Resolutions which would destroy, for all time, some of the greatest privileges which had been defended for ages by the House, and defended because it was conscious that the preservation of these privileges was necessary to the preservation of liberty, for without them, undoubtedly, that liberty would have been sacrificed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had sought to encourage them to assent to these Resolutions, because he had faith in the anxiety of the Liberal Party to insist upon a full discussion of public questions, especially as regarded the Estimates. There was no use in trying to gain support for these Resolutions by the *argumentum ad hominem.* It was about the most unreliable method by which to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. He knew that strong opponents of the policy of foreign aggression defended the late war in Egypt, simply on the strength of that argument. They said—"We should never have thought it would have been justifiable if the Tory Party had invaded Egypt; but it has been done by a man in whom we have confidence." He had had, in fact, a long argument about it with an ardent supporter of the Government, who finally acknowledged that his approval of the policy in Egypt was based on his belief that the Prime Minister could not possibly engage in an unjustifiable war. In the same way they were assured that it was not within the bounds of possibility that, under a Liberal Government, coercive Resolutions could be arbitrarily put in force. But these guarantees would not stand a moment's examination. The hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had apologized for having said, two years ago, that a Liberal Government would not make an aggressive war. This Resolution must stand or fall by its intrinsic merits, and not on arguments of this kind. His opinion was, that where you had a Government supported by a large majority, no matter what Government it was, the tendency was to be impatient of criticism—the tendency was to use whatever powers they possessed to put an end to the discussion. It was not necessary to suspect them of passing these Resolutions merely for the love of suppressing freedom of speech. They might give right hon. Gentlemen opposite credit for all the good intentions avowed in their speeches; but even that should not satisfy them. There was a certain place of evil repute, which they were told was paved with good intentions; but he had never heard of anybody being anxious to go there. He would appeal to the Prime Minister that with this Amendment, and those which would follow it, an attempt should be made to offer some acknowledgment of the disposition which he thought was prevalent in all parts of the Opposition, at the present time, to aid the Government in the legitimate and proper transaction of Public Business. The House had passed during the last two or three years through a time of such grave political excitement that no one could wonder if on occasions liberty of speech had been exercised to its fullest extent. But, surely, they should not make Regulations, dwelling exclusively on the memory of partizan warfare, and the bitterness of Party strife. There was a better feeling among Parties in and out of the House, and he had not abandoned the hope that the Government would show a spirit of conciliation and compromise towards many of the important Amendments on the Paper. At the same time, he would suggest that the despatch of Business was hindered not so much by the number of speeches as by the length of speeches, some limitation of which, he believed, would be acceptable to many hon. Members. Many hon. Members, unfortunately, measured the effectiveness of a speech by its length. He should rejoice at some proposal which would limit the duration of speeches, and compel men to sit down, as he now did, because he had nothing further to say.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not agree with the remark of the hon. Member for Mid Lincoln (Mr. E. Stanhope) that nothing they could say or do could have any effect in resisting the legions of the Government. It was in the power of the 245 Members of the Tory Party, if they were in earnest in the professions they made, if they believed the *clôture* would be fatal to the rights of Parliament, to force the Government to appeal to a higher tribunal than the present House of Commons on the question; and he did not know that the Prime Minister was the man to shirk the challenge. It was not by talking of inconvenience, it was not by walking out of the House, it was not by short speeches, it was not by bandying compliments, that they could resist the proposal they believed to be dangerous; but it was only by evincing a determined opposition, and presenting a strong numerical front, and by taking advantage of all the Forms and Privileges of the House, that the Opposition could hope to have any of their Amendments carried. He did not think there were many who knew, from the declarations of the Government, what were the objects of the Government in pressing the *clôture*. The Amendment of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) hit the blot on the 1st Resolution which had been pointed out over and over again from the time it was first put on the Paper, and he (Lord Randolph Churchill) therefore thanked him for proposing it. That blot was that it was felt that there was a gross and glaring inconsistency between the "evident sense" of the House and *clôture* by a bare majority. Nothing could be more fatal to the position of the Speaker than to leave these words in the Resolution. It was impossible to say that he would at all times, or at any time, detect the evident sense of the House. It meant a proportionate majority, and it could mean nothing else. Where would be the reverence and respect which they all owed to the Speaker if, after having declared that the evident sense of the House was in favour of the *clôture*, this evident sense was only declared by a majority of 1? This Amendment was the test and touchstone of the intentions of the Government—whether it was to strike at fair Parliamentary opposition or at organized Obstruction. The latter the Prime Minister defined as being opposition to the will of the House otherwise than by argument. If that were so, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) should accept the Amendment; but if the object was to put down fair Parliamentary opposition, which, though obstinate, might be fair, the Amendment would be rejected. He took that opportunity of declaring his unalterable and undying hostility to this Rule as it now stood. Was their supposition correct, that opposition and Obstruction were synonymous in the mind of the Prime Minister? Much had been said in the course of this discussion about Irish Obstruction; but, for his part, he would say that he had not always been against Irish Obstruction. What was more, he could tell hon. Members opposite that he was not more against Irish Obstruction in the last Parliament than he had been in this. From the time when he was first able to form an opinion on political matters, he had held the belief that if we had not had Irish Obstruction, we should have had Irish rebellion. The Obstruction of Irish Members had been the great safety-valve of rebellion, and had turned the exuberances of Irish Nationality into a surer and a safer channel. If we sat on the safety-valve of Irish Obstruction, we should have before long a very bloody explosion. Against wilful, organized Obstruction, the Conservative Party had never been slow to help the Government of the day, and if the 1st Resolution were confined solely to that object it would be harmless. Those who voted for the Amendment would be in favour of the liberties of the House of Commons; but those who voted against it were, undoubtedly, and beyond all possibility of contradiction, against freedom of debate, and unworthy of the traditions of Parliament. They were again witnessing to-night a portentous and unnatural silence on the part of the Liberal Members. Of course, it was hard for men to be talkative or cheerful, when they had been told by their Leader, on the first day of the Session, that they had lost all their character and all their honour. It would have been creditable even to Mr. Mark Tapley to be cheerful in such circumstances. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) supposed they were keeping quiet on this occasion because they felt they were assisting in the capacity of mutes at the funeral obsequies of freedom of speech.

MR. MARRIOTT said, that, sitting on the Liberal Benches, he certainly, for one, had received no mandate from the Prime Minister not to speak. If the right hon. Gentleman had issued such a mandate he had certainly left some of them out, and if he (Mr. Marriott) had received it, he did not suppose he should have felt called upon to obey it; and in speaking now he was sure he was not going against any mandate from the Prime Minister to himself or any of their Party. But with regard to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), he did feel in some difficulty, and had also felt some with regard to the Amendments that had gone before. He had listened with great attention to the different speeches made, all directed to this — whether Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees were to have the same power. He had listened with great attention to the speech of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and he fully admitted the logic of all his arguments; but the only question was about his premises. His arguments were enlarged upon by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and were carried to greater length by the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase); but, taking all those speeches together, they might be boiled down and put with a very old proverb—and, in making use of it, he meant no insult to the House—those speeches came to this, that "what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander." What they wanted to know was, what sauce they were going to give the goose? He felt quite certain the House would not object to that term, and he said seriously, in regard to all these Amendments, that they were simply groping in the dark. There were now some 30 or 40 Amendments down, which would not have been given Notice of if they really knew upon what the House was going to decide—whether the *clôture* by bare majority; or by a proportionate majority, whether a majority of two-thirds or three-fifths. At the present time, how did the House stand? According to what was said in the late debates, all that the House had decided was that there was to be a *clôture* by a majority. It was the intention of an humble Mover of an Amendment to raise the question of bare majority; but the word "bare" was inadvertently left out. The real point to decide now was what that majority was to be, for when that was decided it made all the difference to the Amendments they were to discuss and were discussing. If the majority was to be a proportionate one, which he thought was generally agreed—["No, no!"]—there was no need of the Amendment. Hon. Members said "No, no!" He was quite willing there should be no *clôture* at all. His own belief was that there were a number of these Rules which were now proposed to the House which would put down Obstruction, quite independently of the *clôture*. He was struck with what was said by the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and what he said had not been answered. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) spoke as if the sole object of the *clôture* was to put down Obstruction by a small number, such as was sometimes carried on by 20 Members, and he said —"We are willing to put down the Obstruction of 20 Members." Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) used words that would show that the House could easily put down the Obstruction of a small Party; and he (Mr. Marriott) felt certain that if they had the *clôture* by two-thirds or a proportionate majority, when the two Front Benches were agreed, Obstruction would be put down. ["Question!"] That was the Question. Obstruction was the whole Question. The speech of the right hon. Member for Ripon seemed to carry out entirely the views of a two-thirds, or a proportionate majority, because, if the two Front Benches were agreed, the Obstruction of a small minority would be put down. "But," said the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex, "can anybody give an instance when the whole or the greater part of the Conservative Party have obstructed?" All he (Mr. Marriott) could say was that since he had been in the House the Conservative Party never had obstructed as a Party. There might have been some Members of the Party who had joined together for that purpose—some Members of the Party not altogether under the whip and control of their Leader. No doubt, the Leader, like the driver of a four-in-hand, had some little difficulty in keeping his team well together; but their coach was not, therefore, necessarily upset. ["Question!"] Last night they had an instance of the younger Members kicking over the traces. ["Question!"] What was the question of the Amendment? The question was whether the Speaker was to interfere when a debate was carried on for the purpose of Obstruction. Obstruction had existed in the House, and the weapon was to be left to the House to use to put it down. The responsibility rested with the House, and it was no longer a Vote of Confidence in the Ministry. The great point was the putting down of Obstruction, and he believed the great majority of the House had that object in view. The real question was, how was it to be done? If the Amendment of the noble Lord was carried, that intention was expressed in words, according to which power was given to the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, and they could leave it to them to say whether a debate was being carried on for thrashing out the subject, enlightening hon. Members by every scrap of argument, or whether it was merely Obstruction. He was sure it was easy to tell the difference. The Amendment of the noble Lord simply added, "when the debate is carried on for purposes of Obstruction;" and surely that was the only time that the Speaker or the Chairman ought to interfere. If the Government meant to say they could interfere at any other time, whether the debate were long or short, which must depend on the nature of the subject, then what they wished to know was, were debates to be closed when there was no Obstruction? They knew there had been debates resumed Session after Session, each debate adding to the knowledge of the House and the country; and measures had, as the result, been passed and accepted in a very different form to that in which they would have been passed had the debate been hurried and quickly closed by means of the *clôture.* All he wished to say was that he did wish most earnestly that the Government would give them some indication of what they intended to do, what was the main point of their Resolution, whether they were going to insist on a bare majority, or whether it was to be a proportionate majority?

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that they had the authority of the Prime Minister that the purpose of the Resolution was not to put down Obstruction, but to expedite legislation. What legislation? Why, of course, the legislation of the Ministry. Thus, we should be led to a system of Ministerial absolutism. He objected to the absolutism of any Minister, to whichever Party he belonged. The fact was that Ministers and hon. Members cared less and less for that House, and addressed themselves more and more to the constituencies. The House was being reduced to a contemptible position, and its Members were becoming mere delegates of the constituents. An hon. Member on the other side had recently been rather roughly told by his constituents that they did not want him to speak in the House; he spoke too much, they said, already. What they wanted him to do was to vote with the Prime Minister.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY believed that the Amendment of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) would considerably improve the wording of the Resolution. He thought that a provision should be inserted in the Resolution to the effect that the occupant of the Chair must be satisfied that the debate was being prolonged merely for the purpose of Obstruction; and he looked upon the Amendment as a sufficient substitute for the words, either of the Government, or of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey). He believed there was an absolute confusion of ideas among most of the Members on the Liberal side of the House as to the issue upon which they were about to vote. The words were "it is," and if they were ruled out of the Amendment, the words "the evident sense of the House" must fall with them, because they would become grammatically impossible. In the future the *clôture* might be voted, simply in consequence of feelings of fatigue, hunger, or indigestion of a large section of the House, and a vague, illogical sensation on the part of the majority that the debate had better come to a close. There ought, in his opinion, to be the double safeguard of the initiative of the Speaker and the overwhelming majority of the House, before they allowed a debate to be summarily closed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The House, Sir, is at the present moment much fuller than when my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) moved his Amendment. I hope, therefore, that hon. Members understand perfectly the nature of it, and the grounds upon which it rests. By the Resolution now proposed, if it is passed in the form the Government desire—namely, the *clôture* by a bare majority—very great responsibility is cast upon the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means; and it therefore seems but reasonable, when the House decides upon casting such a responsibility upon its Officers, that it should give those Officers full and proper directions as to the conditions under which they are to act in the matter. But according to the Resolution, as proposed by the Government, one instruction, and one only, is to be given to them. If that instruction is to be that which is sufficient merely to close the debate by a bare majority, I think the direction is eminently unsatisfactory—namely, that the power should be exercised when it should appear to the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means to be the evident sense of the House that the Question ought to be put. That is a difficult direction, and not a very intelligible one. If it is understood that the sense of the House means an overwhelming majority, or, say, two-thirds, it would be intelligible; but if by the evident sense of the House is meant that which would be sufficient to close the debate by a bare majority, the direction would be most unsatisfactory. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) saw the difficulty when he proposed, by his Amendment, that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees should be satisfied that the debate had been adequately conducted. So that we have before us two tests—the one, the opinion of the Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means that the debate has been adequately conducted; and the other, that of the decision of the majority of the House upon a division being taken. It certainly does appear that if the object of this Resolution is to put a stop to Obstruction, you are imposing Rules that will be inconsistent one with the other, and not well qualified to obtain that end. The object of the Amendment of my noble Friend is to direct the attention of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means to the question, not whether there happens to be a majority, but whether the majority wish to divide, because the debate has been fairly and adequately conducted, and ought to be brought to an end, and is only being carried on for purposes of illegitimate Obstruction. I venture to say that nine-tenths of the people of this country are under the belief that we are now engaged in an attempt to deal with and put down Obstruction, and they know perfectly well what they mean by Obstruction. But it appears that the meaning which they attach to the word "Obstruction" is not, at all events, the meaning which the Prime Minister attaches to it. My observation, which is merely echoing what the Prime Minister said—[Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!]—is met by a challenge. We seem now to be getting more mysterious than ever. There have been two or three very curious revelations made in the course of this debate. In the first place, we have had a very curious revelation, which, I am bound to say, we were not at all prepared for; and that is the revelation made by an important Member of the Cabinet, who has taken a very large part in these debates, that he does not understand at all what the grounds are on which the Rules were framed, and does not know the Resolutions themselves. The Secretary of State for the Home

Department (Sir William Harcourt), when he got up, in the first instance, to answer the observations of my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton), took objection to the introduction of the words "carried on for the purpose of Obstruction" on this and no other ground—that it was an attempt to go into motives, and that it was quite impossible or unfair to call upon the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means to judge what the motives of those who were carrying on the debate were. But that was not the light in which the Prime Minister understood them. [Mr. GLADSTONE: There were two grounds, and that was one of them.] Then it was one of them. If that be so, I should like to ask the Prime Minister, who is in his place, what I should have liked to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who has left the House, what explanation he can possibly give of the justice and value of the 10th Rule he intends to propose? If it is impossible to go into the question of motive, how does the right hon. Gentleman justify the Rule which the Government themselves have placed upon the Paper, and which reads thus?—

> "That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair."

In the 1st Rule, you are to have an impossibility of diving into motives; but by the time you have advanced to the 10th Rule—and it is an indication of the sort of advance that will take place—you will get far beyond all that, and find yourselves perfectly able to call upon the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means to divine motives. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, who now accepts that solution, gave us also another answer which, to my mind, was inconsistent with it, though perfectly consistent with my recollection of what the Prime Minister has all along said. His objection to the word "Obstruction" in the Amendment moved by my noble Friend is, that he never intended, and that he always said he never intended, by these Resolutions to deal with the case of wilful Obstruction. The right hon. Gentleman said, in the speech in which he first introduced the Resolutions, that that was an offence that ought to be dealt with in a different manner, and he has repeated to-night the same opinion, that it is an offence which ought to be dealt with in a different manner, and that, therefore, we ought not to introduce words for the purpose of bringing it into this Resolution. But I cannot see how the right hon. Gentleman is to take these two objections to the words of my noble Friend —in the first place, that they are words which deal with an offence the Government do not intend to deal with here; and, in the next place, that they imply a diving into the minds of hon. Members. We have the whole of the Resolutions before us, and I think it is desirable we should note the fact that they are not aimed at wilful Obstruction. But if that be so, why should there be an objection raised to the introduction of the words moved by my noble Friend? If these words are objectionable, it is because the Resolution is aimed at something else, and we want to know what that something else is. I do not know that I need detain the House with many further remarks, because this is really the kernel of the whole question —namely, the question whether the Resolutions are intended to keep within bounds tendencies which we have all, more or less, observed, or whether they are intended to do something very different. I must own that I have looked at these Resolutions from the beginning with great suspicion, and the more the debate proceeds, and the more I hear about them, the more my suspicion becomes increased. I regret very much that we are engaged in a contest which may even seem to give the impression that there is any indifference on the part of Gentlemen who sit in this part of the House—even the slightest indifference on their part—to the necessity for promoting the proper conduct of Business in the House. But I do say that if you introduce such a Rule as this, and make it depend on what is called "the evident sense" of the House, even modified as it is—and it is an important modification—by the words introduced by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), you expose yourselves to very great danger. I saw today a curious account of some proceedings which have been taking place in one of our Colonial Legislatures, where the system of *clôture* is in force. I refer to the Assembly of South Australia. I do not know whether the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) is in his place; but if he is, he will probably be aware of what has taken place. In the Assembly of South Australia there appears to have been a question raised as to the proper site of the Parliament Buildings in Adelaide. It was a question of no small importance, because it has now been before the Assembly for some years, and has been the means of the turning out of one Ministry, and the introduction of another. A Motion was brought forward recently in regard to that matter. The speech of the Mover was delivered, and it was a speech of some considerable length; yet, immediately that speech was concluded, a Member got up, and, without a single word having been said in reply, moved that the House should divide. The Motion was at once put; there was a division, in which 18 voted for dividing immediately, and 13 against. A division upon the Main Question accordingly took place, without a single word having been uttered in answer to the speech of the Mover of the original Motion, notwithstanding that, at the time, the question was a burning question which had long agitated the Colony. Within a week, in the other House of Assembly—the Legislative Council—the same Motion was brought forward. It was fully discussed, and eventually carried; whereas, in the other Assembly, it was never discussed at all, and was thrown out without any answer having been made to the speech of the Mover of the Resolution. I see that proceedings are now being taken to obtain some municipal action in the matter, in order that the question may be brought to a further solution. Well, that is the sort of thing you may expect under the *clôture*, when passions are excited and Party feeling runs high. I have no doubt that the true explanation of such action is this—that the majority, who had obtained power in the House of Assembly, were determined not to hear anything more on the question, because they were quite satisfied that they were in the right, and that the Mover of the Motion was altogether in the wrong. But the same would be the case here. We should have the Ministry coming forward and laying down certain propositions that would command the assent of their followers; and if anybody got up to argue against them, he would be put down, and put down very summarily. It reminds me of the story of the Caliph Omar, who ordered the destruction of the Alexandrian Library. He said—

> "If these books contain matters that are in accordance with the Koran, they are superfluous; and if they do not, then they are more than superfluous—they are mischievous and pernicious; and, in either case, they ought to be destroyed."

In the same way, if the arguments of hon. Members are in accordance with the views of the Ministry of the day, the majority will say—"They are superfluous, and can be much better expressed by Her Majesty's Government than by you;" but if, on the other hand, they are in opposition to the views of the Ministry of the day, then the majority will say—"They are more than superfluous—they are mischievous, and we ought not to allow them to be heard; we will therefore put them down." If the Chairman of Ways and Means was to be guided by the sense of a bare majority of the House he would feel himself obliged to put this Rule in force. I am glad that my noble Friend has brought forward this Amendment. I think that it will be an extremely useful Amendment in itself, if it is adopted by the House; and if it is not adopted, then, at all events, the discussion which has taken place upon it will have thrown a great deal of light on the true character of these Resolutions, and on the true nature of the action Her Majesty's Government are taking, and I hope that the lesson will not be altogether lost either upon the House or upon the country.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not quite sure whether I am able to follow the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) through the whole of his argument; but there are one or two observations in what he has just said in regard to which I should like to say one or two words in reply. The right hon. Gentleman concluded his speech by referring to a case which occurred recently in one of the Colonies, and he argues from that case that the majority in this House, if these Rules were passed, would be able to use their power in a very tyrannical and summary manner. But the right hon. Gentleman, in the observations he has made, has entirely ignored all the precautions we are endeavouring to set up against any abuse of the powers we propose to confer. He ignores altogether the initiative of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Ways and Means, and he ignores the directions which are to be given to the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees as to the exercise of the initiative. He absolutely ignores the words which have just been accepted — that the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees is to be guided by what appears to be the "evident sense" of the House, and that he is also to entertain the conviction himself that the subject has been adequately discussed before putting the Rule in force. The right hon. Gentleman assumes that it would be in the power of a tyrannical majority to put a stop to a debate, even before it had properly begun, and to call for a division whenever that tyrannical majority might think fit. The right hon. Gentleman also said that the refusal of the Government to accept the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) shows that in their idea and intention this Resolution is not aimed at Obstruction. Now, I entirely deny that assertion of the right hon. Gentleman. The main purpose of the Resolution is to put down wilful Obstruction. We have endeavoured, over and over again, months ago, and now also in this debate, to show that the main purpose of the proposed Rule is directed against wilful and deliberate Obstruction. We have also always maintained that it was not sufficient to contend against wilful and organized Obstruction alone. A good deal of attention has been paid, in the course of this debate, to a speech which I made several months ago on the subject. If any hon. Gentleman will take the trouble to refer to that speech, he will find that at that time I did not base my argument in defence of this Rule on the case of deliberate and wilful Obstruction. I endeavoured to show that what I thought was necessary for the decency and good order of our debates was that the House should assert the right, which I believe it to possess, of regulating, under certain conditions, the length of time to be devoted to the discussion of a particular subject. Obstruction, no doubt, would never have attained the proportions which it has attained in this House if it had not been aided by the great change in the tone and custom of the House which has lately taken place. We may regret it, but we cannot ignore the fact. We must all of us be very well aware that there is a great disposition, without any wilful Obstruction, to discuss subjects at wholly disproportionate lengths. Everyone will be able to call to mind the number of hours which have been wasted in the discussion of matters of comparatively trivial importance, and the great many more hours which have been wasted in the mere repetition of arguments in debates on more important subjects. In our opinion, what we now propose will have a tendency, by preventing that waste of time, to secure, in reality, the freedom and the perfection of our debates. What are we trying to meet? Is it an imperious and intolerant majority? No; what we are really trying to contend against is something more than an imperious and intolerant majority; we are trying to contend against a physical impossibility. The time of the House is a limited quantity; but the assumption on which you are proceeding is, that there is time enough for the House to discuss, at whatever length any of its Members please, any of the multitudinous subjects which are brought before it. My contention is, that if you discuss minor subjects, or even important subjects, at disproportionate length, you will find yourselves unable to discuss other subjects of equal importance and equally worthy of discussion. Therefore, there should be some power to enable the House to regulate the length of its debates in some manner that shall be proportionate to their importance, and I should regard such a regulation as really tending towards securing freedom of debate. For this reason, I say it would be unwise for the Government, although I own that no doubt the primary purpose of this Rule is to put down Obstruction, and although probably but for the point of abuse of debate which we have lately reached, we should never, for some years, at all events, have heard of this Rule at all, still, when we are taking the character of our mode of Procedure into full consideration, it would be a mistake on our part if we were to limit the exercise of this legitimate and reasonable power on the part of the House to cases in which the Speaker was satisfied that there was an evident intention to obstruct. An unnecessary debate might constitute Obstruction, and the power ought to be used, and, in my opinion, it would be advantageously used on many occasions where there was no Obstruction at all—such, for instance, as when, in the opinion of the majority of the House, a subject had been adequately discussed, and time was only being wasted in order to satisfy the vanity of individual Members.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he wished, before the House went to a division, to ask one question which appeared to him to be somewhat pertinent to the matter. The noble Marquess who had just sat down (the Marquess of Hartington) had said, as he (Viscount Folkestone) understood him, that the Members of the Government with whom he sat had always contended that these Rules were not only necessary for dealing with deliberate and wilful Obstruction alone, but for dealing with other kinds of Obstruction. Now, he presumed that the noble Marquess meant by that remark that the Rules were to affect that kind of action on the part of hon. Members which had a tendency to delay the progress of Public Business unduly. He wished to know what would happen in the case which he was about to put before the House? They were told, and they knew very well that it was so, that Mr. Speaker was always impartial; and they were told, further, that the Chairman of Ways and Means would always be impartial. The case he wished to put before the House was this. On going into Committee of Supply and in Committee of Supply last Session, the Liberal Party occupied in speaking 58 hours and some odd minutes. The Conservative Party, on the other hand, only occupied some 20 hours and odd minutes. That meant that the Liberal Party occupied one-third more time than they were rightly entitled to, supposing that each individual Member of the House was entitled to a certain amount of time. He presumed that that was one of the kinds of Obstruction to which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had just alluded; and he (Viscount Folkestone) wanted to know if it was the case whether, if the Chairman of Ways and Means was always to be as impartial as the Speaker, he would put this Rule in force against his own Party in a case of that kind? If he were assured that that would be the case, he was not at all certain that it would not be the best course to adopt the proposition of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he did not intend to trouble hon. Members with many observations on this matter; but he understood the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) to arrogate for the majority the right of stopping debate, not only when the debate was being prolonged for purposes of deliberate and wilful Obstruction, but when, in the opinion of the majority of the House, the debate had lasted long enough, and was being prolonged simply to satisfy the vanity of individual Members. He (Mr. O'Donnell) wanted to know whether what were regarded as merely superfluous statements in the view of one side of the House were always, and in all cases, to be rigidly choked off? He should like to receive an answer to that question from the noble Marquess. Let him take the case of the Indian Budget for an example. That Budget invariably appeared in the public journals, reprinted from the Indian official *Gazette*, say, in the month of April. Everyone, consequently, became thoroughly familiar with that Indian Budget; and yet, in the month of August, they found, as a rule, the Secretary of State for India occupying some three hours some evening with a recital, generally word for word, of all the statements which had appeared in the official *Gazette* three months before. Surely, many persons would hold that to be a superfluous statement. It was perfectly certain that, if the Leader of the Opposition ventured to inflict a similar three hours' needless repetition of notorious documents upon the House, judged according to the opinion just expressed by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, the gag ought at once to be put into operation. What he (Mr. O'Donnell) was afraid of was that, when the noble Marquess made that magnificent declaration, he made, in his own mind, a reservation which was intended to cover his own case.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 177; Noes 97: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 351.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

Mr. GORST, in moving as an Amendment to the proposed 1st Resolution, in line 2, to leave out the words "the evident," and insert "evidently the general," said, he must apologize to the House for appearing on that occasion with another man's child. The Amendment which he had proposed was one which had been placed on the Paper originally by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson); but he (Mr. Gorst) was given to understand that the hon. Member for Glasgow, whose absence from the House they all greatly regretted on that occasion, because the hon. Member was always disposed to exhibit a certain amount of independence in regard to the rights and privileges of the Members of the House, was not there to move the Amendment. And as none of the hon. Member's Friends were anxious to take up the Amendment, he (Mr. Gorst) had ventured to put it down in his own name, so that he might have an opportunity of bringing it forward. If he might borrow, for a moment, the phraseology of the Resolution, it was "evidently the sense" of the Prime Minister that the words which appeared in the Resolution now were not very felicitously chosen. He, therefore, thought the right hon. Gentleman might feel inclined to look on the Amendment with some degree of favour. At present, one of the conditions for the interference of the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means was to be that the "evident sense of the House" was in favour of the debate being closed, and several of the speakers in the course of the evening had drawn a graphic picture of the noise and confusion which would arise from giving vent to that general sense of the House. It was not necessary that they should draw upon their imagination for the scenes which were likely to ensue; they need only tax their memories. He (Mr. Gorst) remembered very well, at the beginning of the present Parliament, when hon. Members opposite were rather fresh to the duties of their position, and were unaccustomed to hear their own views assailed by argument or contradiction, that whenever anybody got up on the Conservative side of the House, and ventured to express an opinion which was at all in conflict with their own cherished notions, they were accustomed to receive him with howls and incoherent noises, and scenes of that description. Therefore, if hon. Members would only recollect the state of the opposite side of the House in the early part of the Session of 1880, they would be able to form a conception of what would be the state of the whole of the Ministerial side of the House, when it became necessary, on any particular occasion, to express the evident sense of the House. He might add that he the more readily proposed the Amendment because he looked upon it as being exactly in accordance with what the Prime Minister had stated, in the early part of the evening, to be the purpose of the Resolutions. He had listened very carefully to the speech of the Prime Minister, and he did not think he was misrepresenting the right hon. Gentleman when he said that what the right hon. Gentleman had stated to be the object of the Resolution was to give the House the power of checking the oratory of hon. Members, if hon. Members were disposed to inflict that oratory upon the House at a time when the whole House was indisposed to hear them. Of course, his (Mr. Gorst's) Parliamentary experience was very much shorter than that of the right hon. Gentleman; but he remembered a time when, if an hon. Member on either side of the House ventured to address the House at a time when the House was indisposed to listen to him, it was sufficient to express the will of the House, not by any scenes of disorder or tumult, but by a few murmurs of disapprobation and a few cries of "Agreed, agreed!" "Divide, divide!" Such an indication of feeling, proceeding from all parts of the House, was sufficient to induce any hon. Member who was addressing it to resume his seat, and to leave undelivered the speech he had intended to inflict upon the House. No doubt, there was a very great change in that respect now. He was not disposed to attribute the change to the less virtuous and the less modest disposition of the men of the present day. He did not think that any deterioration in the manners of individual Members was the cause of this change in the practice of the House; but he was of opinion that it was largely to be attributed to the greater interest which the constituencies took in the proceedings of Parliament, and to a general demand on the part of the constituents that their Representatives should not merely vote, but should occasionally express their opinions in the House. He was sure that it was very often the pressure of the constituencies—a pressure which he understood the Prime Minister to look upon as a piece of great vanity, and a thing to be very much ashamed of—he had no doubt that, in many cases, it was the pressure of the constituencies that induced a modest Member of Parliament to obtrude himself on the attention of the House. There was another reason which induced many Members to speak much more frequently now than they were in the habit of doing in former days, and that was the practice of the local Press of reporting the debates *in extenso.* He had been told that a speech was often delivered in the House of Commons, because it was already in type, and the Member was obliged to deliver it, because he knew that it would appear in the local newspaper, whether he delivered it or not. Even if on all occasions that practice was not carried to the same extent, there was no doubt that there was much greater temptation for the Member for a country constituency to deliver a speech in that House, when he had every reason to believe that any speech he might deliver would find its way, in all its full eloquence, into the columns of his local paper. Therefore, without joining with the Prime Minister in lamenting over the deterioration of manners on the part of the new Members of the House, he (Mr. Gorst) thought the fact of the circumstances in which they were placed induced them to be more persistent in addressing the House, and much less willing to yield to the expression of the general sense of the House than the Members of former days. The Amendment which he proposed to move, and which, as he had said, was originally placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), exactly met the view which had been expressed by the Prime Minister; because, if it was necessary, before the *clôture* was put in operation, that it should be evidently the general sense of the House that the debate should be closed, it would restore, by the vote of the House, the very same power which was formerly exercised by means of a mere expression of feeling on the part of all sides of the House. Those Members who had sat in the House two or three Parliaments ago would bear him out when he said that what was done in those days amounted to an effectual *clôture.* Whenever it was considered that a question had been sufficiently discussed, there were murmurs all round the House, which indicated to any person who intended to continue the debate that the House had had enough of it. When murmurs of that kind took place, they were received as a significant hint in all parts of the House, and the debate was at once brought to a close. Now, if the Speaker was to recognize an evident indication of that sort of the general sense of the House that the debate should come to an end, he would, by putting the Question, "That the Debate be now closed," substantially give effect, by Resolution of the House, to that which was formerly effected by the voluntary yielding of the Members of the House. He, therefore, ventured to express a hope that, as this was evidently the intention of the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman would accept the Amendment. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had spoken.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, to leave out the words "the evident," in order to insert the words "evidently the general,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'the evident' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was very much indebted to the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Gorst) for having, according to the statement he had just made, framed the Amendment on the remarks which had been made by him (Mr. Gladstone). But, whenever he heard a reference of that kind in a speech from the hon. and learned Member, he was sorry to say it caused him to examine with more anxious scrutiny what followed. It would have been quite possible to frame the Resolution by saying that when the Speaker observed certain things which induced him to believe that the subject under debate had been adequately discussed he might appeal to the House; but the Government had endeavoured to place on the Speaker an additional responsibility, and that was the responsibility of estimating, as well as he could, the sense that prevailed in the Assembly over which he presided; and that they had ventured to describe under the phrase "the evident sense of the House." "The evident sense of the House" was a phrase which had been much considered; and it was a phrase which, unless he was much mistaken, in the judgment of the best authorities, was a practical working direction. The hon. and learned Gentleman, not satisfied with the words "the evident sense of the House," desired to put at the back of them the word "general," making the phrase "evidently the general sense of the House." He was reminded of the old and apposite phrase of the Profession to which the hon. and learned Gentleman belonged—"*Dolus latet in generalibus;*" and he must decline to accept the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The word "evident" was perfectly sufficient for its purpose, as an indication to the Speaker or the Chairman of Commitees; but the hon. and learned Gentleman, in his (Mr. Gladstone's) opinion, had in view, in the exceedingly artful Amendment he had contrived to frame, not a mere decision upon the present Motion, but the making of a convenient introduction to a Motion which was to follow, and which would get at the Government fairly on the sly, and bring them down to a level on which it would be hardly possible for them to argue the case against the proportional majority without having a counter-argument drawn from their own conduct, in reference to their having been deluded into the acceptance of a proposition to the effect that it was to be evidently the general sense of the House. Now, putting these two things together, he was quite sufficiently sensible of the strength of the tie between them to request the hon. and learned Gentleman to excuse him if, while retaining all possible gratitude for the courtesy he had shown towards him, and quite delighted with the sympathy which he felt towards the Prime Minister, and the evident nearness in which they stood to one another, with an occasional difference now and then, he felt that his duty called upon him to endeavour to strip away the cloak in which the hon. and learned Gentleman attempted to conceal his real plan, and to adhere to the words which the Government had themselves proposed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, it seemed to him that the speech just made by the Prime Minister darkened the prospect which the Government had before presented to the House. At the commencement of the discussion of the Resolutions, they had been told that the Speaker would never put this Rule in force unless the majority was much greater than 1; and, if that argument meant anything, it was that the "evident sense of the House" could only be shown when the majority were drawn from more than one quarter of the House. That was the argument of the Government, when they wished to inspire the House with the belief that there was no danger in the Resolution; and it was the desire of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and those who supported him, to place it in a clear light. They were the more strongly urged to do that, because the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) had refused to admit the parallel drawn by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) from the proceedings of the Australian Parliament. The value of the protection which could be given by the Speaker depended on the precision and clearness of the Rules by which he would be guided; and they were told that he was only to put the Rule in force when the "sense of the House was evident." He contended that if the meaning of this was not that the House should be generally, and on the whole, of one opinion, it was manifest that the Resolution was intended to be used in a tyrannical sense. On the other hand, if that were not the meaning, they asked no more than that the Government should introduce into the Resolution a word which would adequately express the construction which they themselves declared the Rule was intended to bear. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had suggested that under the phraseology of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) there lurked some deep and dark design; but it seemed more likely that that was to be found in the conduct of the Government, who declined to introduce the one word which would make the meaning of their Resolution clear beyond all question.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 130 ; Noes 74: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 352.)

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 30th October, 1882.

MINUTES.]—*Select Committee*—Privilege (Mr. Gray), Admiral Sir John Hay and Sir Edward Colebrooke *added.*

QUESTIONS.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS AND THE ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any application has been made to him by the Commissioners of Sewers for the City of London under the Act of this Session amending the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts, 1875—1879; and, what steps, if any, the Commissioners of Sewers are taking under that Act?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had received a letter from the Commissioners of Sewers stating that steps were being taken for erecting dwellings, in accordance with the Artizans' Dwellings Acts, on the Petticoat Square site, and that the works would be commenced soon.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, What steps are being now taken by the Board under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts, 1875—1879, as amended by the Act of this Session?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I beg to inform my right hon. Friend that the Metropolitan Board of Works have given instructions for the preparation of draft schemes, under the Amending Act of last Session, with regard to four areas, situated in Lambeth, St. George-in-the-East, Limehouse, and Greenwich respectively. The orders of the Board are now being carried out; and if the schemes are approved by the Home Secretary, they will be ready to be submitted to Parliament for confirmation in the Session of 1883.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF THOMAS RYAN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the action of the magistrates at Newtown Mount Kennedy Petty Sessions, county Wicklow, as reported in the local paper, as follows:—

> "Magistrates' Sons and Magistrates' Laws. A young ex-soldier, named Thomas Ryan, was brought up by Acting Constable Byrne, on the sworn information of Sub-Constable Barry, for assaulting Mr. Frizell, junior, at Roundwood Fair;"

whether he has received complaints of partizanship being shown by some magistrates in putting suggestive questions to the witness against the prisoner, and stopping him when putting lawful questions to his own witnesses; whether, with reference to Acting Constable Byrne's statement that he was directed to bring this prosecution under the Crimes Act, he will ascertain by whose direction the prosecution was brought; whether it is the fact that the father of Mr. Frizell sat on the bench and took part in the proceedings which resulted in Ryan being sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will move the Lord Lieutenant to remit the remainder of the sentence?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have obtained reports upon this case, from which I find that Thomas Ryan was charged under the ordinary law, not under the recent Prevention of Crime Act, with assaulting Mr. Frizell, and further with committing a violent assault on the police who arrested him. The hon. Member will observe from the report in the newspapers that this man was something more than a young ex-soldier, that he had been previously convicted and sentenced to five years. For each assault he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour. I am assured that there is no ground for supposing that the magistrates exhibited any partizanship in the case, and that the prisoner was allowed every facility to question his witnesses. Mr. Frizell attended the Petty Sessions, but did not sit on the bench while his son's case was being heard. If Ryan or his friends think the sentence imposed on him was unmerited or excessive, it is open to them to memorialize the Lord Lieutenant for its remission or mitigation.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BALTINGLASS MAGISTRATES.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the action of the magistrates at Baltinglass, county Wicklow, on a recent occasion, in regard to a charge brought against the Rev. Mr. Usher, Rector of Baltinglass, of assaulting Henry Fennell, and afterwards shooting at a man named Martin Flinter; whether the magistrates refused to send the shooting case for trial, although it was sworn that the Rev. Mr. Usher pursued Flinter through the streets, firing three shots from a revolver at him, but fined him five shillings for the assault on Fennell; and, whether he can take any steps to improve the administration of the law in the local courts of the county Wicklow?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have received an official account of this transaction, which is to the effect that the Rev. Mr. Usher is at present unpopular in Baltinglass, and that he was assaulted in the town on the night of August 26 when returning home. In self-defence he struck Henry Fennell with his umbrella, and for this assault he was fined 5*s.* Without commenting on the letter of Mr. Usher, who certainly attacked the Irish Government in bitter terms, I think that fine was the outside penalty that could be inflicted on him. I understand that it was proved at the trial by Mr. Usher that he fired the shots for the purpose of attracting the attention of the police, and as the magistrates refused to return the case for trial, they were doubtless satisfied with the evidence on this point. One of the witnesses against the rev. gentleman—Martin Flinter—was fined 5*s*. for assaulting him on the occasion.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether the reports stated that the Rev. Mr. Usher's unpopularity was largely due to the fact of his having fired off shots in the immediate proximity of a number of his parishioners?

[No reply was given.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — RATHDRUM UNION—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the result of the investigation which he, as President of the Local Government Board (Ireland), ordered to be held relative to the election of a Poor Law guardian for the Killiskey Electoral Division of Rathdrum Union; and, whether he will lay the Report of the Poor Law Inspector who held the inquiry, and the Correspondence between the Local Government Board and the clerk of theunio n, upon the Table of the House?

MR. TREVELYAN: The result of the investigation has been that the Local Government Board decided that Mr. Crofton had not obtained a majority of valid votes at the election of Guardians held in March last, and they ordered a new election. The new election was held last month, and resulted in the return of Mr. John Gaskin. If the hon. Member moves for the Correspondence he can have it; but it is voluminous, and will take some time to prepare for presentation.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND) —IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT ARKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that certain works for the improvement of the town of Arklow, which were presented and passed at special sessions and fiated by Mr. Baron Dowse at the late assizes, have been stopped by the county surveyor at the request of Lord Carysfort; and, whether he will, in view of the great want of employment in Arklow at the present time, order the county surveyor to cause the works to be at once proceeded with in accordance with Law and with the desire of the ratepayers and inhabitants of the town?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Board of Public Works in Dublin inform me that they do not know anything of the work referred to in this Question. I have, therefore, directed inquiry to be made of the County Surveyor, but have not yet received his Report. When I do so I will let the hon. Member know the result.

EGYPT—BURNING OF ALEXANDRIA—INDEMNITY FOR LOSSES.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is definitely settled that merchants and others who suffered by the burning of Alexandria are to be indemnified for the direct loss they sustained; and, whether the tribunal to adjudicate on the claims has yet been constituted?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is intended that a Commission should adjudicate upon these claims; but the composition of the Commission has not been settled. It is now the subject of negotiation between the Powers.

ARMY—OFFICERS' CONTINGENT ALLOWANCES.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the propriety of increasing the pay or allowances of subaltern Officers in temporary command of troops or companies, seeing that the present contingent allowance is wholly inadequate to meet the expenses inseparable from such commands?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Baronet, I beg leave to say that, by Clause 215 of the Army Circulars, dated September, 1881, the contingent allowance to officers, whether in permanent or temporary command of troops, batteries, or companies, is settled from year to year. The rates now in force are not inadequate. Out of the whole Army only five representations on the subject have been received; in two of these no details were given, and in the three others I was satisfied that the allowance was sufficient. I am always prepared to receive applications for reimbursement of legitimate expenses in excess of the contingent allowance; but I see no reason on this account to alter subalterns' pay.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE MAYO SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Irish Government have considered the complaints which have been made by a large number of tenants in the county of Mayo against the manner in which the Land Law Act is being administered by the Sub-Commission appointed to that county; and, whether, having in view the expeditious and satisfactory manner in which the County Court Judge of Mayo has disposed of the cases that were listed for hearing in his court, an arrangement can be made for the removal into that court of cases originally listed for hearing in the Sub-Commission Court, but which, owing to the great number of cases to be heard, cannot be taken for a considerable time?

MR. TREVELYAN: Although the Land Commissioners inform me that they have received no complaints as to the manner in which the Land Act is being administered by the Mayo Sub-Commission, I know it is alleged that dissatisfaction does exist; but the suggestion made by the hon. and learned Member could not legally be carried out, as there is no provision in the Land Act for the removal of cases from the Court of a Sub-Commission to the Civil Bill Court.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, that as the matter was one of extreme urgency, he should call attention to it on an early occasion.

EGYPT—THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate taking any steps to prevent the enlistment of Circassians, Albanians, and the inhabitants of other such semi-civilized countries, in a so-called Egyptian army under the command of Baker Pacha, and officered by Englishmen, so long as the Khedival authority is protected by British bayonets? He also asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government is a party to any treaty, alliance, or compact, with any Foreign Power, or Powers, which would oblige it to prevent the Egyptians from exercising that control over their taxation, expenditure, and administration, which is enjoyed by the inhabitants of the independent and semi-independent States which formerly were integral parts of the Ottoman Empire; and, if so, where this treaty, alliance, or compact, is to be found? On behalf of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), the hon. Member also asked, Whether any further information has been received about the cruelties and insults to which Egyptian prisoners are said to be subjected?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Replying first to the third Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that we have no further news about the matter. The reply to the hon. Member's first Question is that we have been informed that the recruiting of Circassians, Albanians, and foreigners has ceased. We shall be consulted by the Egyptian Government in any further steps that may be taken. In answer to the hon. Member's second Question, I have to say that Her Majesty's Government are not a party to any secret treaty, alliance, or compact with any Foreign Power or Powers respecting the affairs of Egypt; and, with regard to engagements of any other character, they are all in the possession of the House. The Question asked is not one of fact, but of inference and argument, and cannot properly be discussed within the limits or in the form of a reply.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman whether the cost of the Army which is to be organized by Baker Pasha is to be regulated by the Chamber of Notables or not?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I can only say that the sum of £380,000 was set aside some years ago for the purposes of the Army in Egypt. No further discussion has taken place up to the present time.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether that sum is to be limited to the sum spent on the Army, and if that implies that it is still to be under the direction of the Joint Control?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; it implies nothing of the kind.

Mr. GORST: Will the Government inform us, as Her Majesty's Government were not consulted with reference to the appointment of Baker Pasha, on what ground they believe they will be consulted on this question?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Because Her Majesty's Government have informed the Egyptian Government that they expect to be consulted.

THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR—PROCEEDINGS OF THE FRENCH.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received from the British Consul General in Madagascar any information concerning the dispute which has arisen between the French and Malagasy authorities in that island; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Consul Pakenham has reported fully from time to time differences existing between the French and Madagascar Governments; but these Reports are of a confidential nature, and for the present, at all events, cannot be published.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEC. 31—LOANS TO OCCUPIERS.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the rule will be modified by which loans to occupiers of land in Ireland, under Section 31 of the Land Act of 1881, cannot be made for any sum less than one hundred pounds?

Mr. COURTNEY: It has been decided that the minimum amount allowed for loans to occupiers in Ireland, under the 31st section of the Land Act, should be reduced to £50.

EGYPT—MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can state to the House the object for which Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, and Lieutenant Charrington were sent upon the expedition which has ended so disastrously; whether they had with them a large sum of money in gold, and why they were not provided with an escort; upon what date news of the attack made on the party reached Suez, and when an expedition in search of them was despatched; and, whether there is any reason to believe they were alive as late as a month after their capture?

Mr. O'DONNELL wished to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty specifically, Whether among the objects of the expedition were the collection of intelligence with regard to the enemy, the cutting of the telegraphic communication, the purchase of the means of transport for the British Army, and the corruption of the fidelity of the tribes opposed to the British Expedition; also, whether Captain Gill was not specially charged with the task of cutting the telegraph wires between Egypt and Turkey; whether Professor Palmer was not the bearer of several thousand pounds in gold for the foregoing objects; and, whether the Government had informed Professor Palmer and his assistants that such a mission involved the penalty of death according to the Codes of the German and other European Armies; and, why the Government did not furnish an escort capable of protecting the mission from the fate which befell it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, in order to give a complete answer to the Questions, I fear it will be necessary to make a somewhat lengthy statement, for which I must ask the indulgence of the House. Towards the end of June last, when affairs in Egypt were becoming serious, and the Board of Admiralty were engaged in preparing to protect the Suez Canal, Professor Palmer, a distinguished Arabic scholar and well-known explorer of the Peninsula of Sinai, furnished some valuable information about the Bedouins of the Peninsula, and gallantly volunteered to travel from Gaza to Suez and ascertain the disposition of the Bedouins. He also undertook, on his arrival at Suez, to act as principal interpreter, if events should, in the meantime, have occurred to give occasion for his services. He left England on the 30th of June, successfully accomplished his journey, and arrived at Suez on the 1st of August. His report was that the Bedouins were favourably disposed, and that plenty of camels could be procured. He was engaged by Sir William Hewett as principal interpreter, as had been arranged, and he left Suez on the 8th of August with the intention of proceeding to Nakhl, in the Desert, to procure camels for the Indian Contingent, which was then on its way to Suez. He took with him £3,000 in gold. No danger seems to have been apprehended, as no mention was made of an escort in any of the communications which were sent home. Lieutenant Charrington, R.N., Flag Lieutenant to Sir William Hewett, accompanied Professor Palmer by his suggestion—to use his own words—"in order to guarantee that he was acting on behalf of the British Government." Captain Gill, R.E., a high spirited and accomplished officer and distinguished traveller, had been engaged in collecting information about the Bedouins in communication with Professor Palmer; and when the military operations commenced he gladly accepted the offer of an appointment in the Intelligence Department under Admiral Hoskins, who had been sent out to the Suez Canal. Captain Gill accompanied the party, but intended to leave it, and, turning to the North, cut the telegraph wire between Kantara and El Arish, in pursuance of orders he had received to that effect. Soon after the expedition left Moses' Wells, opposite Suez, on the 9th of August, rumours reached Suez that their baggage had been plundered; and the telegraph wire not being cut, Admiral Hoskins felt some anxiety about Captain Gill, and sent Mr. Pickard, a telegraph engineer, in the *Beacon* to El Arish to make inquiries. He brought back the report that Captain Gill had been in the neighbourhood, and was expected to reach Suez by the end of the month. Sir William Hewett expected to hear from Professor Palmer on the 18th. Not doing so, he sent Captain Foote, R.N., an officer with considerable experience of Arabs, to Tor to obtain information, and, at the same time, telegraphed to the Consul at Jerusalem to do the same. On the 31st, Captain Foote returned without any intelligence of importance; and on the 6th of September Colonel Warren, R.E., a colleague of Professor Palmer on the Palestine Exploration, who had been sent out from England, proceeded again to Tor with Mr. West, Her Majesty's Consul at Suez, and an officer on the Staff of the Khedive. On the 11th of September, Colonel Warren reported that he had reason to believe the party were safe, and that he hoped to reach them in a fortnight or three weeks. Unfortunately, the information proved to be incorrect. More alarming reports were received, and eventually, on the 23rd of October, Colonel Warren discovered the place where the party were attacked; and on the 24th he reported the evidence of the deaths of Captain Gill and Lieutenant Charrington. There is every reason to believe that they were killed either at or immediately after the attack, which probably occurred on the 18th of August. The evidence regarding the death of Professor Palmer cannot be said to be absolutely conclusive, and Consul Moore, at Gaza, is relaxing no efforts in the search. Captain Burton is on his way from Trieste to assist him. Colonel Warren is engaged in investigating the evidence respecting the attack, and until his Report is received we cannot say precisely who are the guilty parties; and, therefore, it is impossible to state yet what steps will be taken for their punishment. In the course of this statement I think I have answered most of the Questions which have been put to me.

MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question I put to him, as to why the party, being in possession of such a large sum in gold, was not provided with an escort?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I have stated that we heard nothing of any necessity for an escort. The arrangements were all made on the spot, without consultation with us as to details, by Sir William Hewett, in conjunction with Mr. West, Her Majesty's Consul at Suez, after receiving information brought by Professor Palmer himself from the very places to which he was going. Apparently there was no apprehension on the part of the authorities of any danger, and we heard nothing of the necessity for an escort.

MR. RITCHIE: Will the hon. Gentleman inquire whether it is a fact—I have heard the rumour myself—that, before the expedition set out, the authorities were warned that these gentlemen were engaged in an undertaking that might possibly cost them their lives?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: There is no such information in possession of the Admiralty.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday next I will ask the Prime Minister whether he is prepared, on behalf of the Government, to propose a grant of compensation to the family of Professor Palmer?

SIR HENRY TYLER: Was it supposed that Captain Gill, leaving his two comrades, should go by himself to cut the telegraph wires without any assistance or escort?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I have already said that the arrangements were made entirely at Suez, under the advice, not only of the authorities, but of Captain Gill himself and Professor Palmer; and I have no doubt that they made such arrangements as their experience thought necessary.

MR. O'DONNELL: Was there any authority from the Turkish Government for cutting the telegraph wires between Turkey and Egypt?

[No reply was given.]

MR. RITCHIE: Were the arrangements made at Suez reported to the Admiralty at the time?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Not, I think, in any detail. If the hon. Member wishes it, all the documents connected with the matter shall be laid upon the Table.

MR. RITCHIE: Will it be necessary for me to move for them?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: No; I will lay them upon the Table as an unopposed Return.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the arrest and surrender of three political refugees, General José, Colonels Rodriguez and Castillo, leaders of the late Cuban Insurrection, to the Spanish authorities by the Chief Constable of Gibraltar; whether the Chief Constable was justified in arresting and surrendering those gentlemen to a Foreign Government; and, if so, under what statute was the surrender made; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will use its good offices with the Spanish Government to secure the release of General Maceo and his companions?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The case of these three Cuban gentlemen has engaged the serious attention of the Colonial Office. It appears that on their landing at Gibraltar they were immediately apprehended, and, by order of the acting police magistrate, without any previous communication with the Governor, they were put outside the British lines, when they were at once arrested by the Spanish authorities. The police magistrate acted under the powers of the Gibraltar Aliens Order in Council, which authorizes him to remove any alien who is without a passport or the guarantee of his Consul. But it is perfectly clear that this Order in Council is not applicable to such a case as this, and that, under the circumstances, the action of the police virtually amounted to a surrender of these men to the Spanish Government. Now, this ought not to have been done, except, if at all, under the provisions of our Extradition Treaty with Spain, and with all the due inquiries and formalities specified by our Extradition Acts. The Secretary of State has already expressed his grave disapprobation of what has occurred, and has directed Lord Napier to institute a searching inquiry into the conduct of all the persons connected with the transaction, and that measures should at once be taken to prevent the recurrence of so regrettable an affair. The surrender of the prisoners having taken place by reason of a gross mistake on the part of our police authorities, their re-delivery by the Spanish Government, with a view to the case being dealt with in accordance with the Extradition Treaty between Spain and Great Britain, would be a gracious and friendly act, which Her Majesty's Government would highly appreciate, but which, in their opinion, must be left to the chivalry and generosity of the Spanish Government.

MR. O'KELLY: Will Her Majesty's Government undertake to make application to the Spanish Government, and press for the surrender of these men, who, remember, are soldiers that for 10 years maintained an honourable struggle for their country?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The terms of the answer just given on behalf of the Colonial Office have to-day been telegraphed to Her Majesty's Minister in Spain.

MR. MACFARLANE asked, was there an Extradition Treaty with Spain?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes; dated 1878.

MEXICO AND ENGLAND—RENEWAL OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

MR. NORWOOD asked the Under Secretary of Sate for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the considerable development, of late, of the industrial and commercial resources of Mexico; and, whether the Government are continuing their efforts to bring about a renewal of diplomatic relations with that Country on a satisfactory basis?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government would be very glad to renew relations with Mexico; but the difficulties in the way are considerable.

NAVY—THE ROYAL MARINES—PROMOTION.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, When he will inform the House of the steps which are to be taken to remove the block to promotion which exists in the case of the officers of the Royal Marines?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Promotion in the Corps of Royal Marines may be said at present to be in a satisfactory state, the stagnation which existed two years ago having been removed by the measures then adopted. Although, however, there is no block to promotion in the Corps itself, there are some questions of supersession, as between officers of the Marines and of the Army, which are receiving the attention of the two Departments; and I hope a scheme will shortly be adopted which will place the condition of the two Services on fairer terms in this respect.

GROUND GAME ACT, 1880—SEC. 6—LEGISLATION.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, during the next Session of Parliament, he will introduce a Bill to amend the wording of the sixth section of the Ground Game Act of 1880, so as to give practical effect to the evident intention of the Legislature, when passing the Act, that persons having a right to kill ground game should be allowed to employ spring traps in holes made by rabbits?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. and gallant Baronet has not introduced debatable matter into this question by his allusion to the "evident intention of the Legislature?"

MR. SPEAKER: The words should have been left out; but, at the same time, I see no reason for interposing between the hon. and gallant Member and the House.

MR. HEALY asked the Speaker whether, in cases of this sort, it was the practice for the Clerk at the Table to submit such Questions to the Speaker before they were altered? Objectionable words in Questions by Irish Members were, he said, very quickly struck out.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no doubt that any material alteration is always submitted to the Chair.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, he would be glad to put the Question another day, if there was any doubt about its propriety. ["No, no!"]

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The fact is, I am not able to give any very distinct answer to this Question. I had an impression that the law was as the hon. and gallant Baronet evidently wishes it to be. If he will communicate with me privately I will look into the matter.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—REPORTED BREAKDOWN OF THE TRANSPORT AND COMMISSARIAT DEPARTMENTS.

Captain AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in consequence of the reported breakdown in the Transport and Commissariat Services in Egypt, he intends that an inquiry should be held on the organization of those Services?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to inform the House that I have had a long conversation with Sir Garnet Wolseley on this subject, and that he will furnish me in a few days with a full and exhaustive Report on the working of the Commissariat and Transport arrangements in Egypt. I am bound, however, at once to say that nothing which could possibly be called a breakdown of those Services occurred. In the first place, the most ample quantities of Commissariat supplies were sent from this country and arrived promptly at Ismailia. For their carriage across the desert full provision was made. But we had to deal with these facts. First, there was no communication between the utterly insufficient wharves at Ismailia and the railway station outside the town. At these miserable wharves the Army and the whole of the munitions of war and the supplies had to be landed with the greatest speed. In the second place, the railway itself was a single line, broken down by the enemy, without adequate sidings or rolling stock, and was, therefore, at first hardly available. What we had done in this respect was to send out large supplies of rolling stock and permanent way material from England, the first ship containing which arrived at Port Said before the Expedition itself, and was followed by others containing, not only material from England, but engines sent in pieces from Alexandria, erected at Suez, and sent up to the base. We had also organized at home, before the Vote of Credit, a Railway Corps in the Force of Sappers, which arrived out promptly. We had further purchased several thousand mules; and although the unfriendly action of the Porte delayed the arrival of those collected in Syria and Asia Minor, this delay did not practically do us as much harm as apparently it was intended to inflict. Our Transport arrangements were more than sufficient, and no failure occurred in connection with them; but Sir Garnet Wolseley wisely decided, on military grounds, suddenly to push on a large military force 22 miles into the Desert, in order to seize the head of the water at Kassassin Lock; and having successfully done so, he deliberately waited until his Transport arrangements enabled him to bring up his supplies, forming there ample depôts of munitions of war and food, so as to be able to strike a decisive blow. During the sudden advance from Ismailia to Kassassin the Army was, of course, somewhat ahead of its supplies, and there were, perhaps, cases of complaint and hardship; but as to these Sir Garnet Wolseley's Report will doubtless give me full particulars. When I receive it, I shall consider what course to take.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY—PROTECTION FROM FIRE.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE asked the First Commissioner of Works, If his attention has been drawn to the great danger of destruction from fire in which the National Portrait Gallery is involved by the construction in close proximity of a series of huge wooden sheds intended to serve as a Fisheries Exhibition, and if additional precautions will be taken to prevent so great a calamity?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, he had already been in communication with the authorities of the Exhibition on the subject, and they had promised him that no building would be erected nearer than 85 feet from the National Portrait Gallery, and the Government Surveyor was of opinion that this would be ample security against any danger.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — APPOINTMENT OF IRISH JUDGES.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, When the vacancies existing on the Irish Bench will be filled up; and, whether he can state the names of the gentlemen to be promoted?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson); Sir, one of these vacancies has, I understand, been filled up by Her Majesty's gracious approval of the appointment of Mr. William Drennan Andrews (one of Her Majesty's counsel) to the Exchequer Division. As to the other vacancy I have no information.

Mr. REDMOND: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give the House any information as to the time these vacancies, which have existed for a long time, will be filled up?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I have already stated that one of them has been filled up, and as to the other I have no information.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman say, after the undertaking he gave the House, that the vacancies will be filled up before November?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I gave the House no undertaking.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES—THE FORTUNE BAY DISPUTE.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any steps have yet been taken, as proposed by Lord Granville in March 1881, for the purpose of establishing, in concert with the Government of the United States, such regulations for the coast fisheries of Newfoundland as may in future prevent misunderstandings between the Newfoundland and the United States fishermen; and, whether the sum of £15,000, agreed upon and paid by Her Majesty's Government in June 1881, as compensation for acts of violence committed by Newfoundland fishermen against the United States fishermen in Fortune Bay, and other places, has been repaid by the Colonial Government; and, if not, why a Vote for that amount has not been submitted to Parliament?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: There has been correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the United States Government with respect to the matter raised by the Question; but no understanding has been yet arrived at as to the regulations. I believe the last despatch was in July. As to the second part of the Question, the Newfoundland Government has not yet repaid the sum advanced by Her Majesty's Government as compensation for the acts referred to, and it has been requested to propose a Vote for the amount in the approaching Session of the Newfoundland Parliament. As Her Majesty's Government hope that this amount will be shortly repaid and brought to account they have not submitted to Parliament any Vote to make provision for it.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether the Newfoundland Government had agreed to propose a Vote for the amount?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, the Newfoundland Government had agreed to propose the Vote when the Parliament met again in February.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked when Papers would be laid on the Table?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he did not suppose Papers would be ready yet.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS—MR. IRWIN FLAHERTY.

Lord ARTHUR HILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the county court judge of the county Leitrim, Mr. Waters, Q.C., recently appointed a Mr. Irwin Flaherty as the court valuer in cases under the Land Act of 1881, where applications had been made to fix a fair rent, and which were to be heard before him; whether this is the same person who is a yearly tenant in the same quarter sessions district where he was appointed valuer; whether his valuation is under £20 annual value for all the tenements or holdings of which he is the occupier, in county Leitrim, or elsewhere; and, whether he carries on a small business as an auctioneer in the village of Drumkeeran, county Leitrim, and keeps a car for hire and posting purposes, which he drives himself?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that they have no information to give in reference to the Question which the noble Lord put to me. I have, therefore, sent it to Mr. Waters, the County Court Judge; but I understand that he is at present on Circuit, and I cannot say whether he may desire to favour me with any observations on the matter.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—BREAKDOWN OF THE ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Mr. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, taking into consideration the complaints made against the Medical Department in Egypt, he will consent to the institution of some tribunal to inquire into the alleged break down of the system of Medical Service lately introduced into the Army, other than a War Office Committee presided over by the Under Secretary of State for War; whether he will consent to the appointment either of a Committee of this House, or of a Royal Commission, to inquire into and report upon the working and results of the new system; and, further, if there is any truth in the report that Deputy Surgeon General Hanbury has demanded a Court of Inquiry to investigate the charges made against the Medical Department during the recent operations in Egypt?

Mr. CHILDERS: I have already answered the first two Questions of my hon. and gallant Friend in replying to the hon. Member for Portarlington (Mr. Fitz-Patrick) on Friday. I certainly shall not advise the appointment of a Committee of this House, or a Royal Commission, to deal with a Departmental question, for action upon which, as Secretary of State, I am responsible. The Committee which I have appointed is a strong one, calculated to act fairly to all concerned. There are other parties [illegible]ncerned than those on whose behalf [illegible] Question is asked. In reply to the [illegible]uestion, I have to state that Sur- [illegible]eral Hanbury has not asked [illegible] Inquiry, but has expressed [illegible] fullest investigation of [illegible]ade against his officers by certain correspondents may take place. Of course, the Committee will have the advantage of the evidence of these gentlemen.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DUBLIN JURORS.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he has any objection to furnish a Return giving the number of Catholics on the Dublin City and County Panels for 1882; the number of persons sworn at the late Special Commissions; how many of these were Catholics, distinguishing the cases upon which they were empannelled; the number of Catholics ordered by the Crown to stand by; the names of the cases at which they were so ordered; and the number of Protestants ordered to stand by, and the cases in which the order was given?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, I should have no objection whatever to furnish the Return which the hon. Member asks for if it were in my power to do so; but, except as to the actual number of persons sworn, there is no official record, nor have I any personal knowledge of the religion of any of these gentlemen.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman who it was that supplied the Prime Minister with the information with which he furnished the House last Friday?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I am not aware, Sir. I did not; and I have to repeat that there is no official record, nor any means that I know of getting this information.

Mr. HEALY: I shall put my Question to the Prime Minister on an early day, and I may take this opportunity of expressing my satisfaction that he is better acquainted with what goes on in Ireland than the Irish officials.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the Attorney General for Ireland gives us the religion of the jurors in the case of Hynes?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): It is not one second since I informed the hon. Member that there is no official record of this information, and no means of obtaining one.

Mr. PARNELL: Might I ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he could not get the information from the Census Office?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): No, Sir. The information in the Census Office is confidential; and, if my information serves me right, it is a penal offence to disclose it.

EGYPT—DEFEAT OF EGYPTIAN TROOPS IN THE SOUDAN.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government propose to take any steps, and if so, what steps, if the reported defeat of the Egyptian troops in the Soudan by the troops of Mahdi, the false prophet, is true?

MR. GLADSTONE: In reply to the Question of the hon. and gallant Baronet, I may state that we are at present in possession of very limited and imperfect information as to what is taking place in the Soudan. There is great difficulty in discriminating between what is true and what is probably untrue or greatly exaggerated. The question is in a state of rumour, and has not yet come to the state of positive and defined intelligence, although there can be no doubt that there has been a defeat of Egyptian forces by the person called the False Prophet. The Egyptian Government is taking defensive measures, and has applied to the English authorities for the counsel and aid of certain officers, and the matter is now under consideration. The hon. and gallant Gentleman will, of course, bear in mind that Khartoum, which is generally spoken of as in the neighbourhood, is more than 1,000 miles away from Cairo.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND—THE REV. MR. PERCIVAL.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that the Rev. J. Percival, President of Trinity College, Oxford, has been appointed to a canonry in Bristol Cathedral; and, whether it is intended that Mr. Percival shall continue to hold both these offices; and, if so, on what grounds the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Cathedrals, that,

> "with certain important exceptions, in those cases in which sufficient means and a house of residence can be provided, canons should reside within the cathedral precincts for eight months in the year, and should not hold preferment inconsistent with the performance of diocesan duties,"

has not been acted upon in this case?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not know under what impression the right hon. Gentleman has put this Question to me, the matter being one with which I am not concerned; but, it being a Question which it is most proper should be answered, I have placed it before my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor, who has given me the materials of a reply. The Lord Chancellor made it his business before this appointment to ascertain whether it would be in the power of Mr. Percival to discharge the duties of the canonry in conjunction with the duties of the Headship of the College, and he satisfied himself beyond all doubt that such was the case. With regard to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Cathedrals, the Lord Chancellor, while feeling every respect for it, did not, however, think it his duty to act upon it, as he would have done had it been adopted by Parliament. As to Mr. Percival's position, the special motive of the Lord Chancellor in selecting him for this preferment was that he was head master of a great school at Clifton, in the immediate neighbourhood of Bristol, where he was exceedingly distinguished in the discharge of his office, and was also much concerned in all philanthropic and religious undertakings connected with the city of Bristol. I feel sure that it was not the intention of the right hon. Gentleman, in putting this Question, to intimate any doubt whatever as to the distinguished merits of Mr. Percival generally; but that the point intended to be raised is with reference to the compatibility of the office he held and the office to which he has been appointed.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE PROROGATION.

MR. ONSLOW: In consequence of the statement made by the Prime Minister on Friday last—that there were certain questions which it might be the desire of the House to discuss before the Prorogation—I wish to ask him if he could now state whether it is the intention of the Government to give opportunities of discussing any or all of the following subjects, on each of which I venture to say the House and the country take the deepest interest:—(1) Egyptian affairs, both retrospective and prospective; (2) Ways and means to meet the extra cost of the recent war; (3) cost to India of the contingent sent by that Government; (4) return of Cetewayo to Zululand?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not doubt for a moment the interest and importance of the subject which has been mentioned by the hon. Gentleman. Indeed, I could considerably add to that list. But with respect to the affairs of Egypt generally, I cannot at present make any addition to what I said six days ago in answer to the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). Matters remain substantially as they were, except that I may say that if any portion of the arrangements which can be separated from the rest with regard to the future of Egypt, and which is of interest to the House, should be shortly completed, we should reserve to ourselves the discretion of making it known at once to the House, without waiting for further progress. But, generally speaking, I must refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave last week. With respect to the charge for the war and the cost of the Indian Contingent, we have received no information of any kind that would enable us to make a statement to the House; but the moment we are in a position to communicate information that would increase the knowledge of the House on either of those subjects we shall do so. As to the cost of the Indian Expedition, no facts of any kind, but only general anticipations, which are not of an unfavourable character, have reached my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India since he made his Financial Statement on the Indian Budget. With regard to the return of Cetewayo—certainly a subject of interest—I do not anticipate that it will be our duty to encourage any discussion of that question within a period so short as that which we hope will intervene before the Prorogation of Parliament.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCEL POST.

Mr. WILBRAHAM EGERTON asked the Postmaster General, Whether the introduction of the Parcels Post will necessitate the enlargement of the post offices throughout the Country; and, if so, can he estimate what will be the expense, either in building or in increased rent, involved in carrying out such a system?

Mr. FAWCETT: Before the parcel post can be brought into operation, it will be necessary in many instances to enlarge existing post offices, and in some cases it will be necessary to erect new buildings. In reply to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I may state that Estimates are being prepared of the additional expenditure involved; but I am not yet in a position to state its amount.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. BOURKE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question on one subject connected with the affairs of Egypt which does not brook delay—that is, the position of Arabi Pasha. I hope that Her Majesty's Government will see their way to give the House an opportunity of discussing the question why it was that Arabi Pasha was surrendered; also what are to be the charges brought against him; and, further, what justification there is, from an international point of view, for Her Majesty's Government demanding from the Government of the Khedive that British officers should be present at the trial?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I agree with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that that is an important subject. It was certainly included in the general answer which I gave a few days ago to the right hon. Baronet opposite. I think I am correct in saying that there was no demand from Her Majesty's Government that British officers should attend the trial; and, unless my memory deceives me, it was a spontaneous offer on the part of the Egyptian Government, for which they ought to have the credit.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT — THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether on the proposed Commission or Committee on this subject there ought not to be some independent Members appointed?

Mr. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I do not think that a Committee appointed to advise the Secretary of State should be constituted in this manner. There are officers whose public reputation is at stake; and as I am entirely responsible for the inquiry, I am not prepared to alter the constitution of the Commission.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the Secretary of State for War whether he would afford the House an opportunity of seeing the Evidence taken before the Committee?

MR. HENEAGE asked whether it was intended to lay before the Committee the contract entered into by the Government with certain shipping firms for supplying the sick officers and men with provisions, and evidence as to the way in which the contract was carried out on board the *Carthage?*

MR. CHILDERS said, that, with reference to the last Question, the contract was not entered into by the War Office, and therefore he had no information on the subject; but he had no doubt that it would be one of the special questions before the Committee. In answer to the hon. Member for Mid Somerset, he might say that it was not the rule to undertake before a Committee's Report had been received to lay it on the Table; but he could not at this moment see any reason why in this case the Report should not be laid on the Table, and, as at present advised, that would be done.

MR. CARINGTON wished to state that in putting the Question which he had asked the Secretary of State for War earlier that day he had acted simply from a sense of duty.

MR. CHILDERS said, he knew that strong pressure from different directions had been put upon himself.

MR. CARINGTON remarked, that none had been brought to bear upon him.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.).

ADDITION TO SELECT COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Privilege (Mr. Gray) do consist of Seventeen Members:—That Admiral Sir JOHN HAY and Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE be added to the Committee.—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. GIBSON said, that the first verbal Amendment on the Paper which stood in his name in regard to the discretion to be vested in the Speaker having been rendered unnecessary by an Amendment which the Government accepted the other evening, he would not move it.

MR. BRYCE proposed as an Amendment, in line 4, to leave out all after "may" to "put," in line 5, and insert—

> "Upon the request of a Minister of the Crown or of the Member in charge, either of any original Motion then under discussion, or of any Amendment thereto, give leave to such Minister or Member to move 'that the Question be now put,' and if such Member shall so move."

He admitted that the Amendment was not, in his judgment, the best that could be proposed. In his opinion, and in the opinion of others, it would be better if the Speaker or Chairman had no function in the matter whatever, and the initiative was allowed to rest entirely upon the Ministers and other Members of the House, and also if the functions of the Chair had bee nentirely confined to interposing its veto where it was obvious a Motion was made merely for vexatious purposes or Obstruction. It would, however, be in the recollection of the House that when the vote was taken on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), the House ordered the words "when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker" to stand part of the Question. Therefore, the Chair was now necessarily concerned in the matter, and all that could be done was to take the next best course, which was indicated by his Amendment. In the first place, he believed it would be of great advantage to the House and the country if the impartiality of the Chair, which had been one of the oldest and most priceless Parliamentary treasures, were removed from all possibility of question. He was far from saying that he entertained the view, if the Resolution were passed, that the power it gave to the Speaker would be abused during the present generation. On the contrary, he thought it would be used too rarely, and that the Speaker would regard it as too exceptional a power for anything like ordinary occasions. But though their feeling might be that it would be impossible for the present Speaker and his immediate Successors, in whose time this power was conferred, to unduly exercise it; yet they could not tell what might be done and said in a new generation which was accustomed to see the Speaker invested with power of this kind, and ultimately the Chair might suffer that degradation which it had unhappily suffered in the United States of America. They should, therefore, endeavour to minimize the function of the Chair in this matter, and that could only be done by dividing the responsibility with a Minister or with the Member in charge. At present the responsibility rested entirely between the Chair and the House, and, after all, mainly with the Chair, because the Chair took the initiative. The Amendment he proposed would change the position of the Speaker and shift it into the background, and the responsibility of initiating this power would attach in the first instance to the person who made the Motion. The newspaper reports would show to the country that the Motion was that of Mr. So-and-so, and the position of the Speaker, instead of being initiative, would be merely a moderating function. He was well aware that it would be said that under a provision like this there would be danger of exposing the Chair to pressure. But, knowing how impartially both sides of the House had been dealt with by the present Speaker, he could not think that the exercise of a veto of the kind proposed would be likely to be controlled by the Ministry of to-day. Even supposing this danger to exist, it was one that existed under the Resolution as it now stood. It had often been said that the Speaker in taking action would do so on suggestions from the Ministry, and after endeavouring to ascertain what the Ministers' wishes were, and if the power at present provided were exercised, persons would be found in the House, and still more out-of-doors, to say that the Speaker had done it as the result of pressure put upon him by the Ministers. He could not see, therefore, that the danger would be much greater under the Amendment than under the Resolution. On the whole, if there was an advantage it was under the Amendment, by which what was done would be done openly on the appeal of a Minister or a Member. Further, the result of an error on the part of the Chair would be less serious. It was thought that the authority of the Chairman would receive a certain shock if a mistake was made, and that he would be rather less willing to exercise his power in the future. That evil would be much less under the Amendment than under the Resolution. It would be, in fact, a more trivial mistake for the Chairman to suppose that the time had come for closing the debate when the Rule applied on the Motion of a Minister or a Member, than it would be for him on his own proper Motion to come before the House and say so, and subsequently to find that the evident sense of the House was not that which he had supposed it to be. Lastly, though its observation might tend to deprive him of some support, he would say that it would improve the Resolution by strengthening it. Many Members on that side had come to the conclusion that some more drastic measure was needed than that before the House to stop the needless loquacity and endless prolixity which they witnessed in the proceedings of the House. He was afraid the Government had made the machine so cumbrous that it would not work, and that the Chair would hesitate to use its power except on extraordinary occasions, and Business would progress as badly as ever. They must trust to the good sense and good feeling of the House in that matter. But he ventured to hope that the Government would take the proposal fairly into their consideration, and accept, if not its actual terms, at least some modification of them, because he believed it would immensely increase the preventive operations of the Resolution, and, therefore, carry out the objects of the Government.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, to leave out the words "so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,'" in order to insert the words "upon the request of a Minister of the Crown, or of the Member in charge, either of any original Motion then under discussion, or of any Amendment thereto, give leave to such Minister or Member to move 'That the Question be now put,' and if such Member shall so move,"—(*Mr. Bryce,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'so inform the House or the Committee; and, if' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, his hon. Friend had argued this question with his customary clearness. He had also, with his customary candour, admitted that this was not the Amendment he would have moved if he had had his choice; but they need not occupy the time of the House in discussing an Amendment he would have liked to move if he could. He (Mr. Gladstone) considered the Amendment in two points of view. His hon. Friend, agreeing with them in feeling the necessity for a strong measure of reform, was of opinion that their measure was not strong enough, and wished them, to use a homely expression, "to put more powder into the charge"—to strengthen the Resolution, and to insure either its more rapid and effective action, or at least by giving a prospect of that to increase its preventive force. It was clear that in the interests of the supposed majority of the House they had no reason to complain; but he must consider it in two points of view—in its bearing on the Speaker, and in its bearing on the position of the minority of the House. He owned that he was not prepared to accept it when he viewed it in its bearing on the Speaker. They did not disguise that they were asking the House to impose on the Chair, and asking the Chair to assume, very weighty and delicate functions, and a great responsibility; but they had done that believing it to be the course that was attended with the least amount of difficulty, and open to the least amount of objection; but, manifestly, if they were to impose this delicate and difficult office on the Chair, it was quite plain that they must sedulously preserve the Chair, in the discharge of this office, from anything that would be like interference with its high dignity. He was sorry to say that he was of opinion that this Amendment would impart a kind of aggression on the dignity of the Chair—he would not say of its impartiality, because his opinion of the Chair was such that he did not believe its impartiality would give way; but he must say he thought it would hardly be consistent with the dignity of the Chair to place it in a position in which it would stand if the Amendment were carried. Because it was not a question of relieving the Chair from the difficult duty of considering the condition of the House and the state of a debate. The Speaker had to make up his mind on two points of the greatest importance. First of all, he had to satisfy himself that the question had been adequately debated; further, he had to satisfy himself that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should be put; and then he had to exercise his own discretion as to whether, in those circumstances, it was, upon the whole, expedient that he should move the House in a particular manner. That was a very serious matter to put in the hands of the Speaker; but if he were to have a matter so serious in his hands, he (Mr. Gladstone) did not think it ought to depend either on the Member in charge of a Bill, or still more, on a Minister of the Crown, whether the Speaker was to move or whether he was not. He should rather say that this Amendment hampered the Speaker without relieving him. It did not take out of his hands any of the duties that were proposed to be put upon him; but it introduced a pressure from without to be exercised upon him in a manner which he (Mr. Gladstone) thought tended to disparage his high position, and the influence he ought to exercise. There were those who thought the impartiality of the Chair was in danger from the

Resolution as it stood. If it were in danger from the Resolution as it stood, he was afraid it required no argument to show that it was in danger from the Resolution as proposed to be amended. Therefore, he did not think that as regarded the Speaker the Amendment was satisfactory. He must say, also, that in the interests of the minority, Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to accept the Amendment. He had expressed his own sincere opinion that the Speaker's impartiality would not be affected. He believed the effect of an Amendment of this kind would be to leave the occupant of the Chair, or the Chairman in Committees rather, to assume a certain stiffness and rigidity in order to prevent his impartiality from being interfered with by an appeal made to him from a political quarter. The hon. Member had stated that the decision of the Speaker and of the Chairman of Ways and Means was sometimes influenced by the wish of Ministers.

Mr. BRYCE said, he had not stated this. He had referred to one of the objections to his Amendment—namely, that in future the Speaker might, if it were carried, be influenced by the wish of the Minister.

Mr. GLADSTONE, resuming, said, he was glad to hear this explanation, for, after a pretty long experience, he could not recollect to have heard of a single case of a judgment upon Order or Procedure in this House, either of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees, being given after endeavouring beforehand to ascertain what was the opinion or wish of the Minister of the Crown. But what he did feel was, that the Speaker ought not to be put under a political pressure. His belief was that the Speaker would resist. Many thought he could not resist; but he (Mr. Gladstone) thought political pressure ought to be altogether excluded from this matter. Even Gentlemen opposite, in good faith, were afraid of the strong political action of the Resolution. The Government, in actual good faith, dismissed altogether that apprehension; but certainly he could not for a moment deny that the minority, if the Amendment were adopted, would so far be put in this unjust position, that obviously a political element would be admitted as part of the influence that was to act in the case. It would mean that the desire of the Minister, as the organ of the majority—he need not argue it with regard to a Member in charge of a Bill, because really this was the most important part of the question—was to count for something. That was the mildest and most moderate statement of it. In his opinion, it ought to count for nothing at all. The desire of the Minister had no place in this. It was an illegitimate element, and ought to be thrust out, and the Government were not prepared to move a single inch in this direction; and he hoped the hon. Member would not press, or the House accept, this Amendment.

Mr. RAIKES said, that the Speaker, whose duty it would be to observe the evident sense of the House, could not but regard the Minister as the organ of the majority. A Minister, indeed, who was responsible for the conduct of Public Business might as legitimately give expression to the evident sense of the House as the voices of irresponsible private Members. There was probably great difference of opinion on the subject of the Amendment, and he might remind the House of the debates in the last Parliament in Committee on the Irish Sunday Closing Bill. That Bill was in charge of a private Member (The O'Conor Don), and was the cause of several very late Sittings of the House, and of much controversy among the Irish Members themselves. One of those Sittings was continued till past 8 o'clock in the morning, and afforded an occasion on which, had the proposed Rule of Procedure been then in force, the *clôture* would certainly have been demanded by the Member in charge of the Bill. It would have been difficult for the Chairman, having regard to the majorities by which the Bill was being pushed through, to resist such an application; but he was sure that the bulk of hon. Members, when they returned at 4 o'clock, would have been dissatisfied at such a result, and that the suppressed minority would have thought themselves deeply aggrieved. Although, therefore, he did not regard with any very great favour that part of the Amendment which related to the case of an individual private Member taking the initiative, yet he thought there was a good deal of value to be attached to the principle of the Amendment, and to its application to the case of a Minister of the Crown. It seemed to him that, whether a Minister was to remain mute during an embarrassing debate, or was to make himself heard, if not by his own voice, by his servitors on the Treasury Bench, it would be wise to remove the impression that, whenever the *clôture* was applied, it would have been applied in the interests and at the wish of those who sat on the Treasury Bench. They must make up their minds for that. It was all very well for Members brought up in the tradition that the Chair was above human frailty to have no suspicion; but outside on platforms, in debating societies, pothouses, and Provincial newspapers, it would be said that the Chair had yielded to the solicitation of the Treasury Bench. Whether that was true or false, it would be impossible to prevent the spread of the belief. Would it not be better, in the interests of the Treasury Bench, that the thing should be done in the open, and should not be left to private hints or confidential suggestions? It might not be done even by the recognized subordinates of the Government; but it might be left to some of those convenient Friends who sometimes sat behind the Treasury Bench. He thought it would be well to make up their minds, if they were to have this form of Procedure forced upon them when it was most repugnant to their minds, if they were to give up all freedom of debate, to do something to preserve the respect, authority, and independence of the Chair, which, he believed, next to freedom of debate, was the most important function of the House. While he saw difficulties in accepting the Amendment, while he thought it might increase the number of occasions on which the *clôture* would be applied—sad as the sacrifice and difficult as the alternative might be—yet, on the whole, he would be inclined to support the Amendment, with the object of maintaining that absolute confidence in the impartiality of those who occupied the Chair without which it would be impossible to conduct the Business of the House of Commons.

MR. WHITBREAD said, the Amendment boldly raised the question whether the initiative in asking the sense of the House was to rest with the House or with the Chair; and there was much to be said for relieving the Chair from the initiative, but not for the limitation now proposed. If it had been left to a Member of the House to move, the Speaker or the Chairman would frequently have been exhibited as befriending the minority and the continuance of debate; but if the Speaker or the Chairman took the initiative they would be exhibited in a contrary light. On the other hand, the effect of the initiative being vested in the Speaker or the Chairman would operate very much in favour of the minority in this way—they would have to satisfy themselves more conclusively than under the other plan that it was the wish of a preponderating majority that a debate should be closed. Looked at in this way, it appeared to him that the proposal of the Government was much more in favour of minorities, and that the *clôture* would be less often applied than it would be if the initiative were taken by a private Member or by a Minister of the Crown. If it was to be open to any at all to make an appeal to the Chair, it should be equally open to all. In analogous matters there was equality between Ministers and other Members. It would give an enormous advantage to a Minister to leave it to him alone to take the initiative, because he would choose the moment most advantageous to himself, perhaps after a telling speech from one of his Colleagues or Followers; whereas the Speaker or Chairman might not act at a time so convenient to the Ministry.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, it was not quite accurate to say, as the hon. Gentleman who spoke last had said, that there was at present absolute equality between Ministers and private Members, because it was only Ministers who could move that Orders be postponed or that Members be suspended. In reply to the expression of fear that the Rule would be used to oppress a minority, the Secretary for India said no Ministry would dare so to use it, because they would lose ground with the country by high-handed proceedings. It was then pointed out to the noble Lord that it was not a Minister who was to put the Rule in force, but the Speaker, and that, therefore, the responsibility must rest upon the Speaker. The safeguard which the noble Lord promised them against abuse by a majority really fell to the ground. Admitting that there was much to be said against the Amendment, he felt it had this one great advantage, that it would directly cast responsibility on the Ministry. If a Minister made a tyrannical use of the power, the Opposition would be able to point to him directly as having put the *clôture* in motion and being responsible for its operation. That argument weighed with him (Mr. A. J. Balfour) so much, that if the Amendment went to a division he should support it.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD thought the first part of the Amendment ought to be accepted, because the Leader of the House was the person who, above all others, was accustomed to the exercise of responsibility. He was not responsible to his Party alone, but to every Member of the House; and he was bound to show sense, feeling, tact, temper, and moderation. He was, therefore, decidedly in favour of this power being exercised by the Leader of the House. He would suggest, however, that the second part of the Amendment should be omitted. A private Member in charge of a Motion was not always interested in bringing the debate on it to a close. In such a case he might absent himself from day to day, and then, if the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) were carried, there would be no authority in the House to follow the suggestion of the Speaker, and to apply the power of closing the debate.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, that he was as much opposed to this Resolution as any Member of the House; but the position in which they stood was that a majority were anxious to adopt some system of *clôture.* The question now was whether the power of closing a debate should be left with the Speaker or with the Leader of the House; and he thought that the responsibility should be left with the Chair, who ought to exercise an impartial judgment upon the whole matter. The Speaker might be a Party man in future days, but the Minister was sure to be so. Therefore, while regretting to differ from some of his hon. Friends, he should vote against the Amendment.

Mr. ASHTON DILKE said, he was of opinion that the Amendment would give more freedom to the House in voting on the question of the *clôture* than it would enjoy under the Rule as it at present stood. If the *clôture* were proposed by the Speaker, the House would be exceedingly unwilling to deal a blow at his authority by showing that they differed from him. The House, he thought, would feel no such reluctance in dealing with the Motion if it proceeded from a Minister of the Crown or a private Member.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he could not arrive at the same conclusion as his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Ashton Dilke), because before the matter could be put to a vote of the House the Speaker must have decided that the question had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. Therefore, the House, in coming to a vote against the *clôture,* would be just as much contravening the opinion of the Speaker as in the other case. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was in error in saying that the responsibility of closing debate would rest with the Minister of the Crown. That responsibility would really rest with the House; and it was quite certain that if a majority tyrannically exercised this power, they would suffer in the estimation of the country.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, it was no doubt true that the responsibility of closing a debate rested with the House; but the distinction was that the responsibility of enabling the majority to exercise that power rested with the Speaker. As far as the Amendment related to a Minister of the Crown he differed entirely from his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), who thought a good deal might be said for it. For his own part, he was opposed to giving Ministers of the Crown any privileges in addition to those they now enjoyed. He did not see any difficulty in placing this partial power in the hands of independent Members. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) said that the Government were to be blamed for not making their proposals strong enough. That this proposal would not be effective in stopping Obstruction, he (Mr. Chaplin) entirely admitted; but it would be ineffective not because it was not strong, but because it was a clumsy and awkward weapon not fitted to deal with the evil with which they had to cope. So far as the vast majority of the House was concerned these Resolutions were not required at all. He should support the Amendment, and if it were agreed to he would move to omit the words "or a Minister of the Crown." The effect then would be to place in the hands of any Member, including Ministers of the Crown, the power to request the Speaker to put *clôture* into force.

MR. THOMASSON said, he thought that there would be some advantage in giving private Members in charge of Bills, which were often of a very important character, the power of asking the Speaker whether a question had not been sufficiently discussed.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he and others who had taken part in these discussions had not thought that it would be out of place at this stage to discuss the question of whether or not the Speaker was the proper person to take the position which had been alluded to. It had been said by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) that the Prime Minister or any Minister of the Crown would be placed in a very invidious and improper position if they did so; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) should like to direct the House to the great question of Urgency. The question of Urgency could alone be introduced by a Minister of the Crown, clearly laying down that such important questions as Urgency, and analogous questions to that which they were now discussing, could only be raised by a Minister of the Crown; and the Rules relating to Urgency had been almost unanimously approved by the House. As in Urgency, so in *clôture*, the responsibility ought to be thrown upon that Member who had the greatest interest in passing the Bill before the House, and who would feel a deeper responsibility than private Members possibly could feel. Again, if the Minister of the Crown wished that the *clôture* should be put they had an impartial authority in the Chair, who, considering all the circumstances, and looking at the condition of the question, would be in a position to say when the time had arrived at which the *clôture* should be put. That being so, the power being vested in the Chair, the Minister of the Crown would be much less likely to put the Question to the House than he would under the condition in which matters stood now. This was not like a Bill before Parliament; it was a question that could only be raised in a particular way. It was a question which proposed to deal with and alter their proceedings. Upon other questions of less vital importance they would have the opportunity, upon the second reading, upon going into and in Committee, and upon the Report, as well as the third reading, of discussing it over again if they thought there had been error in the judgment of the House; but here they were to have only one opportunity, and he confidently asked them to pause before deciding upon it. If the responsibility were thrown upon the Minister of the Crown it would be so grave that he would be loth to exercise it, being fully aware of the grave responsibility it entailed.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, the Opposition desired an amended Procedure as much as the supporters of the Government. The question was not whether the power would be exercised often or seldom, but whether it would be exercised wisely. The best course was to divide the responsibility between a Minister of the Crown and the Chair. If they had a timid Speaker he would be afraid to apply the Rule, while a rash one might apply it too frequently. By dividing the responsibility these two extremes would be avoided. Under the Rule, as proposed by the Government, they feared that the Speaker would become simply a placeman and official of the Government. A placeman and official might yet be respected, if his position was acknowledged and defined—self-respect and the respect of others was compatible with partizanship. But a partizan whose functions were such that he could not be impartial, should not be obliged to affect an impartiality which he had not. Let the Speaker of the future in the interests of the majority permit the Minister to enforce the *clôture*, but let the responsibility of enforcing it be confined to the Minister. The criticisms which otherwise would be levelled at the Speaker would be then levelled at the Prime Minister, and some shred of dignity would still be preserved to the future occupants of the Chair.

MR. WARTON said, he supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, because it would relieve the Speaker of an invidious responsibility. It was strong in the interests of truth, and he did not suppose that any Minister, whatever might be his position, would, by taking the initiative, stifle a debate upon any subject in which the people of this country took a deep interest. He believed that the Amendment was necessary, because all the proposals of the Government were nothing else than attempts on the part of a tyrannical Minister to crush the Tory minority; and he should say, therefore, let those who want dirty work to be done do it themselves, and not place it in the hands of one in so high a position as the Speaker of the House. He must appeal to the House not to throw on the Speaker a duty which, in his opinion, belonged to a Minister of the Crown. The Amendment was in the direction of decency, for the alternative was the dictation of a howling mob.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE desired, in a few words, to say why he could not vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets. He desired to look upon the question not merely in its immediate effect upon the House, but as affecting its future position in relation to the country and its effect upon public feeling and public morality. His objection to the Resolution of the Prime Minister was heightened by the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, for its effect would be to make the *clôture* more objectionable than it was at present. How would the creation of the new power contained in the *clôture* affect that enlightened public opinion which ultimately decided every question in this country, and chrystallized it into what was known as Constitutional principles? It was never to be forgotten that what were called Constitutional principles in all countries, and especially in progressive countries, were the gradual growth and outcome of public opinion and public morality. The Amendment would in a very marked way increase the power of the Minister of the Crown, and, indeed, give him a new power. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), with that generous appreciation of human nature which always characterized him, believed that a Minister of the Crown would never be found to take an unfair advantage of the power with which this Amendment would endow him; but he seemed to forget how conventional was the popular estimate of minor morals, so that what was now regarded as unfair might gradually be evolved into a new Constitutional principle, and that what would now be stigmatized as unfair and immoral might, under the stimulus of the new Procedure, come to be regarded in another century as legitimate policy and wise strategy. One thing was certain—it gave to Ministers of the Crown a legal right to obstruct debate; and all that could be said of that new privilege, if this Resolution were agreed to, would be that Parliament had given to Ministers the power. Then there would at once be introduced that system of government from the official Benches which was the great danger of Constitutional government elsewhere. The Office of Prime Minister would be strengthened by a perfectly novel attribute. It might be said that there was the same danger from the Speaker obtaining the attribute. He admitted that there was such danger, and, with all his respect for the Speaker and for his impartiality, he did not wish to see him endowed with that new power. He, however, saw far less risk of danger from the exercise of such power by the Speaker than by the Prime Minister. He could well conceive the case of an interesting debate on a private Member's Motion or Bill running great risk of closure, from the desire of a Minister to promote Government, at the cost of Private—in its popular sense—Business, and to bring forward his own projects; while the Speaker would more naturally be of opinion that the special private Members' Business was more for the public good than the proximate proposals of the Government. It must be recollected that a Minister owed a duty to more than one—in the first place, he owed a duty to his Sovereign; in the second place, to his country; and, in the third and most important place, to his Party; and, therefore, he could never pretend to exercise the impartiality with which the Speaker would be endowed.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he had only one remark to make, and that was induced by the observation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, who had just sat down. He quite agreed with him that the entire drift of modern legislation and the animating object of the Rule before the House was to establish government by Cabinet, instead of government by

Parliament. It was also to convert Parliament into a Caucus. No one could have listened to the speeches that had been made in favour of the *clôture* and the spirit that characterized its advocacy, without becoming sensible that such was the end to which they were drifting. They were Americanizing, in the worst sense, British institutions. It was because such was the direction in which events were tending that he had been led to support the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). The Amendment was not entirely to his satisfaction; but in the circumstances in which they were placed it was the best that could be done. It was certainly, in a literal sense, an amendment upon the Rule. There were two Parliamentary axioms which they had heretofore all assented to—the responsibility of Ministers and the impartiality of the Speaker. The Rule, as it stood, would destroy both. Let the House consider how the *clôture* would have to be put in operation, and the part the Speaker would have to take in enforcing it. Suppose they were engaged in a discussion on any question that excited partizan warmth or social animosity. Take, for example, the question of the Permissive Bill. There were a large number of Members who believed that all that could be said either for or against the measure had been said. Anyway, they did not wish to hear any more in respect to it. And if a debate on the subject was initiated under the *clôture*, it would be quite possible—or, rather, he would say, it would be very probable—that its opponents would clamour for its close before it had fairly started. The Speaker would be compelled to yield to the clamour. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen said "No, no!" but he said "Yes, yes!" There was no other means, according to the Rule, of getting at the evident sense of the House except by clamour. Members who wished to make their desires known would have to shout, and the Speaker would have to yield to their shouting. Suppose that the Speaker had closed a discussion on the Permissive Bill, what would be the consequence? His name, his character, his position would become a subject of popular contention. Let them imagine the outburst of indignation that would greet the mention of the Speaker's name in the Free Trade Hall in Manchester at the annual meeting of the United Kingdom Alliance if he had stopped a debate on Local Option. Those who knew the kind of meetings that were accustomed to gather there—their enthusiasm and earnestness—could easily picture to themselves the sort of language that would be used against the highest Officer in that House if he had been the instrument of depriving the temperance advocates of a hearing. But they might take another case. What would the Nonconformists say if a Disestablishment discussion was closed by the clamour of the Cloturists who forced the Speaker to act at their instigation? And such things would certainly occur—as certainly as anything contingent could be certain. The Speakership of the House of Commons—whatever it had been in the distant past—had been in the immediate past above debate. The character of the distinguished men who had held the Office had been so far above suspicion that no one had questioned the course they had pursued. They had made mistakes, because they were human; but their general impartiality had never been called in question. If, however, the Rule passed in the form in which it now stood, the conduct of the Speaker would be a point over which Parties would squabble as they now squabbled over the character of Ministries and Party Leaders. If they allowed the Speaker to be attacked, they must allow him to defend himself; and if the Speaker was to be forced upon the stump in defence of his position, his judicial attributes would be destroyed. No one could seriously contemplate the possibility of such a consequence with satisfaction or equanimity. The majority was not only evidently bent on recasting the arrangements of the House, but breaking in upon its cherished traditions. He was desirous, whatever else might befal, that the Speakership should be rescued from the wreck they were so busily making. Hon. Members in that part of the House either did not or would not see the end of the policy they were supporting. They imagined that the House of Commons was created for the purpose of making Laws and passing Estimates—the Laws to be proposed and the Estimates to be prepared by the Government. They would turn Parliament into a legislative spinning mill, where statutes could be spun as they spun yarns—by the yard. Such, however, was not his conception of Parliament. He regarded it as a Tribunal before which popular grievances could be redressed, where great political principles could be propounded, and the interests of their vast and varied Empire defended. But in the estimation of some hon. Gentlemen grievances were but nuisances, and principles the playthings of philosophers and patriots. Philosophers were dreamers to be shunned, and patriots enthusiasts to be distrusted. This, he regretted to say, was the mode of thought of too many hon. Gentlemen on that side; but it was not the mode of thought which was once prevalent there. Although he knew it was in vain, he would stand up on every occasion to maintain the Constitutional principles under which their country had prospered and Parliament had won its renown.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he felt bound to vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets on the ground that in his opinion the Speaker should possess the power of deciding when a subject had been sufficiently discussed. The Amendment, however, required that after the Speaker had decided that a Motion had been adequately discussed, someone else was to come in, without whose aid the opinion of the Speaker could not be carried out. That would very much diminish the power and the responsibility which should rest with the Speaker, and with no one else. It was clear, from the difference of opinion which prevailed on the opposite side of the House, that it was injudicious to go beyond the simple proposition of the Government. It had been said that this Resolution would tend to render the action of the Speaker liable to be influenced by political feelings; but he did not think that there was any such danger to be apprehended. He was surprised to hear some hon. Gentlemen contend that to leave this power in the hands of the Speaker would tend to stop free discussion. If he thought that it would have such a tendency, he should vote against it, and should do all he could to prevent its passing. But he did not think so, and therefore he should vote for it. The object of the Resolution was not to stop free discussion, but merely to close the debate when the Speaker was of opinion that it had proceeded far enough. He believed that its tendency would be to increase free discussion, inasmuch as it would save the time of the House.

Lord JOHN MANNERS rose to Order. Was the hon. Member at liberty to discuss the whole scope of the Resolution on the Amendment before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member would see the necessity for confining his observations to the question of the Amendment before the House.

Mr. W. FOWLER, continuing, said, he had made these observations in answer to the remarks of hon. Members who had preceded him on the other side. He would, however, remind hon. Gentlemen on his own side of the House that agreeing to the Amendment would very much increase the difficulty of carrying the *clôture* by a bare majority, for it would be argued that if once a Minister of the Crown or a private Member were to co-operate in imposing the *clôture*, the danger of a bare majority would be greatly increased. He had no fear that any future Speaker would become a mere political partizan, because he thought that the Speakers of the future would be very much like those of the past. He hoped, therefore, they would abide by the Resolution as it stood and reject the Amendment.

Mr. DALY said, he was of opinion that the arguments of hon. Members upon this Amendment were based upon their estimate of the present occupant of the Chair and its past traditions; but he believed that the Speakers of the future under the *clôture* would be very different from those who had gone before. Let them look at how the Speaker was elected. He was elected by the majority of that House—that was to say, by a majority of men who happened to be in power. The *clôture* was a temptation that had never yet been applied to the Chair, and there was no pretence for saying that any future occupants of the Chair would be other than human, and subject to human influences; and there was no more certain thing than that a despotic power once placed in the possession of one who would be likely to abuse it, it would be abused. On a Government coming into power their first duty would be to select a man for the position of Speaker with the most intimate knowledge of the Forms of the House, and a man of calm judgment; but would he be selected apart altogether from political considerations? He should vote for the Amendment because he believed that *clôture* was but another name for the despotism of a majority, and that despotism might be wielded sometimes by a man whom, however eminent, he should not like to see intrusted with the liberties of the country—he meant the present Prime Minister. He held that future Speakers would be a very dogmatic class, indeed, compared with the Speakers of the past. After the Session had concluded a partizan Speaker might retire on some reward or be promoted to the Upper House; but the Prime Minister had still to face public opinion, and could not refuse any minority an opportunity of expressing their views fairly in the House. Hence the importance of putting on his shoulders some part of the duty of taking the initiative. Radical Members below the Gangway were enamoured of the *clôture*, because they believed it would be used to crush the Irish Members; but it was quite probable that at a time not far distant it might be directed against themselves, and a Minister on the Treasury Bench would ram his measures down their throats. Indeed, it was a question whether they were not now, in the words of an Irish proverb, "Cutting a stick to beat their own backs."

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he thought that the hostility which hon. Members evinced towards the Amendment arose from a misapprehension as to what the Rule meant as it stood, and what it would mean if the Amendment should pass. The hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) could not have read the Resolution when he spoke against the Amendment. The proposal of the Government was that the Speaker should make up his mind—first, that the subject had been adequately discussed, and then that the evident sense of the House required a division; next, he was to inform the House that he had come to that conclusion, and then a Motion was to be made that the Question be put. The hon. Member for Cambridge could not have remembered that the Resolution as it stood required that some Motion should be made. The hon. Member spoke as if the Amendment would extinguish the authority of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees in the matter. But the House had already decided that the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees should, before anything was done, make up his mind that there had been adequate discussion, and that the evident sense of the House wished the debate to be closed. The question was what was the best way to impose the *clôture*, and, in his opinion, the Amendment superadded an important guarantee to the authority of the Speaker—namely, the responsibility of the Minister of the Crown. They had been told that if the Minister made an improper use of this weapon there would be an appeal to the constituencies. He was anxious that the appeal should be a direct one. With the Resolution as it stood all the Minister would have to say was that it was the Speaker who had brought the *clôture* into operation, and he only acted upon the Speaker's authority. He himself would vote against the *clôture* in every form, because he was hostile to it. The Government hoped by the *clôture* to establish a sort of Radical septenniat, and they hoped by it to pass measures which they otherwise would not be able to do; but if the *clôture* were to be adopted, he would support any Amendment which would tend to place it in the most straightforward way before the House.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he could not support the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, and his chief reason was that in the operation of this Rule to which they were driven, their object ought to be to make it in its operation as much as possible the action of the House, and not of any Party. He therefore greatly preferred that the initiative should rest with the Speaker, as the guardian of freedom of discussion and of the Privileges of the House; while it would rest with the House whether they would support his decision or not. He had one or two other objections to the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). He thought it a somewhat clumsy arrangement. The hon. and learned Member who had just spoken said that the hon. Member for Cambridge could hardly have read the Resolution. But the Resolution ran to the effect that when the Speaker thought the subject had been adequately discussed he might inform the House that such was his opinion. The Speaker or Chairman would first tell the House or the Committee the opinion that he had arrived at, and that was a perfectly intelligible course to take. The Speaker or the Chairman might have an impression as strong as possible that a question was adequately discussed, but, according to the Amendment now before the House, unless a Minister of the Crown or the person in charge of a Bill rose, the Speaker would not be able to take any account whatever of the state of the discussion. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not think that the Amendment in this respect would be any improvement, because it would not give the Speaker the power of saying what his opinion was until a Minister of the Crown interfered.

Mr. BRYCE said, his Amendment did not go so far as that.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had two other grounds for opposing the Amendment. He thought it really would be unfair to the minority, and he entirely agreed with the Prime Minister with what he had said on that point, for it would put it in the power of the Leader of the majority, and of the majority itself, quite independent of any action of the Speaker, to insist upon the *clôture* upon their own responsibility. That, he considered, would be an unfair and an unnecessary action against the minority; but, more than that, and this was a very strong objection, to his mind, it would be unfair to the Speaker. What might happen would be this—that the Minister of the Crown would not be informed that Mr. Speaker had come to the conclusion to stop the debate, but would be guessing that the Speaker had done so. The Minister would act upon this supposition, which might or might not be a mistake. Then, either the Speaker acceded to the Motion or he did not. If he did not accede to it, it was a very disagreeable position to put him in, for the Speaker would then be in antagonism to the Leader of the Government or the Minister who had moved in the matter. If the Speaker did accede to the Motion, then he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was afraid that the minority would be rather free in their remarks upon the pressure that had been brought to bear upon the Speaker.

Mr. J. LOWTHER thought that as the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down wished that the power of closing a debate should be the action of the House, and not of any one Party in the House, he might fairly expect that the right hon. Gentleman would support the Amendment that would be brought before them by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Anyone who wished that the *clôture* should be the result of the action of the House should be careful to see a provision inserted in the Resolution necessitating an expression of opinion on the part of a large proportion of the House. With regard to the Amendment before them, he should vote for the omission of the words which the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) proposed should be omitted; but in their stead he should move the insertion of words differing much in meaning from those of the hon. Member. A Minister in charge of a Bill or of certain Estimates was never a person inclined to view with equanimity the exhaustive discussion of his proposals, however legitimate that discussion might be. He could not imagine a less impartial authority than a Member charged with the advocacy of one side of a question. In the event of the omission of the words which it was proposed to leave out, he should propose other words which would, he thought, meet the merits of the case.

Mr. DODSON wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that the omission of the words proposed to be left out by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, without other words being substituted, would leave the Resolution in a state in which it would have no meaning. The right hon. Gentleman had said he would move the insertion of other words; but he had not told the House what those other words would be. Such a practice was contrary to the spirit of the Rules of the House, and he, therefore, hoped the House would not be beguiled by the right hon. Gentleman.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, he thought the House need be under no apprehension of sinning against the spirit of its Rules by acceding to the views of his right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Lowther). He was glad, however, to observe so much veneration on the part of the right hon. Gentleman opposite for the spirit of the existing Rules of the House, and he hoped they would now have the support of the right hon.

Gentleman in their endeavours so to alter the New Rules as to bring them more into harmony with those already existing. He was inclined to view the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite with favour, for, if it were adopted, the steps preceding the closure of a debate would gain in solemnity and dignity. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) was, he believed, not justified in assuming, as he had done, that a Minister of the Crown would expose himself to the charge of having invited the Speaker to violate his primary duty and close the debate before being himself satisfied that the proper time for closure had arrived. Upon the whole, he was disposed to think that the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, so far as the introduction of a Minister was concerned, would afford some slight additional check or safeguard upon the Resolution proposed by the Government, and, therefore, he should support it.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST said, that, having had an Amendment on the Paper throwing the responsibility for *clôture* on a Minister of the Crown, and which was ruled out of Order at the same time as that proposed by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), he should, of course, vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). On the 1st of May there was a division on an Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) to the same effect, which Amendment he supported, as also did right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, including the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Beresford Hope). From the remarks which had just fallen from that right hon. Gentleman, however, he feared he had changed his mind, and was now going to vote against this Amendment, and he hoped that other right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite would not now vote against that which they had already voted for on the 1st of May. In his opinion, it was desirable that the onus in using the *clôture* should be upon a Minister responsible to the country, and not upon the Speaker, who was only responsible to the House.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he intended to vote for the omission of the words proposed, and he would also support the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) so far as it endeavoured to throw the responsibility upon a Minister of the Crown. But he had an Amendment on the Paper proposing to exclude ordinary Members from asking for the *clôture.* Such a demand by a private Member would be unavailing, unless he made it in collusion with the Government, who might, in order to avoid the odium of the *clôture,* place a Ministerial Bill in the hands of a private Member. It was unfortunate that the Rules of the House made it necessary to come to a decision upon this Amendment before deciding the important question of whether the initiative should be left to the Speaker. He would suggest that the Government should withdraw the Resolution in order that a division might be at once taken on the question of the Speaker's initiative. An honourable understanding could then be arrived at that the debate should be resumed at that exact point.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER observed, that this Amendment linked together the Chair and the Leader of a political Party. In his opinion, the exercise of the *clôture* should be in the hands of the Chair as a judicial matter, to be used with judicial impartiality; and he objected to its being linked with the political action of a Minister.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE remarked, that he had turned to the proceedings of the House at the earlier part of the Session, which he was ashamed to say he had forgotten, and he saw that on the 1st of May an Amendment was proposed upon this Resolution by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), and an Amendment had also been proposed by his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and a division was taken, with the result that the proposal was defeated. But it seemed to him that the whole of this question had been already decided by the House, and he did not know that it was in Order that they should discuss it over again. He would certainly not have allowed the debate to proceed in this way if he had been aware that this had taken place; and he now ventured to submit whether, having regard to the Motion and Amendment which had been voted upon on the 1st of May, it was in Order to put this Amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon has not escaped my attention. When my attention was drawn to the terms of this Amendment, it struck me at first that it raised the same question as that of the hon. Member for Dungarvan; but the House will observe that the Amendment now before the House proposes to give the initiative not only at the request of a Minister of the Crown, but also at that of any Member in charge of a Motion or Amendment under discussion, and of any Amendment thereto. It proposes to enlarge the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, and, therefore, I thought it right to allow it to be brought before the House.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I made that very Motion to add the words to the Motion of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, and it was rejected by the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The words were withdrawn, and the vote of the House was not taken.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 152; Noes 100: Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 353.)

Mr. HINDE PALMER, in rising to move, as an Amendment to the 1st Resolution, to insert, in line 4, after "if," the words

"Such information of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall be confirmed by not less than twenty Members rising in their places and,"

said, that its object was that when the Speaker or the Chairman considered that the subject of debate had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should be now put, the Speaker or the Chairman should be immediately fortified by the action of the House itself—that was, by at least 20 Members of the House. That met the objection of the Prime Minister, who had said that the effect of the last Amendment would be to hamper the Speaker; but the present Amendment not only did not hamper the Speaker, but, on the contrary, fortified, and very considerably relieved him of a certain portion of his responsibility, because, whenever he saw what was the evident sense of the House, he would be immediately strengthened by at least 20 Members rising to sanction that view. His Amendment said, "not less than twenty Members;" but there was a Resolution lower down on the Paper of the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), which proposed that the sense of the House should be taken by not less than 40 Members. Of course, he (Mr. Hinde Palmer) was not wedded to any particular number; but he felt strongly convinced that it would be a satisfaction to the Speaker and to the Chairman and protection to the House, that the House itself should take an active part in the initiation of the *clôture*, nor would that in any way detract from the dignity of the Speaker or of the Chairman. In every foreign country where the *clôture* was adopted, the initiative invariably proceeded from the House itself. That supported his view as to the desirability of Members of the House themselves taking part in the initiation of the *clôture*. In Belgium 12 Members were required to put the *clôture* machinery in motion. In France five were sufficient; but, generally speaking, their requests were to be handed in in writing. In Germany the request in writing of 30 Members was also necessary. He did not wish to substitute the action of Members of the House for the Speaker, but to show the House that it was the practice in other countries, where the *clôture* had prevailed, that Members of the House should themselves take an active part in any proceeding under which the *clôture* was to be applied. These Resolutions would affect the conduct, and perhaps the character, of the House for generations, and it was the duty of all Members to make them as perfect as possible. His Amendment would, he thought, be a most beneficial addition to the proposed Rule, and, therefore, he now begged to move it.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "if," to insert the words "such information of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall be confirmed by not less than twenty Members rising in their places and."—(*Mr. Hinde Palmer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Lincoln (Mr. Hinde Palmer) in two of his propositions. He concurred in the view that it was the duty, in a rather special manner, of hon. Members to assist in bringing these Resolutions for the conduct of the proceedings of the

House to a satisfactory conclusion by making suggestions which they deemed worthy of consideration. He also shared the opinion of the hon. and learned Member that the Amendment was perfectly distinct from the one with which they had previously been dealing, and that it was not open to the same class of objection, nor did it introduce into the Resolution the same amount of change, because the previous Amendment entirely shifted the responsible initiative of the Chair to the Minister of the Crown, or to the Member in charge of the Motion; but he feared he could not carry his agreement with his hon. and learned Friend any further. It was true, as his hon. and learned Friend had said, that, in various foreign Assemblies where a closing power existed, the action of a portion of the Assembly itself was called in to put the closing power into motion; but he thought that both the Government who had framed these Resolutions and those who had framed Resolutions for regulating proceedings abroad were agreed in one thing—namely, the choice as to initiative really lay between the President and some portion or fraction of the Assembly. The example of foreign Assemblies did not, however, support the Mover of this Amendment in mixing the two methods—namely, the method in which the Speaker made himself responsible for the exercise of the initiative, and the method requiring a certain proportion of Members to support him. For his own part, he did not see that the Speaker would in any way be strengthened by the support of these 20 Members rising in their places. The Speaker was necessarily a person accustomed to watch the House almost more than any other person within its walls, and had probably more than any other person the faculty of appreciating the currents of Party feeling in the House from time to time; and it was hardly conceivable that a case could occur in which he could not find 20 Members to support him when he arrived at the conclusion that a subject had been sufficiently debated, and that the "evident sense of the House" was in favour of putting the Question. If that were so, it followed that the rising of the 20 Members would not in any degree add strength to the proceeding of the Speaker, whose judgment would stand upon its own merits. The adoption of the Amendment was also liable to this inconvenience. The 20 Members might, unfortunately, through accident, present some appearance of a section; they might be Gentlemen who had recently come into the House, or they might be Gentlemen known to be connected with some particular view described under the familiar term of "crotchet." In fact, the House was susceptible of division into so many sections, according to the different views entertained, that it was impossible almost to say in what strange company the Speaker might not find himself, and there would be a presumption that there was a latent sympathy between the Speaker and those 20 Members. Being desirous, therefore, of keeping the Speaker out of those relationships with a limited body of men, and thinking, on the whole, that the plan of mixing the two proceedings would not improve the Resolution, he hoped that the Amendment would not be pressed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that, of course, a good deal might be said against mixing the two kinds of Procedure; but, in point of fact, the two had been mixed already in the Resolution as it stood upon the Paper; because there was first the action of the Speaker or Chairman, who had to inform the House that he was of opinion that the House was prepared to come to a conclusion, and then they had the action of some other person who was to get up and make a Motion. The only question, therefore, raised by the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hinde Palmer) was whether it would not be better and more convenient, and whether it would not strengthen the position of the Chair itself, if there were some further action on the part of the House to show what the real feeling of Members was. Now, he must once for all enter his protest against the way in which, while considering all these questions, almost everyone described the responsibility of exercising that power as one which rested with Mr. Speaker, making no mention whatever of the Chairman of Ways and Means. It had been decided that what was laid down for the Speaker was laid down also for the Chairman of Ways and Means. They must remember that the mode of testing the strength of a chain was by taking the strength of its weaker link;

and the Chairman of Ways and Means must necessarily be regarded, without disrespect, as the weaker link in the chain. Nor was it a fair way of conducting the argument to rest so much upon the high character of Mr. Speaker, when they were told over and over again that it was in the case of Committees that that action would be most frequently had recourse to. Let them consider what was the position of the Chairman who took the Chair on going into Committee on a Bill for the second reading of which he had probably voted. He had a recognized and known opinion on the merits of the question or Bill on which he would vote or had voted already; whereas the Speaker was supposed to have no decided or recognized opinion, and was considered as impartial. The Chairman was, therefore, exposed more than the Speaker could be to a great deal of inconvenience in the conduct of Business, even from having his place at the Table instead of in the Chair; and also from the greater freedom of Committee. Therefore, he could not help thinking that if the Chairman were to get up and say it appeared to him to be the "evident sense of the House" that the time had come when the debate might close, it would be a very great support to him to know that he would not be alone in taking that view, nor taking it entirely on himself, but that he was to be supported by not an inconsiderable number of Members who would maintain his judgment. Without saying that the question was one of first-rate importance, it seemed to him that the Amendment was an improvement, and deserved not only the consideration, but the acceptance of the House.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought, in spite of the objections taken to it by the Prime Minister, that the proposal of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Hinde Palmer) was one of considerable value. With regard to the interpretation of the "evident sense of the House," the proposal was of great advantage. Under the *clôture* Rule, as proposed by the 1st Resolution, the "evident sense of the House," or rather, the process of its manufacture, would soon become a fine art. When the Government were hard pressed, and anxious to close a debate, the Whips would organize "the evident sense of the House," on a plan similar to that already adopted by hon. Members opposite. Hon. Members anxious to earn distinction by shouting would be found ready to distribute themselves in a judicious and artful manner throughout the various Benches, and the Speaker might well find himself deceived by their clamour, and imagine they represented a larger section of the House than they did. Indeed, they had already witnessed attempts to close debates by an informal *clôture* when hon. Members opposite did not happen to like the subject before the House. If, hovever, those who clamoured for the *cloture* were compelled on each occasion to stand up and exhibit themselves to the House, it would be made much more difficult for a small body to impose the *clôture* upon the House. The argument of the Prime Minister against mixing the two methods did not appear to be of any great weight. Why should not the two methods be mixed, if a better result was produced? The Prime Minister proceeded on the assumption that both the Speaker and the Chairmen of Committees were infallible; but both might be deceived. His (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's) own impression was, that had the Rules now proposed existed on the night when the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Motion censuring the conduct of the House of Lords, so important was it in the interests of the Premier to stifle criticism, and such was the impatience of his Followers that the debate might have been prematurely closed the same night. He had very little doubt that the *clôture*, as passed by the Government, would deteriorate the high Office of Speaker; and he thought, on that account, that it was very important that some attempt should be made to relieve both the right hon. Gentleman and the Chairman of as much responsibility as possible. If, therefore, he was in Order, for the purpose of safeguarding their position as far as possible, he would propose to substitute 40 Members for the 20 Members provided by the hon. and learned Member's Amendment.

Sir HENRY TYLER seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "forty,"—(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett,*) —instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), to a certain extent, met one of the objections of the Prime Minister, who laid stress upon the fact that 20 Members were not sufficient for the purpose contemplated. If that was so, it surely could hardly be considered that 40 Members were an insignificant portion of the House. For himself, he did not approve of this system of obtaining the decision of the House by the informal method of Members rising in their places. He remembered, some 12 years ago, how Mr. Bouverie proposed that no division should be taken unless 10 Members rose in their places to support the call; and the Prime Minister had, with some variation as to number, adopted the substance of the proposal in one of the present Resolutions. On the occasion in question, he (Mr. J. Lowther) ventured to object to the proposal, and though then a very young Member, by drawing attention to the serious departure, which was involved in the proposal, from the old Constitutional practice, and which view was endorsed by the House, had succeeded in defeating Mr. Bouverie's Motion, which was ultimately withdrawn, and he (Mr. J. Lowther) very much regretted that any occasion had arisen to suggest a recurrence to any such plans, but the fact was, the Prime Minister was afraid to let it be known who it was who took the initiative. He (Mr. J. Lowther), however, approved of the plan of making those who professed that they represented the "evident sense of the House" stand up in their places, in order that they might individually be made known to the House and to the public out-of-doors through the ordinary channels, which was quite a different thing from interfering with the right of challenging divisions. If the House determined that the freedom of speech should be brought to a close, the least they could do was to see that the action of the Chair was supported by a certain number of Members. He thought, also, that it would be a great assistance to the Speaker, who would be able to judge whether the desire to close the debate came merely from a small coterie, or was the general opinion of the House supported by a fairly representative body of hon. Members on both sides. The House would, therefore, do well to accede to the proposal of the hon. Member for Eye, and to recollect that any such request as the closing of the debate ought to be openly and boldly supported by those who desired it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was afraid the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), in consequence of his absence in the earlier part of the evening, had not understood what portion of the Resolution had been debated on by the House. The right hon. Gentleman thought this proposal would assist the Speaker; but if he would take the trouble to read the Resolution——

MR. J. LOWTHER: I have read it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If he would take the trouble to read the Resolution, he would find that it could have no effect upon the Speaker's mind, because he had already determined, as far as his judgment went, before he made the intimation that was necessary to the House.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: No.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT thought the hon. Member for Eye had better read the Resolution too. How could the Speaker, who had already decided in his own mind that the "evident sense of the House" was in favour of closing the debate, be strengthened in his view by finding that so insignificant a number as 20 Members rose in their places to support it? He (Sir William Harcourt) would esteem it a very small compliment if, when in his Office, he took any decision, he was told by one or two of the junior clerks that, upon the whole, the Home Secretary was not very far wrong. He could imagine nothing less dignified for the Speaker, or less convenient for the House, than that Members should stand up in their places, and that a division should thereupon be taken. The Amendment, as it seemed to him, would place the Speaker in an absurd position, if it appeared that, in the division, some 200 or 300 Gentlemen did not in the Lobby support him, and thus confirm the demand made for the *clôture* by the 20 or 40 Members who rose in their places; and, in any case, it would waste the time of the House. The real test was the division which would follow, and all the country would then know who voted for closing the debate, and who voted against it.

Mr. WARTON said, the Prime Minister spoke of sections of the House, as if he had to deal with a few crotcheteers, instead of with opponents scattered all over the House; while he forgot that there might be a section afterwards by whom the *clôture* might be applied. In spite of what had been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, there was all the difference between names appearing in a Division List and Members standing up in their places. It was desirable that the country should have distinct information of every step taken in applying the *clôture*, and those who wanted it to be so applied should have to stand up boldly and say so. In principle, he could not see there was any difference between the Amendment and the 4th of the proposed Rules, which required 20 Members to rise in their places to challenge the decision of the Speaker before a division was taken.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he could not agree with the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) in what had just fallen from him. It had now been decided that the initiative in these *clôture* proceedings was to be taken by the Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means, and thereby a grave responsibility was thrown upon those Officers. He (Sir Henry Holland) would be very glad, in any way, to lessen that responsibility, and the difficulty of the task thus imposed upon them; but, after listening to the speeches on this question, he confessed he was quite at a loss to understand how that responsibility and difficulty would be lessened if this Amendment were adopted. He could not see how the proposed confirmation by 20 or 40 Members would assist the Speaker. The Speaker would have declared that, in his opinion, the matter before the House had been sufficiently discussed, and that it was the "evident intention of the House" that the debate should be closed. If he was right, as shown by the division which was immediately to follow, how would he be relieved by the fact that 20 or 40 Members had, previously to the division, jumped up to show that they agreed with him? If he was wrong, as shown by the division, what comfort could he derive, or how would his error be less grave, because that small body of Members had previously confirmed his view? It appeared to him (Sir Henry Holland) that it would make no difference, though some speakers seemed to think it would, whether these confirming Members all rose from one part of the House, as representing a certain section of the House, or whether they rose from different parts of the House. Their confirmation would neither strengthen the Speaker in the opinion of the House if he was right, or increase confidence in his judgment in the future if he was wrong. He (Sir Henry Holland) could not, either, agree with the hon. and learned Member for Bridport as to his construction of the 4th Resolution. That Resolution referred to a different class of divisions, and did not affect the case provided by the 1st Resolution when the Question was to be put at once. For these reasons, he must oppose the Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'forty' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'such information of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall be confirmed by not less than forty Members rising in their places and,' be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

Captain AYLMER (for Sir Henry Tyler) moved to amend the Resolution by substituting the word "Debate" for "Question" in line 5. The object of the Amendment, he explained, was to provide that after the "evident sense of the House" had been ascertained, the vote to be taken should only have the effect of limiting subsequent speeches to five or ten minutes in duration. It was a provision already existing in the American House of Representatives, and he thought it would be preferable to a summary closing of debate altogether. If accepted, it would enable distinguished Members of the House to avoid the total exclusion from the debate which they would experience if this, or something of a like nature, were not accepted.

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the word "Question," in order to insert the word "Debate,"—(*Captain Aylmer,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'Question' stand part of the Question."

SIR HENRY TYLER (who had just returned to the House) hoped the Amendment would commend itself to the judgment of the House. In the American House of Representatives there was a limit as regards time, in order to prevent the debate extending to too great a length, no Member being allowed to speak for more than one hour; and there was an additional Rule under which, when a decision of the House had been taken to that effect, the duration of speeches was limited to five or ten minutes. If Her Majesty's Government did not wish to stop debate, but only to stop Obstruction, which he took for granted was their object, he thought they would welcome this Amendment, for the greatest difficulty the House had to deal with was the extraordinary length of some speeches, and his Amendment would allow of a debate being continued without any possibility of Obstruction taking place.

MR. DODSON said, the proposal could not be accepted, for it was of an entirely novel character, and would completely alter the nature of the proposal which the Government had submitted to the House, and which they had been so long discussing. The object of the Amendment was to put in place of a closing power that which was known in America as "the gag law." [Sir HENRY TYLER: A modified gag.] That law existed in no Assembly except the American House of Representatives, and, possibly, some of the State Legislatures. There was, indeed, a similar law in one Chamber of the Italian Legislature; but it applied only to speeches which were read, and not to those which were spoken. A law limiting speeches to 20 minutes, on being proposed in the New Zealand House of Assembly, was rejected. Apart from its merits, his objection on the part of the Government to the Amendment was that it was a complete alteration of their proposal.

MR. MACFARLANE opposed the Amendment, and said, he could not see in it any element of equity or justice. He did not see why Members who were not fortunate enough to catch the Speaker's eye before a certain time should be limited to 10 minutes, while those who went before them were subjected to no such restriction. He believed it would be much fairer and more equitable to limit the time for which any Member should be allowed to speak during the whole debate. Supposing that a debate were to spread over three nights, there would be about 20 hours for discussion. Under the existing system, half of those 20 hours would ordinarily be occupied by speakers on the two Front Benches; and it would be an equitable proposal that no speaker in a debate should, without express permission, address the House for a longer time than half-an-hour. He would, however, except the Mover of a Bill or of a Budget, or any other important subjects of that kind. He was sure most Members would be glad to see such a Rule introduced, for there was, in his opinion, more loss of time in one Session from excessive speaking than there was from all the Obstruction that was ever invented. If a half-hour glass was placed upon the Table, and turned up when every speaker commenced, it would be an immense relief to Members to be able to pull out their watch and say—"If I leave now and come back in 29 minutes there will be an end to this." There were very few men who could not say all they really had to say in half-an-hour.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, that, while he approved of its principle, he could not agree with the Amendment to its fullest extent, when he saw the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and the Attorney General sitting on the Treasury Bench. He should not like to place a limit upon their speeches, for he always listened to what they said with great pleasure, though he did not often agree with them. Neither could he agree with the President of the Local Government Board that there would be any fear of 60 speeches of 10 minutes each. There were many Members who would not like to address the House under such a limitation. It was more difficult to make a good short speech than a good long one.

MR. WARTON said, he had long been of opinion that the length of speeches was the great evil to which the delay in the progress of Business was mainly attributable, and he had often wished to bring forward some proposal dealing with it.

He maintained that there was no occasion for any Member to make a speech an hour long, except the Prime Minister, and even in his case the latitude ought to be permitted only on Budget night. The House was really suffering from the inordinate vanity of Members, which led them, in many instances, to take up an hour of the time of the House in saying what could be just as well said in one quarter. If the *clôture* was the gag, the 10 minutes' Rule might be called the modified gag. He would support the Amendment as going in a direction much needed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought it would be a mistake to mix up the *clôture* with the limit of time. He could not, therefore, support the Amendment in its present form. He agreed that long speeches were the great evil, and he would move, at a future stage, that a 10 minute Rule should also be in operation, in order that they might, as the circumstances warranted, at one time adopt the *clôture* and at another a modified gag. The 10 minute Rule would only come into force after there had been an exhaustive debate on the subject. For his part, he did not know why two-thirds or three-fourths of the lengthy speeches that were delivered were delivered. Nobody wanted them, and they were not listened to or reported, except in the organs of the "Little Pedlingtons," which the hon. Members themselves represented, and which had them in print before they were delivered. He, therefore, thought that a 10 minute Rule would operate with advantage to the Business and dignity of the House; but the hon. and gallant Member's proposal, as now made, would only muddle the Resolution. He appealed to the hon. and gallant Member to withdraw it, and support his (Mr. Labouchere's) Amendment when it came on.

Mr. HENEAGE said, he remembered one occasion on which hon. Members opposite had taken up four and a-half hours in a discussion, whilst one hour and a-half was occupied by the Front Opposition Bench, leaving only two hours for the rest of the House. He agreed that the question of limitation ought to be dealt with separately, and thought the best plan would be, as he had proposed in his own Amendment, to limit all except certain speakers to half-an-hour. If that Amendment received good support, he would certainly divide the House upon it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. GIBSON, in moving an Amendment, the effect of which was to provide that after the Speaker had declared that it was "the evident sense of the House" that the Question should be put, he should give "such reasonable notice as, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, he shall consider to be just," before putting the Question, proceeded to argue that the Amendment was one of great simplicity, for he considered that it was only reasonable that there should be some sufficient notice before the debate was brought to a conclusion. As the Rule stood at present, the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees might put the Question when he was satisfied the "evident sense of the House" was in a particular direction, and that might be done without any notice whatever. The Rule, as it stood, was, therefore, susceptible of the grossest abuse; and he had not a shadow of doubt but that, if it were passed in its present form, it would be found liable to such abuse, not by Mr. Speaker, who was alive to the traditions of the House, and whose own character was such that the House could rely upon him; but the Rule might be worked by the Party in power in a way that was not fair, and which he hardly thought would be reputable. In the case of a great Party debate, it was eminently reasonable that there should be some sufficient notice given before it was brought to a conclusion. It might well be thought there would be a debate which had occupied from three to four days, with the tacit and direct sanction of the Leaders of both sides, and the approval of the whole House. Would it not be perfectly monstrous, and a positive scandal, that when New Rules had been passed, and when the old arrangements had ceased to be the rule and the custom of the House, that one Party should evidence very strongly to the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees that they desired the debate to proceed no further, and that the Speaker would thus have it brought to his mind, in the most disagreeable way, that the "evident sense" was that the debate should no longer proceed? The Speaker might have very little scope left for independent judgment in the matter. Again, it might also be that the evidence was all on the Government side; and the Opposition, assuming that the division would not take place for, it might be, several hours later, or the day after, would not be present to offer resistance. In these circumstances the Speaker would find himself in a very difficult position, unless he was told, in express terms of the Rule, that it was his duty to consider all portions of the House should have had full notice. Even putting aside what might happen in the case of a great Party debate, when a Motion involving the existence of the Government or of an important Bill was in question, might it not well be that the Government of the day, or those strongly interested in the Bill, would all be present in force, owing either to accident or design, and that the Opposition, taken unawares, would be absent? The "evident sense of the House" would be made already apparent, and the Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, having nothing in the Rule to indicate that they were to give some notice to the House before applying a drastic Rule, a division might be snapped by a cunning device. Would not such a proceeding be a scandal to legislation? Again, how must the Rule operate upon private Members? Nothing would be easier than for the Government, with the aid of their supporters, to get rid of a Bill brought forward by a private Member. It had been alleged that, in the future, it might be that—collusion was not the word, he would not use it; but, at all events, an understanding expressed, or implied, existed between the Minister interested in applying the *clôture* and the Speaker. It had been more openly stated that such an understanding might take place between the Minister and the Chairman of Ways and Means, whom he distinctly and really appointed. Taking that into consideration, he (Mr. Gibson) ventured to think it would be a great protection to the Speaker, who desired to do his duty fairly, and to the Chairman of Committees, to be able to apply a portion of the Rule, as provided for by the Amendment, which indicated that there was to be a notice given. He had no desire to put an extreme case, because, at present, they were all speaking under the influence of the old and honourable traditions of the House, and he would not like to make a single suggestion disrespectful to any Member of the present Government; but if they changed altogether the old traditions of the House, and introduced a new order of things in their place, putting an immense weapon like this at the mercy of the sense of justice of the Minister, they could not rely any more upon the Minister than upon the individual that his sense of justice would not occasionally give way to the distinct and powerful motives of self-interest and Party. Neither could they in future rely upon the high character of the Speaker when degraded from the high position of importance—when he was no longer the Representative of the whole House, but had become little better than the creature of a Party. On those grounds, therefore, he (Mr. Gibson) thought it desirable and absolutely essential that the Rule should, in its terms, indicate that it was the bounden duty of the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means to give previous notice of the closure of the debate. In this Amendment, which he had sketched with some care before the House adjourned, he had not sought to lay down any hard-and-fast line as to the length of that notice, nor did he attempt to dogmatize upon the subject. He admitted there might be varying notices required according to the various measures before the House. In the case of any great Motion, involving an important question of Government policy in which the whole country was interested, and upon which the existence of the Government might depend, he thought it should be the bounden duty of the Speaker to give ample and complete notice when the division should be taken, so that all Members should know how to give their vote in a division on which might depend the existence of the country itself. On great Motions of that kind very ample notice should be given; but he did not say what. He left it to the discretion of the Chair. Again, it might well be that in a second class of cases—that of very important Bills—it would be desirable that some hours' notice should be given; while in regard to minor matters a shorter notice might be required, the Speaker or Chairman intimating within a reasonable time when a division would be taken. As the Rule at present stood, there was not a solitary syllable to indicate to the Speaker that he was to give any notice whatever. All he asked was that, in accordance with justice, the Speaker or Chairman of Committees should be told he was bound in duty to give the House such notice as would be adequate to the circumstances of the case.

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, after the word "shall," to insert the words "after such reasonable notice as, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, he shall consider to be just."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that of all the Amendments submitted to the House there was not one which he believed was more plausible in the sound which it carried to the minds of its intelligent hearers than that one of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson); but, at the same time, there was not one which, in his opinion, was of a more impracticable or impossible character. He believed that the Amendment was one which was totally incompatible with the Business they had in hand, totally unworkable by any Speaker, and not in the slightest degree required by the justice of the case. He thought he could see a much stronger argument in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman—namely, in the case where they were going to inflict an actual penalty on an individual; but even in such a case as that, under the existing Rules as to Obstruction, no notice had ever at any time been given, and the House, as he believed right and justly, came down at the moment with the punishment that had been incurred. Really, the most important argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman had no connection with the Motion before them. They had had the old contention trotted out that the Speaker, under the new state of things indicated by these Resolutions, would be no better than the creature of a Party. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not argue the matter; but, with all possible respect, he did not believe that a more baseless dream ever came into the mind of man—namely, that under any system it was in the power of Parliament or of the Government to establish a Speaker who could be made, or who would be, what was meant by the phrase "a creature of Party." That, he maintained, for these reasons, not simply or exclusively because of the traditions of the House, and because he was convinced that the House would always seek to choose for the Chair one of the greatest Gentlemen in the House—he used that word, not only in its social, but also in its highest moral sense—but likewise for the reason that if the Speaker were the creature of a Party, the House under him would be absolutely ungovernable, and not a Session would elapse before that creature of Party would cease to be Speaker. All that it was necessary for him to say was this—that if the Speaker were a creature of Party, he would exhibit himself in that light, by this very affair of notice, by exhibiting an unfairness, and give just the notice that ought not to be given. He would not give some hours' notice, but some minutes' notice, if he were the creature of a Party. The evil, as anticipated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, was, he believed, altogether visionary; and, supposing it were substantial, the remedy was altogether futile, for it was impossible to suppose that, in directing this creature of a Party to form his judgment on the whole circumstances of the case, and to give such notice as he—the creature of the Party—should, in his creature-like mind, think proper and necessary, they would afford the slightest mitigation of the portentous mischief which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had conjured up. But let them look at the matter from a practical point of view, because he would admit that, after they had dismissed all these horrors from their minds, it was still a practical question. Would it be advantageous, rational, consistent with and suited to the circumstances of the case, that the Speaker should be called upon to give notice, when he had made up his mind on two points—first, that the subject had been adequately discussed; and, second, that it was the "evident sense of the House" that the debate should terminate? Supposing the subject to have been adequately discussed, why should it be more than adequately discussed? Discussion which was more than adequate discussion was waste of time; and why, then, should the Speaker fix a time when time was so valuable, a portion of which must necessarily be wasted? In the next place, the Speaker must have made up his mind that the "evident sense of the House" was in favour of closing the discussion, and that "evident sense" must be something different from the mere clamour of one side. [Mr. Gibson: What?] Well, if they were to discuss the different words which had been used, they would not proceed very rapidly with the discussion; he declined to go back on that which they had happily disposed of. If the Speaker had made up his mind on these two points, why was the putting of the Question not to follow? These were not the only objections to the Amendment. It was really an unworkable one. Take the case of a great debate. During the whole of his (Mr. Gladstone's) recollection, it had always been a matter of arrangement of a tacit kind, that the Leaders of the Parties, or some prominent men, should wind up the debate on a certain night. Clearly, the Speaker could not give notice while that was going on, for it would be most outrageous that he should fix a time by the clock at which an important speech must close. In addition to that, there must be some hours' interval before the debate was to terminate—that was to say, if the speeches of the Leaders were prolonged, say, till 2 o'clock in the morning, the House must wait till 5 or 6 before coming to a division. He would not attempt to describe the infinite discomfort of hon. Members during those hours. The fact was, it was impossible for the Speaker to know what amount of future discussion would be necessary, and strange results would follow any attempt to fix any limit beforehand. How was a Speaker to investigate the course a debate would take, or know what new matters would arise? By such notice as that now suggested the House would be doomed to give a certain portion of its time to utter waste, considering how a part of that time might be abused and misused by Members disposed to turn it to their own account, by introducing personal matter, and highly contentious matter, shortly before the hour by which the hands of the clock absolutely declared that the debate must close, and would they go to a division notwithstanding? The House would see that this was an impossible Amendment, and he would ask the House to reject it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he would not detain the House more than a few minutes; but he must protest against the course the argument generally took on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They began with the present occupant of the Chair, for whom they all entertained the highest respect, and then proceeded by an easy step to another Speaker. From that unknown Speaker, the next stage brought them to the Chairman of Ways and Means; but he would remind the House that he admittedly occupied a different position. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) ventured to suggest that the time would soon come when the authority of the Chairman of Ways and Means would be considerably weakened. With reference to the statement of the Prime Minister, that this Amendment was unworkable, and that some person might get up and introduce new matter at the last moment which would require an answer, he could only say that if that were so, and if new and original matter were introduced, then it only proved that the subject had not been adequately discussed, and the Speaker was wrong in his judgment as to the time for closing the debate. He thought the right hon. Gentleman's remarks were too strong, for he had used the word absurd in criticizing the argument of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson). The right hon. Gentleman said he had great authorities in favour of his Motion; he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would like to refer to what Lord Eversley, a former Speaker of the House, said, in 1848, with respect to closing the debate. He advocated the giving of some notice, for otherwise, when there were only a few Members in the House, an unfair advantage might be taken. He was informed that in America no Business could be proceeded with unless a majority of the House were present; and, in that case, there could be no surprise. He therefore proposed that it would be competent to any Member, on the Order for the Adjourned Debate, to move that the debate be no longer adjourned, and that no Member should be allowed to speak after 2 o'clock in the morning, at which hour the Speaker should put the Question. It appeared that what was in Lord Eversley's mind was that at the Sitting of the House some Member might call attention to the fact that the debate ought to be closed; and if the House were of that opinion, and if proper notice were given, the debate must close that evening, or within a certain time. In that case, hon. Gentlemen who otherwise would have spoken would not speak, and those who would be naturally chosen to close the debate would, at the proper time, be called upon. It was quite clear that was what Lord Eversley contemplated, and was discussing, as the *clôture* was not a matter that was to be constantly used, but a course to be adopted in the case of an adjourned debate. That advice was very well worthy of the consideration of the House, and it thoroughly justified his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) for having brought forward the Amendment.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that no justification was needed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) for bringing anything to the notice of the House. The proposal of Lord Eversley, however, although it justly carried great weight, yet applied to a totally different state of things; and giving the power to any private Member to apply the *clôture*, as suggested by it, was open to the objection that it would be liable to great abuse. They all admitted that it was liable to great abuse; and, therefore, it was on that account that Her Majesty's Government proposed to place the decision in the hands of the Speaker. As Lord Eversley proposed to place the power in the hands of a private Member of declaring that the debate had been sufficiently discussed, it was quite right also to say, as that noble Lord had done, that the *clôture* should not be so applied without notice to the House. It was a totally different state of things, however, when the power was placed in the hands of the Speaker, who, having been present during the whole of the debate, was in a position to know whether the matter had been adequately discussed. When he decided that it had been adequately discussed, it would be absurd to require him to say that, therefore, it should be closed four hours hence. Such a proposal would be a contradiction in terms. It would be still more absurd when applied in Committee, where, after an Amendment on a clause had been discussed for three or four hours, and the Chairman decided that the Committee desired to come to a decision, he would have to decide that the decision should be taken three or four hours later. He did not think the House would accept any such contradictory proposition.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, he had been much struck by the admission of the Prime Minister, that there was an old and efficient system of *clôture* already in operation in the House; for the general argument used against the Amendment of his (Mr. Beresford Hope's) right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) was, how was his Rule to be applied on one of those great nights of a protracted debate, on which an arrangement was made that five or six speeches were to be delivered, and the division was then to be taken? If that system of *clôture* was not efficient, the Prime Minister's argument was worth nothing. In a moment of forgetfulness, the right hon. Gentleman had appealed from *clôture* to *clôture;* he admitted that there was an efficient *clôture* already in existence, and had cited that old and efficient system as the reason that the crude proposal of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin was not for a moment to be entertained, because it would bother, disconcert, and ruin the old traditional *clôture* of the House. His (Mr. Beresford Hope's) reason for not accepting the new *clôture* of the Government was that he stood on the old and mature form of *clôture* as being legitimate, efficient, and full of vitality. He objected to the former as being a *clôture* of surprise. The whole argument of the Secretary of State for the Home Department had been directed against the grammatical absurdity of the Speaker declaring that the time had come for closing the debate, when what was meant was that it would come three or four hours afterwards. But declaring the time had come was a mere form of words, which would be used with an intention perfectly well understood of fixing a future time at which the debate must close. And there would be no absurdity whatever in the Speaker's declaring that the time had come when, after the lapse of a quarter of an hour or more, the debate should close. Supposing the virulence of the Rule to be mitigated by the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend, the Speaker might pronounce that the debate should close at 2 in the morning, or at 7 or 8 in the evening, and then arrangements could be made that the Leaders on both sides should speak. The argument of the Secretary of State for the Home Department had neither spirit nor strength in it; while that of the Prime Minister left the conviction that they had the *clôture* now, and had had it for a long time in its best form, and that the Resolution of the Government would only give them a *clôture* much inferior in form to the old institution.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that there was a vice which ran through the logic of the Prime Minister from the beginning to the end of the debate, and that was that he begged the question, and confidently asserted that Speakers would be so perfect in the future that they could do no wrong. The right hon. Gentleman, in addition to his other great powers, assumed the function of a prophet; but where was his inspiration? He (Mr. S. Leighton) held that, just as the Division Bell was now rung, in order to summon hon. Members to vote, so should ample notice be given before applying the *clôture*, in order to enable all Members in London to come down to the House and vote for or against the suspension of the functions of Parliament.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood the object of the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson). It was not that the Speaker at any hour should say—"I consider this debate should be closed," at, say, 12 o'clock to-night, and that then the notice should be given that at the stated hour the Main Question would be put; but the proposal before the House was that the Speaker should give due notice in the course of the evening that at a given hour he would submit to the House not the Main Question, but the Question that the debate be closed. When the time named should have arrived, it would still be in the power of the House to decide that new elements had been introduced into the debate which justified its protraction. It was most important that no snap decision should be arrived at. His right hon. and learned Friend had avoided going into undue details, and he had not indicated the method in which the sense of the House should be determined. He merely left it to the judgment of the Chair, of which due notice should be given; and he hoped, therefore, that the Amendment would be accepted.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 88; Noes 149: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 354.)

CAPTAIN AYLMER, in moving in line 6, after the word "affirmative," to insert the words "in a Committee of the Whole House," said, if this Amendment were carried, he would further move to insert in the next line of the Resolution, after the word "forthwith," these words—

> "And if so decided in the full House, then the next Notice or Order of the Day shall be forthwith proceeded with, after Mr. Speaker has named an hour at the sitting next but one to be holden, when the Question on which further discussion has been prohibited shall be put without Debate."

In the case of Committee of the Whole House he did not propose to amend the Resolutions under which the division would be taken forthwith. He maintained that the adoption of his Amendment would save as much time as the proposal of the Government. The Prime Minister had stated that under existing Rules it was now generally known which was to be the closing night of a debate. The Whips of both sides were accordingly able to secure a large attendance for a division. That could not be done if a division were taken unexpectedly in a thin House at an untimely hour, but when, through the impatience of hon. Members, the Speaker judged it to be the evident sense of the House that the subject had been adequately discussed. If divisions on great and important measures or great questions of policy were taken in that manner, as might well happen, unless his proposal were adopted, a strong feeling against such procedure would arise in the country. There was no way to obviate that possibility but, as he proposed, to have some delay before the division, though the precise duration of the interval was immaterial. He concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, in line 6, after the word "affirmative," to insert the words "in a Committee of the whole House."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, though he appreciated the object the hon. and gallant Member had in view, he thought the very great change he proposed was not one calculated to attain that object, and that it would, moreover, entail most serious inconvenience on the House. The object the hon. and gallant Member had in view was to avoid snap divisions, and the answer to that was that he thought the evil which was anticipated, if it could happen, would be a very grave and serious one; but he would say that any Speaker in whose hands such miscarriage could arise would be a man altogether beneath the lowest average level of sense and intelligence which Nature had formed in perfectly civilized races. The Speakers of that House had generally been, not only choice specimens of a civilized race, but choice specimens of the Members of that House; and he felt himself removed by a gap almost immeasurably wide from the conclusions of the hon. and gallant Member. He thought that if the Speaker were such a being as had been suggested, he would predict that such a Speaker would encumber the Chair for but for a short time. He would not say it would be too hot to hold him; but the Speaker would find the House would become ungovernable in his hands, for the House would not consent to be governed by a man of such mental calibre. Now, let the House look at the other side of the question. The hon. and gallant Member proposed to insert an interval of two days between the suspension of the debate and the putting of the Main Question. He thought that such a system would do much towards diminishing the attendance at a debate. Under the present system, in all great debates, the last four or five hours, which were often the most important, were attended very largely by those who would take part in the division; but if it were known that the division would not take place until two days afterwards the attendance during the latter part of the debate would be but small. Then, again, much public disappointment would be created at the decision on some great question being long delayed. It was, moreover, important that a Vote should be made the subject of immediate action; for instance, a Vote of Credit such as was asked for on the 27th of July last. To have proposed to delay it until the 29th would have been a most serious evil. Take the case of a Tax Bill. It was most important that it should be disposed of within certain dates, and it was often most difficult to bring it within those limits. If in such a case they were to insert an idle interval between the debate and the decision on the Main Question, it would entail great public inconvenience, and it would be a matter of great difficulty to conform to the provisions of the law. For these reasons he hoped the hon. and gallant Member would not press his Motion. He thought that if any further precautions were to be taken in the direction indicated by the hon. and gallant Member they must be something very different from those he had proposed.

Mr. E. STANHOPE thought it hardly worth while for his hon. and gallant Friend to press his first point; but the second point—namely, that as to giving due notice before the Question was put —was very important, and well worthy of consideration. He thought it would be an improvement if it were left to the option of the Speaker either to put the Question at once or to put it the following day.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, he thought the Amendment would have the effect of preventing a snap division being taken, and would lay down a distinct and definite method of giving the House notice that a division was about to take place. If the Amendment were altered so as to insure the division being taken next day, he thought it one worthy the attention of the House. He thought good reason had been shown for supporting the principle, at least, contained in the Amendment, although its present wording might be advantageously changed.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought there was much worthy of consideration in the suggestion which had been thrown out by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). In the United States, from which he (Sir George Campbell) had just come, after a Bill had been discussed in a large Committee, the Member in charge of it might move that it be taken into consideration a few days subsequently. He thought it would be an advantage if something similar to the American practice were adopted. It might be placed in the power of the Speaker to say that he thought the debate had been continued long enough, and to warn the House that after a certain time he should think it right to announce its close, the speeches made during the interval being limited to a certain length.

MR. RAIKES said, he thought the House had no right to quarrel with the manner with which the Prime Minister had met the Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman having expressed himself rather favourably to its object, though he had deprecated the machinery proposed by the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), for its attainment. What the right hon. Gentleman had said on the subject would have been conclusive had it not been that they had unfortunately got in the Resolution those unlucky words "the evident sense of the House." He had been induced to rise by the re-appearance of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), because he had a vivid recollection of an occasion when in Committee of the Whole House there were at least 300 Members clamouring against the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, who was then anxious to be heard; and it would then have been exceedinglydifficult for anyone occupying the Chair to have withstood the impression that that manifestation was the evident sense of the House. Yet no Scotch Member would have been justified in believing that that debate terminated in a satisfactory manner without that hon. Member having been heard. He remembered another occasion when Mr. Auberon Herbert in that House supported the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in an attack on Her Majesty's private revenue; and no one who was then present would forget the scene which ensued on that occasion. Indeed, the Speaker had said it was a very painful scene, and not creditable to the House; but it would have been still less creditable if the occupant of the Chair had been compelled by "the evident sense of the House" at that time to terminate the debate, and refuse the two Members who then held those peculiar opinions the opportunity of being heard. The House would, he thought, do well to pause before they rejected the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone. That Amendment stood on the Paper in a form, perhaps, not altogether convenient or acceptable; and he should prefer the suggestion of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), who pointed out that it might be convenient to leave the Speaker the option of fixing a certain hour or the next Sitting for the division to be taken. That would give a protection to the House, because without some such protection they might be sure that as the House proceeded in the course which the Prime Minister had so much deplored in the last few decades it would become a practice to organize "the evident sense of the House" in a way that would prove most disastrous. The right hon. Gentleman said that it might be inconvenient to press that a decision should be postponed. But that was arguing on the assumption that all important debates in the future were to be closed by the *clôture*, and unless that was so he could not see the force of the argument. The Amendment proposed that the vote was to be taken forthwith, and, therefore, some objection might be raised with respect to Votes of Credit. But there would be no difficulty in passing the first portion of the Resolution, and the ingenuity of hon. Members would easily provide some alteration which would exempt Money Bills from its operation. In the interest of the transaction of the ordinary Business of the House, he trusted the Government would see their way to accept, at any rate, the Proviso of the Amendment.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the right hon. Gentleman desired the Government to accept an Amendment, providing for the postponement of putting the Question when it had already been decided that the Question should be put forthwith.

CAPTAIN AYLMER explained that his Amendment applied to the putting of the Main Question, and not to that relating to *clôture.*

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had understood the arguments of hon. Members opposite had been directed towards the *clôture* proposal. If they were not, he could not understand why they displayed a greater anxiety, as they had done in all their arguments, with respect to these Rules for the majority by which the *clôture* was to be enforced than that which sufficed to carry the Main Question. He however, thought that the same protection ought to be afforded to the one as the other. Whatever delay, whatever preparation was made for one ought equally to be made for the other. He did not understand how it was that the hon. Member had come to the conclusion that the world was getting steadily worse. Why could not the Speaker's discretion be trusted? It seemed to be argued that the Speaker was under compulsion to put the Question, at a time when he knew that the House was not so constituted as that a fair division could be taken; but the Speaker was not compelled at the moment the moral conviction entered his mind that the question had been sufficiently discussed to put the Question. It was inconceivable that a Speaker of ordinary intelligence and fairness would put the Question of the *clôture* or the Main Question during the dinner hour, or when the House was not so constituted as that a fair division could be taken. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin had withdrawn his Amendment. What, then, was to be done? [An hon. MEMBER: Wait till next day.] He thought that enough had been said against the next day being chosen.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that he had especially excepted the next day, and proposed the next Sitting but one.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that all who had spoken on the other side of the House had condemned that proposal, so that it was unnecessary for him to deal with it. Everybody admitted that they should be on their guard against snap divisions; but the question was, whether they were to wait two or three hours for the division on the Main Question? In his opinion, it would be highly inconvenient for the House so to wait; and the matter would best be settled by leaving it to the discretion of the Speaker, who would take care that the Question, whether it were of the *clôture* or the Main Question, was put at a time which was fair and convenient to the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, it always seemed to him, when he heard the Secretary of State for the Home Department argue any point in connection with the Resolution, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman argued somewhat as if he did not like the whole business, and that he was speaking against the grain, because they happened to be Government Resolutions, rather than in support of the object and aim of the Resolutions, which he (Sir Stafford Northcote) certainly imagined to be highly distasteful to one who had distinguished himself so much in debate in that House as the right hon. and learned Gentleman. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, of course, to fight the battle which he was put up to conduct, and he did it in the best way that he could. The impression which the right hon. and learned Gentleman made upon him (Sir Stafford Northcote) was, that he looked as little at these things as he possibly could, until the moment came for making a speech, and then he made it without having very carefully studied either the Resolution or the Amendment. On the present occasion, he (Sir Stafford Northcote) really did not see where the difficulty lay in understanding what the object and spirit of the Amendment moved by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) was. It was, to him, perfectly clear that there were two matters which the House had to consider. They had first to consider the debate, and they had, in the second place, also to consider the vote on the Question that might, at any time, be before the House. These Resolutions for stopping debate were Resolutions which, on that side of the House, they did not like, and which they would be very glad either to defeat or materially to modify. But, assuming that they were to have Resolutions which were to limit and cripple debate, he wanted to know if it was necessary also to spoil the fairness of a division upon the Main Question? Because two things might happen. They might have a debate stopped by the intervention of the Speaker in a thin House at 8 o'clock in the evening, or some hour of that kind, the effect of which would be to conclude any discussion upon the subject; but that might be done without preventing hon. Members who had fully expected that the discussion would run on for some hours, and who were likely to be present at the time of voting, from taking part in the division upon a question in which they took considerable interest. By closing the debate, unless some provision of the kind suggested by his hon. and gallant Friend were made, such hon. Members would be excluded from taking part in the division upon the Main Question, and they would run the risk both of stopping debate which ought not to be stopped, and, still more, of shutting out hon. Members from voting who ought to be allowed to vote. What his hon. and gallant Friend said was, that if they could alter their Resolution in such a way as to say that when the Speaker had put the Question "That the Question be now put," then, in regard to the Main Question—the question under discussion—being also put, should be a matter at the discretion of the Speaker, who should have full liberty to name the time when the division on the Main Question should take place. Such an Amendment of the Resolution of Her Majesty's Government would greatly modify and mitigate the severity of that part of the Rule relating to the vote being taken on the Main Question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department spoke as if that were so very novel an idea that it was quite impossible to entertain it; but it was not a very novel idea at all. Surely the right hon. and learned Gentleman had had some experience, within the last year or two, of a course similar to that proposed by the Amendment under the Rules of Urgency. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) certainly recollected two instances in which, under those Rules, it had been decided to close a debate at a given hour. In the first instance, the Motion was made by the Prime Minister himself—he believed in Committee upon the Bill for the better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland—that on that day, at 12 o'clock, the remaining clauses of the Bill and any Amendments and New Clauses should be put forthwith. In the second case, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), at 7 o'clock, gave notice that at 12 o'clock the time of voting should take place. Therefore, there could be nothing extravagant in such an idea; and if they were prepared entirely to trust the Speaker, as he presumed they would be disposed in such a matter to trust the Speaker, then they could trust him to take a division at some convenient hour. There would be no insuperable difficulty or objection to the adoption of such a course as that; and if the House desired to avoid a snap division, he thought it would do well to accept the spirit of the proposal of his hon. and gallant Friend. It might be convenient to alter the wording of the second part of the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend by merely leaving out the words "at the sitting next but one to be holden." That would leave it entirely to the Speaker to say when the Question should be put. There could be no confusion between the two questions. The question under discussion having been debated, the Speaker would take notice that the debate had been exhausted, and he would put the Question for stopping further debate. Perhaps that might be done in a thin House, and in that case the thin House would decide that there should be no more debate. But that would not necessarily decide, unless the House chose that it should be so, that the vote should forthwith be taken upon the question under discussion. What his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) asked was that a further time should be named at which the vote on the question under discussion should be taken, and the demand was only fair and reasonable.

Mr. DODSON said, the proposition which the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had made to the House was a very singular one, and was one which had considerably perplexed his own supporters, who all of them found themselves unable to support it in the form in which it stood upon the Paper. But the speech of the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down (Sir Stafford Northcote) would lead the House, if possible, to greater perplexity still; for what was it that the right hon. Baronet proposed? He proposed that the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member should be modified. And what was the effect of the modification which the right hon. Gentleman suggested? Why, it was this—that the Speaker should, or might, put a Motion for the closure of the debate at an inconvenient hour, and then that at a convenient hour the division should be taken on the Main Question, or Question under discussion. He (Mr. Dodson) should have thought that it would have been better to trust to the Speaker to put both Motions—namely, that for closing the debate, and then the Question under discussion at a convenient hour. The right hon. Baronet complained that his (Mr. Dodson's) right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department had not read either the Resolution or the Amendment; but the right hon. Baronet had evidently not read them himself. The right hon. Baronet appeared to think that there was to be one Motion for the *clôture* distinctly and another for the Main Question. That was not so. The House would observe that the words they had already agreed to were these—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the Whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put,"

—the Resolution then proceeded to say—

> "he may so inform the House, or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,'"—

that was, the Main Question—[*Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] It certainly was the Main Question; and the Resolution further said—

> "Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith,"

Then the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) proposed, after those words, to add—

> "And if so decided in the full House, then the next Notice or Order of the Day shall be forthwith proceeded with, after Mr. Speaker has named an hour at the sitting next but one to be holden, when the Question on which further discussion has been prohibited shall be put without Debate."

The effect of the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member, which the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) favoured, was to say that the Question, which the House had decided "should be now put," should be put at some future time; in fact, that the word "now" in the Resolution should mean "the day after to-morrow." No wonder the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member did not appear to approve itself to his own Friends; while the modification which the right hon. Baronet had recommended, and which all the speakers sitting on the same side of the House as the hon. and gallant Member had spoken in favour of, was nothing more nor less than a clumsier form of the Amendment moved in an earlier part of the Resolution by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and negatived by the House. The right hon. Baronet failed to see that a decision under the words already agreed to, "That the Question be now put," required that the Main Question be put forthwith, and not at some other time. He (Mr. Dodson) certainly thought, after the speeches which had been made by the supporters of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), even including that of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), it was not necessary for the House to discuss the matter further.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, it seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), who had just addressed the House, did not quite understand the situation or the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman had certainly stated three, if not six, times that the phrase "the Main Question" meant "that the Question be now put." Well, that certainly was not the Main Question, and the phrase "that the Question be now put" simply meant "that the discussion be now ended." ["No, no!"] If it did not mean that, then the Resolution was nonsense; because, in the next sentence, it went on to say, "and if the same be decided in the affirmative"—that was, "that the Question be now put"—"the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith." Consequently, the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) dealt, not with the question "that the Question be now put," but with the question under discussion, which was the Main Question. [Mr. Dodson: Precisely so; "that the Main Question be now put."] He was delighted to find that the right hon. Gentleman had at last been induced to agree with him. He had thought that a few minutes ago the right hon. Gentleman expressed a strong dissent from the statement made by his (Lord George Hamilton's) right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), which he was now only repeating. He thought everyone must admit that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone had hit a blot in the Resolution. There was no hon. Member who would deny that. ["No, no!"] Then, if it was not a blot on the Resolution, let them recollect what it was that the Prime Minister had said. His hon. and gallant Friend asserted that under the Resolution a Speaker might put the Question during the dinner hour, and that a small quorum of the House might thus decide a most important question; whereupon the Prime Minister said—and it was a curious remark to make—that if such a thing occurred, and the Speaker literally obeyed his own Resolution, he would be below the average common sense and intelligence accorded by Nature to mankind. Consequently, they were asked to elevate the House of Commons, and preserve its dignity, by making a Resolution a Standing Order, which, if the Speaker of the day implicitly obeyed, it would place him below the average common sense and intelligence of mankind. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had admitted this. He said that, even in their present difficulties, there was one thing on which they might implicitly rely. What was that one thing? It was the ordinary common sense and intelligence of the Speaker. But how would the Resolution look if words to that effect were inserted in it? What would be thought if they made the Resolution read—"The Question shall be now put, provided that Mr. Speaker has the ordinary common sense and intelligence not to observe the Resolution?" It was quite evident that Her Majesty's Government dared not embody their own argument in the Resolution; and if they could not do that, when the Resolution became a Standing Order, the Prime Minister's argument would be forgotten. Surely, the House ought to do something to remedy the evil which his hon. and gallant Friend had unquestionably hit; and it seemed to him (Lord George Hamilton) that a remedy might be applied in a tolerably easy manner. Suppose that, in the second Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend, they inserted after the words "and if so decided in the full House" the words "of not less than two hundred Members," the Resolution would be made to run in a manner which would meet the views of the Opposition, and he was inclined to think would meet the views of Her Majesty's Government themselves. He understood the Government to say that they were not averse to the sense of the Amendment, but that they could not agree to it because they did not understand it. The Resolution would then read—

> "And, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, in a Committee of the whole House, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith, and if so decided in the full House"

—after which word he proposed to insert the words "of not less than two hundred Members"—

> "then the next Notice or Order of the Day shall be forthwith proceeded with, after Mr. Speaker has named an hour at the sitting next but one to be holden, when the Question on which further discussion has been prohibited shall be put without Debate."

Let them for a moment consider what the objection was which the Prime Minister had made. The right hon. Gentleman said it would be inconvenient to Members to be required to attend afterwards, and decide the question whether the Main Question should be then put. But the question under discussion might be a most important question, and a considerable number of Members might be away during the dinner hour; and if the Speaker considered it necessary to put the Question, unquestionably the House would have a grievance against the Speaker, and they would be glad to show the interest they took in the question by coming down to vote. Of course, if the question was simply a matter of no importance, nobody would come down, and the decision previously arrived at would be adhered to. It therefore seemed to him that the very slight Amendment he had suggested in the earlier part of the second Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend would meet all the difficulty, without in any way invalidating the efficacy of the Resolution.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that he had placed an Amendment on the Paper which was constructively the same as that now before the House; and as it might be ruled out, after that of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had been discussed and decided, he should like to explain to the House what the object of it was, and what his idea was of the way in which the matter ought to be dealt with. The discussion which had taken place had certainly thrown the whole matter into a state of such confusion that he confessed he was hardly able to recognize his own proposition, in the interpretations which had been put on the Amendment before the House. He would, therefore, read his Amendment. It came in in this way; at the end of the Resolution to add—

> "Provided also, That the intervention of the Speaker at any stage of a Bill shall be subject to confirmation, by such Question being again put without Debate at the next Sitting of the House as a matter of Privilege, under the conditions heretobefore provided as to the requisite majority; and, unless confirmed, the Debate shall in due course be resumed as though the Speaker had not intervened."

His object was to provide that there should be an appeal—an appeal from a passionate and agitated House to a House which had had some little time for considering the matter. Surely, the question of appeal was not one to be thrown aside as quite unworthy of the consideration of the House. There was an appeal from the decision of every Judge to a Superior Court, and no discredit was thrown upon the Judge whose decision was appealed against. So, also, in the case of the Speaker, it would be no discredit to Mr. Speaker that his decision should be appealed against, and afterwards overruled by the House; and for this reason—that it would not be so much the decision of the Speaker as it would be of the House itself that would be overruled. They knew, over and over again, of instances in which the Prime Minister insisted that decisions which the House had arrived at should be overruled by a subsequent vote. An instance occurred during the present Session, in regard to the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh. Therefore, the argument that an appeal would throw discredit upon the Speaker fell to the ground at once. All that was asked was that the decision of the Speaker should be subject to reversal by the Whole House; should, in fact, be subject to confirmation by requiring the Question to be again put without debate at the next Sitting of the House; and if it were not confirmed, then the debate would be resumed as though the Speaker had not intervened.

Mr. WARTON said, he only rose for the purpose of recalling to the memory of the House two incidents which had occurred in the progress of debate since the present Government had been in power. One of them was an incident which occurred last year, and the other happened during the present Session. On the 25th of April last year, the day put down for the second reading of the Irish Land Bill, after some months had been allowed for studying the provisions of the measure, shortly before dinner, an attempt was made by clamour on the Liberal side of the House, by shouting out "Divide!" and by other annoyances, to have the second reading of the Bill, which was the most important measure of the Session, carried at once without discussion or debate. The most conspicuous person who called out "Divide!" on that occasion was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain); and if it had not been for an hon. Member on that (the Opposition) side of the House rising in his place and moving the Adjournment of the Debate, a division would have been snapped at that time. It would, therefore, be seen that, even under the existing arrangements, the House ran the risk of having snap divisions. The second incident to which he wished to call the attention of the House was one that occurred in the present Session; it was on the second reading of the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Bill, as amended. The Bill was introduced for the first time on a Friday, and distributed on the Saturday morning; and the Opposition were charged with Obstruction because, at 12 or 1 o'clock on the Monday night, they wished to have a second day for the consideration of the second reading of that most important Bill. When they went into the Lobby, the majority against them was slightly over two to one—290 to 140—and they were told by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) that that was an overwhelming majority, to the decision of which they were bound to submit. If the New Rules had been in force, it would have been said that the "evident sense of the House" had been manifested by the division, and all discussion upon the second reading of that important measure would have been stopped. He mentioned these incidents as two reasons why he, for one, was exceedingly anxious not to allow the Ministry to have the chance of taking advantage of a single snap division. When it was argued by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department that the

Opposition asked for the divison upon the *clôture* to be taken carelessly, and the division on the Main Question to be taken carefully, he (Mr. Warton) would remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the Resolution itself provided that the Question should not be decided in the affirmative, if a division were taken, unless it should appear to have been supported by more than 200 Members, or unless it should appear to have been opposed by less than 40 Members, and supported by more than 100 Members. In that way there would be security against any carelessness. He thought that a considerable amount of confusion existed, as manifested by the course the debate had taken in regard to the use of the word "Question." Even the Secretary of State for the Home Department himself had been misled; and when they came to the 7th line of the Resolution, which now read—"Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative," unless they inserted words to explain clearly what the Question was, the House would find themselves involved in some difficulty. He thought it would be found necessary to amend the Resolution by making it read—"Provided that the Question, 'That that Question be now put' shall not be decided in the affirmative." Unless that were done, they would have this curious result—"That the Question under discussion be put forthwith, provided that the Question"—that was the question under discussion, which might be the *clôture* or the Main Question—"shall not be decided in the affirmative." He pointed out this defect in the Resolution for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, he did not propose to detain the House for more than a few minutes. He only desired to say that there appeared to have been a slight misunderstanding on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) as to the argument which had been used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). All that he (Mr. Northcote) understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon to say was, that he wished to provide, in the event of the Speaker putting the vote for the *clôture* at an unreasonable or inconvenient hour, that he should not have the power of acting with further inconvenience and irregularity by putting the Main Question. There was one thing which appeared not to have occurred to Her Majesty's Government, and it was in regard to the character of a possible future Speaker. Hitherto, the House had had represented to it only two characters in which to regard the Speaker—in the one case, a perfectly immaculate Speaker; and, in the other, a Speaker who would be the thorough partizan of the Government of the day. He apprehended that, in either of those two cases, it would be of very little importance what Rules the House adopted. If they had a perfect Speaker, he might be fully trusted not to abuse the powers placed in his hands. On the other hand, if they had a Speaker who was a thorough partizan of the Government of the day, he quite agreed with the Prime Minister, that that would be the surest way of insuring the downfall of any Government he might happen to support. But there was another case—namely, that of a Speaker who might occasionally, in the course of the discharge of his duty, give a decision which might appear doubtful to the Party against whom he gave it; and the object of adopting an Amendment somewhat on the principle of that proposed by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) was, in his (Mr. Northcote's) judgment, to diminish, as far as possible, the friction which might arise between the Speaker and the Party against whom he might decide. If an Amendment similar in principle to that which had been proposed by the hon. and gallant Member were adopted, they would have at least the practical consolation of knowing that the minority would have the fullest opportunity given to them of mustering their forces, and bringing all the weight they could to bear against the decision which had been given in the first instance. He hoped the House would agree to the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 89; Noes 145: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 355.)

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the next Amendment upon the Paper stood in the name of the hon.

Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley). As he did not see the hon. Member in his place, and as the Amendment raised rather a curious point, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) proposed to move the Amendment himself. The Amendment was, in line 7, after "forthwith," to insert "but no such Question shall be put so as to interrupt a Member while speaking." He asked for the attention of the Prime Minister, for a moment, upon this point. He was not quite sure that it would be necessary to move the Amendment at all; but he wished to know whether the Speaker could, except under a subsequent Resolution which referred to relevancy of speaking, gather the "evident sense of the House" and apply the *clôture* during an hon. Member's speech? If that were so, he should be strongly prepared to resist such a proposition, that any speech might be interrupted by the Speaker in order to bring a debate to a close. Such a power would, he was satisfied, greatly encourage every man who sat on the Liberal Benches in shouting down his opponents.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand that the noble Lord is now proposing to take up the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley)?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already pointed out to the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) that the Amendment could not be put, because it is already the Rule of Debate that no hon. Member shall be interrupted by the Chair when speaking to a question except on points of Order.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: In that case, I will not move the Amendment.

Mr. HICKS, in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said, that when he first placed the Amendment upon the Paper, the general impression of the House was, he believed, that the Resolution of the Government was intended to apply simply to cases of Obstruction. But since then a new light appeared to have dawned upon Her Majesty's Government; and the Rules, prepared with such great care, were to be made applicable to vain and frivolous speeches. The House, however, was still in the dark as to the force which was to be applied to these words; because it was very possible that speeches which were delivered by one side of the House might be held to be vain and frivolous, which would not be held to be vain and frivolous when they came from the other side of the House. Again, they might be held to be vain and frivolous at one hour, when at another hour they would not be held to be either vain or frivolous. But, were that so or not, it had never yet been announced that there was any intention to put a stop to all debates; and, that being so, he thought he might fairly ask the support and acceptance of Her Majesty's Government to his Amendment; and if they would not give him their support and acceptance, then he would ask the support of independent Members in all quarters and upon all sides of the House. Surely four nights was not an unreasonable period of time to devote to the consideration of great measures; for the House would observe that the Amendment which he proposed was not directed, and did not provide, that all debates should extend to four days, but simply that this arbitrary power should not be put in force when the subject-matter of debate should have been, in a great measure, brought on by Her Majesty's Government, and when it had not been debated for at least four nights. It did not follow that every measure brought in by Her Majesty's Government should be held to be a measure of that kind; but his object was simply to provide that this arbitrary power of closing a debate should not be put in force until such a period of time had expired. If hon. Members would look back to the history of the House, he thought they would find very few occasions on which measures of very great importance had not been debated for at least that length of time. They would have in their recollection the debates upon the Divorce Bill—a measure in which the present Prime Minister took a great interest, and which the right hon. Gentleman thought so objectionable that he considered he was perfectly privileged in using all the rights of a Member of Parliament to defeat it, and prevent it from passing into law. Then there was the Irish Church Bill; that took four nights. The last Reform Bill was debated for four nights on the second reading; the repeal of the Corn Laws was eight nights under discussion, and not the second reading, but the first reading, of the first Reform Bill engaged the attention of the House for 12 nights. Further, he believed that there was hardly any instance in regard to any division having been postponed when it had been previously agreed upon by Parties on both sides that a division should take place. If this Resolution was to be passed in the way it was now drawn, there was nothing whatever to prevent a powerful Minister from coming down to the House at a time of the evening when hon. Members knew very well that the House was generally thin, and carrying the second reading of any Bill he might think proper to introduce, even upon the very first night of the debate. He thought that was a possibility which the Liberal Members below the Gangway would not altogether at all times wish to see realized. Therefore, if there were no real desire to put a stop to free discussion, this Amendment, he thought, ought at once to be accepted; and if it were not accepted, then, he thought, they could come to but one conclusion — namely, that the real object of this Resolution was not the stopping of Obstruction, but the giving of power to an arbitrary Government. There was an old saying that "extremes meet;" and it was rather remarkable that they found the extreme Radical of 1882 pursuing the same course, and aiming at the same power, that the Stuarts aimed at in 1682. The similarity of the events of these two periods was rather remarkable. He found it recorded in Burnett's *Own Times* that when James, Duke of York, went down to Scotland, these circumstances occurred—

> "Some complaints were also made of the lords of regalities, who had forfeitures and the power of life and death, within their regalities. It was upon that promised that there should be a regulation of these Courts, as there was indeed great cause for it, these lords being so many tyrants up and down the country; so it was intended to subject these jurisdictions to the Supreme Judicatories. But the Act was passed in such words as imported that the whole course of justice all over the kingdom was made subject to the King's will and pleasure; so that instead of appeals to the Supreme Courts, all was made to end in a personal appeal to the King; and by this means he was made master of the whole justice and property of the kingdom. There was not much time given to consider things; for the Duke, finding that he was master of a clear majority, drove on everything fast, and put Bills on a very short debate to the vote, which went always as he had a mind to it."

Those were the events of 1682, and here, he thought, they had history repeating itself. Here they had a grievance acknowledged, he believed, by all Parties in the House; here they were promised a remedy; and here, again, the remedy was far in excess of the occasion. Again, they had also a powerful Minister aiming at great power, and trying to force all his measures through the House without discussion. If he went on a little further he came to the time of the French Empire. [*Laughter.*] No doubt, to some hon. Members, it was a very laughable matter; but, personally, he did not at all think it was very pleasant. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) told the House that his objection to the Resolution was that it did not go far enough. Perhaps the hon. Member would like to hear the practice that prevailed in France during the Empire. [An hon. MEMBER: Which Empire?] The First Empire. It was this—

> "By degrees all the laws were presented to the Council by the Ministers, and were either changed into decrees, which, without any other sanction, were put in force from one end of France to the other; or else, having received the sanction of the *Corps Legislatif*, they were passed with no more trouble than that imposed on the reporters to the Council, who had to preface them by a discourse, so that they might have some show of necessity."

The hon. Member for Dungarvan, on Thursday, used these words—"As the Premier has undertaken to destroy the constitution of Parliament, the more thorough the ruin the better, as the sooner would come the reaction." He agreed with that opinion; and although it was the duty of independent Members to endeavour to amend the Resolution, still, for one, he had rather see the Minister of this country clothed with the power which Napoleon secured than see the House degraded, as it must be if this Resolution passed in its present form. Under the first state, they might soon see the reaction throughout the country; under the second, it might be years before the House regained those rights and privileges which it had been the work of centuries to secure. He would conclude by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "forthwith," to insert the words "Provided, That when the subject-matter of Debate shall be the Second Reading of a Bill introduced by a Member of the Government, a Motion 'That the Question be now put' shall not be put until Twelve of the Clock on the fourth night of the Debate, the Second Reading having been put down as first Order of the Day on each of the four days."—(*Mr. Hicks.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he felt sure the House would appreciate the consideration and research which the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) had brought to bear on the present question; but, having listened to the character the hon. Member had drawn of Gentlemen sitting on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, and his historical reminiscences, he (Sir William Harcourt) could not but hope that it was not proposed to treat them to the same kind of *clôture* that overtook the First Napoleon, or the first and second generations of the Stuarts. He thought the hon. Member might take comfort, for he should not forget that, from the dangers of the times to which he had referred, society had always found some great deliverer; and he (Sir William Harcourt) doubted not that, in case of need, it could yet look with confidence to the county of Cambridge. But he could not entertain the opinion that a four days' debate would either have kept James II. on the Throne, or driven the First Napoleon from it—some other measures would have to have been taken for these purposes. Practically, the proposal of the hon. Gentleman was, that whenever a Member of the Government brought forward a measure, the debate thereon should not be closed until four days had elapsed. He had truly said that, on great occasions, debates had extended to four days, and even longer. But that would be the case in the future as well as in the past. No doubt, four days would not be too much to devote to the discussion of great questions where strong feelings were aroused, and he ventured to say that this was exactly the view which the Speaker would take on such occasions. But, to put it in the language of the hon. Member, that in the case of the second reading of a Bill introduced by a Member of the Government, the question should, in no case, be considered to have been fully discussed in less than four days, would be seen, from experience, to be laying down a very inconvenient Rule. That would be evident in the case of Money Bills, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had, in a former Amendment, proposed to exclude.

MR. HICKS said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to have misapprehended his proposal, which was not that the debates on Government measures should continue four days, but that until that time had expired the *clôture* should not be applied.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the Amendment, however, laid down the rule that the debate should not be closed by the exercise of this power until four days had elapsed, and that, in the case of a Money Bill, or, to take another illustration, the Mutiny Bill, would be highly inconvenient. In the latter case, the interests of the Public Service might require the Bill to be passed in 24 hours; but if the Amendment of the hon. Member were adopted, the Government would find themselves confronted with the "four-days' Rule;" moreover, if Saturday and Sunday intervened, that period would be extended to six days. In view, therefore, of the great delay which would be opposed to measures that it was absolutely essential to the Public Service to pass in a limited time, he hoped he had been able to satisfy the hon. Member that it was impossible for Her Majesty's Government to accede to the proposed Amendment.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he entirely agreed with the object which his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) had in view. But while he shared his apprehension of the dangers which might ensue, he feared it would be difficult to meet them by any words that could be introduced into a Resolution of the kind under notice. The whole scheme embodied in the Resolution was open to great objection, and might lead to very serious inconvenience and protracted debates on subjects of great national importance, for which reason he hoped the House would limit, if it did not entirely reject it. But he was afraid the proposal of his hon. Friend was not one capable of being worked, and would, therefore, suggest that he should be satisfied with having called attention to the subject, without proceeding to a division.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF thought that, in the absence of the Prime Minister, it would be satisfactory to the House if the debate were adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the Government would have no objection to the adjournment of the debate when a point of great importance was reached; but he thought they might be allowed to dispose of the present Amendment.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he felt much indebted to the hon. Member (Mr. Hicks) for raising the point suggested by his Amendment. He did not, however, think that the latter was drawn exactly in the words which would carry out his object. But his hon. Friend had succeeded in obtaining from the Government an admission of the leading fact, that the length or, perhaps, the extreme shortness of discussion would, under this Resolution, remain absolutely in the discretion of Mr. Speaker, who would have to consider the wishes of Her Majesty's Ministers. Both Mr. Speaker and the House of Commons would become mere instruments of a majority, in existence under conditions which prevented its being a free agent. He hoped his hon. Friend would not divide the House upon his Amendment in its present form; at the same time, he thanked him sincerely for having pointed out the nature of the Government proposal and its inevitable results upon the position of Mr. Speaker and of the House itself.

MR. R. N. FOWLER considered that the Amendment before the House raised a question which deserved very serious consideration. His fear—and that of hon. Members on those Benches—was that the discussion of matters of interest and importance to their constituents might be cut short in a way that would deprive them of an opportunity of laying their views before the House. He believed the Secretary of State for the Home Department intended to bring in a Bill next Session, that would affect his constituency, and he supposed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would move the second reading of it at, say, 5 o'clock in the afternoon. What would follow? The right hon. and learned Gentleman would probably address the House for an hour and a-half; another hour would be occupied in moving the rejection of the Bill; the Metropolitan Members, all of whom would wish to speak on the question, would then have from half-past 7 till 11 o'clock, during which time they would be endeavouring to catch the Speaker's eye. It would then be intimated to the Leader of the Opposition that, if he wanted to address the House, he had better get up at once. The Leader of the Opposition would have no alternative but to rise; the Prime Minister would reply, and what he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) feared would take place would be that the Metropolitan Members who had not been called upon would be absolutely precluded from addressing the House upon a question of the greatest interest to their constituents. For these reasons, and because the proposal of the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) tended to obviate the danger indicated, he should give the Amendment his cordial support.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question again proposed.

MR. HICKS said, he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 31st October, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

THE CHURCH IN THE COLONIES—THE BISHOP OF COLOMBO.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether a Memorial has been received by the Governor of Ceylon with respect to an official letter stated to be "on Her Majesty's Service," and carried, as such, free from postage, written by the Bishop of Colombo, threatening a master in a Government-aided school in Ceylon with dismissal, for the offence of marrying a Wesleyan Methodist, in a Wesleyan chapel; whether any and what reply has been sent to such Memorial; and, whether he will take steps to prevent communications reflecting on the religious opinions of Native Christians being franked through the Colonial post offices as official documents "on Her Majesty's Service?"

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, the Colonial Office has received no communication from the Governor of Ceylon with reference to this matter; but he has been requested to report about it. The conduct imputed to Bishop Coplestone is so extraordinary that I can hardly bring myself to credit it until I receive official corroboration. The Government, indeed, have no control over the Bishop, except, perhaps, in this matter of franking; but all I can say as to this at present is that certainly this privilege was not granted for purposes such as those for which it is alleged it has been used.

VACCINATION—ALLEGED DEATH OF CHILDREN AT NORWICH FROM EFFECTS OF OPERATION—THE REPORT.

Mr. HOPWOOD (for Mr. P. A. Taylor) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he can say when the Report of the Inquiry into the Vaccination fatality at Norwich will be in print?

Mr. DODSON, in reply, said, that he could not answer the Question with any degree of precision; but he had made inquiries and he hoped the Report would be in the hands of Members in about a fortnight.

CRIMINAL LAW—EXCESSIVE SENTENCE—MARY COLE.

Mr. HOPWOOD (for Mr. P. A. Taylor) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that an old woman nearly eighty years of age, named Mary Cole, was a few days ago sentenced at the Durham Quarter Sessions to ten years' penal servitude, for stealing an apron and another article of the value of fifteen pence; and, if so, whether he will recommend a mitigation of the sentence?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the history of the case is this. The woman is not 80, as stated, but 77. During the last 20 years she has been 27 times convicted. She was out on ticket-of-leave under a sentence of penal servitude. She was kindly taken by a poor woman into her house, and she robbed her benefactress of all she possessed. She was then tried, and this sentence was then passed upon her. Under these circumstances, I have no intention of recommending a mitigation of the sentence which was passed upon an incurable offender by a Judge in whom everyone, I think, has great confidence. I mean Mr. Warton, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions at Durham. I would venture to submit to those who criticize sentences of this kind that the previous history of offenders should be inquired into, because a false impression is produced when it is supposed that a woman is sentenced to a severe punishment for what appears to have been a slight offence, but when the fact is that she is an incurable offender with whom it is impossible to deal in any other way than by keeping her in prison.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE AND SPAIN.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty with France have been definitely abandoned; and, whether any further information can now be given with regard to our commercial relations with Spain?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, no commercial negotiations with France have taken place since the publication of the Correspondence which has been laid before Parliament. As regards Spain, the latest information is contained in the Blue Book recently distributed.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC—FRENCH OCCUPATION OF RAIATEA—TREATY OF 1847.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French occupation of the island of Raitatia, in the South Pacific, against the Treaty of 1847, still continues; and, whether any arrangement between the French and English Governments on this subject has been arrived at or is impending?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I presume the hon. Member means Raiatea. The situation remains as it was on the 11th of August, when I replied to a Question on the subject put to me by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether Papers would be presented on the subject?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he would inquire whether any Papers could be presented; but he feared that he should be unable to comply with the right hon. Baronet's wish in this respect, as the matter was still under discussion between the Governments.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT, DUBLIN.

MR. DAWSON asked, What steps are being taken towards the commencement of the building of the new Science and Art Department in Dublin; and, what is the exact position of this question?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the selected designs for the Dublin Museum have been examined by the Science and Art Department with reference to their suitability for museum purposes and by professional architects with reference to their probable cost; and they have been submitted to Lord Spencer, whose opinion has just been received. Before a final decision is arrived at the five designs will be exhibited for a time in Dublin so as to obtain public criticism. Temporary premises have been prepared for the exhibition of the contents of the Museum while the new buildings are in progress.

MR. DAWSON wished to know whether the Corporation of the City of Dublin, as the representatives of the public of that city, would be consulted in the matter?

MR. COURTNEY: The members of the Corporation will have the opportunity of examining the designs like all other citizens of Dublin.

MR. DAWSON gave Notice that on an early day he should ask whether the Predecessor of the present Lord Lieutenant had not distinctly promised that the Corporation of Dublin would be consulted before the final adoption of any plan?

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MEDICAL ATTENDANCE.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the men of the Royal Irish Constabulary are compelled to pay a certain sum regularly every month for medical attendance; whether it is true that complaints were made by the men quartered in the town of Arklow, county Wicklow, through the head constable, of the non-attendance upon them and neglect of duty of the medical attendant; whether it was the duty of the head constable to lay the complaints made by the men before the proper authorities; whether it is true that an investigation was held by the county inspector into these charges, which resulted in the removal of the head constable to some remote part of Connaught; and, whether he will inquire into the matter, and repair any injustice that may have been done?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, members of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force do not pay any sum for medical attendance, as they are provided with such attendance free of cost. Complaints were made by the men quartered in Arklow through the head constable against the medical attendant. It was the duty of the head constable to lay the complaints before the proper authorities. The complaints were carefully inquired into by the County Inspector, who reported that they were exaggerated. The removal of the head constable had no connection whatever with those complaints, nor had the result of the inquiry anything to do to his removal.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state the number of applications for licences to carry arms which have been made under the Arms Act in the county of Wexford, and the proportion refused by the licensing authority; and, whether the district of Wexford is and has been almost entirely free from crimes of violence?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, in the County Wexford the number of applications for licences to carry arms has been about 5,611, and in about 30 of these cases licences had been refused. There have been but few crimes of violence recently committed in the county, and I feel pleasure in saying so. The district has not, however, been entirely free from crime. I find from the Returns presented to Parliament that there have been 93 outrages reported to the Constabulary Office up to the 30th of September this year, 47 of these being agrarian outrages.

Mr. REDMOND: Does that number include threatening letters?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It includes threatening letters; 33 of the number I have mentioned are offences against property—incendiary offences.

Mr. HEALY asked whether it was not the fact that Wexford was the only county in the South of Ireland that was not proclaimed under the Crimes Act?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — RETURNS OF ARRESTS, &c.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many warrants were issued under the late Coercion Act, how many persons were imprisoned, how many were re-arrested, what was the highest number arrested under any previous suspension of the Habeas Corpus and the date, how many persons were summoned under the Statute of Edward III., how many were imprisoned, how many of these were women, how many gave bail, and in how many cases were the bails estreated?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I cannot inform the hon. Member what was the number of warrants issued under the recent Act for the better protection of persons and property in Ireland; 987 persons were arrested under that Act, of whom 28 were arrested a second time. I am informed that 1,217 persons were arrested under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act of 1866; but I do not know if that was the highest number reached under previous Acts. If the hon. Member will specify some period for which he wants the information with regard to the number of persons summoned under the Act of Edward III., I will endeavour to obtain it for him. It will necessarily be a work of considerable labour.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many of the court valuers under the Land Act have been under police protection in their own localities and elsewhere; how many tenants were dispossessed by Mr. Gray, J.P. Mr. Russell, J.P. and Captain M'Gill, court valuers; and, when police protection ceased to be given to the two former gentlemen?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It has been found necessary to refer this Question to the several Court valuers for report; but, as they are employed on the business of their Circuits, replies have as yet been received in a few cases only. If the hon. Member will kindly repeat the Question on Thursday, I hope then to be able to give him a full answer.

STATE OF IRELAND — DISTRESS IN CLARE.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received a Copy of Resolutions recently passed by the guardians of the poor of Corofin, county Clare, calling attention to the high poor rates and county cess, and to threatened destitution in that union; and, if so, whether he will cause official inquiry to be immediately made into the statements contained in those resolutions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Local Government Board in Dublin have received from the Guardians of Ennistymon Union copies of resolutions relating to apprehended distress. These resolutions, which only reached the Local Government Board yesterday, will have immediate attention, and inquiry into the subject of them has already been ordered. I have seen copies of the resolutions in Saturday's Irish papers; but they have not yet reached me from the Guardians.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the Government have had their attention directed to the composition of the Commission appointed to try Arabi Pacha; and; if there is any truth in the statements that some of the Commissioners are political partizans of very questionable antecedents?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, we have no report on the antecedents of the Commissioners; but a list of their names was sent to us and read by me in the House. Although the Foreign Office, acting on the highest legal advice, has insisted on certain points thought necessary, they have no pretension to constitute the Court, or interfere in every detail of the trial.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the report that it is intended to exclude the Press during the coming investigation into the conduct of Arabi Pacha, and of the other prisoners who surrendered to the British Army; and, whether, if so, Her Majesty's Government will use their good offices with the Egyptian Government to insure full publicity being given to the proceedings?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the rules of procedure agreed upon between the advocate of the Egyptian Government and the counsel for the defence contained no provision for the exclusion of the Press; but although, as I have said, we have insisted on certain points which we thought necessary, we cannot undertake to conduct the trial from London.

EGYPT—THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, With what authority in Egypt, and by what document, Her Majesty's Government have arranged that the cost of the Army now being organised in that Country is not to exceed a specified amount; whether the document, in which such an agreement is laid down, will be laid before the House; and, whether the amount in question is to be maintained irrespective of the decision of the Chamber of Notables?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the information to which I alluded yesterday came from Sir Edward Malet, who was informed, on the 20th instant, that the amount estimated for the cost of the Egyptian Army would be the same as was laid down by the Liquidation Commission. The last branch of the Question comes under the statement made for himself and his Colleagues by the Prime Minister on the first night of the Session.

TURKEY—ARMENIA.

Mr. BAXTER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If any recent and urgent representations have been made by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of Turkey regarding the necessity, in the interest of a suffering population, and to prevent a civil war, which may end in annexation to Russia, of introducing immediately administrative reforms into Armenia?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Lord Dufferin's instructions are to make representations as to Armenia, and we have perfect confidence in the manner in which he has been executing them.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether any representation had been made by Lord Dufferin as to the introduction into Turkey in Europe of the reforms recommended by the Commission, of which the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was Chairman?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I cannot say positively; but my impression is that the subject has been mentioned recently. Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—TREATMENT OF THE SICK.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, If there is any foundation for the allegation that the Medical Service necessary for the proper treatment of the sick and wounded brought home on board H.M.S. "Malabar" was insufficient; if so, will he be good enough to state the cause, and, further, why measures were not adopted when the troops left for Egypt to insure in every respect an efficient Medical Service in connection with each regiment; and, if it is a fact that the care of the sick and wounded depended mainly upon the assistance of lady volunteer nurses sent out under the auspices of the Ambulance Society?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that the Committee presided over by Lord Morley will minutely investigate the allegations as to the treatment of the sick and wounded on board the *Malabar* and other ships on which they were embarked, and that I prefer not to prejudge the Committee's Report. With reference to my hon. Friend's inquiry, why what he considers an inefficient medical force was sent with the Expedition, the whole of this question will come before the Committee; but I am bound to say that beyond dispute no military expedition ever left this country with anything like the proportionate strength of medical officers and attendants. The number of medical officers actually embarked from England, not including India, was 163, besides 13 who would have left had not the additional drafts been stopped. The numbers of the Army Hospital Corps were 18 officers and warrant officers and 817 non-commissioned officers and men; and, in addition, 29 nursing Sisters were sent out by the War Department. Of course, I do not include Sisters of Mercy or Nuns sent by private societies, of whom we have no knowledge. Of the 29 Sisters six were obtained from the National Aid Society, to which I presume my hon. Friend's last Question refers. I may take this opportunity to say that, after considering the suggestions made to me yesterday as to enlarging the Committee, I came to the conclusion that, without in any way qualifying my absolute responsibility in the matter, I might make an addition to the Committee which from every point of view would strengthen it; and I accordingly asked the hon. and gallant Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) if he was willing to give us the benefit of his assistance. I am happy to say that he has consented, and the first meeting of the Committee will take place tomorrow.

SIR HARRY VERNEY wished to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman also to appoint a Member from that side of the House on the Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Baronet desires to put a Question he will be in Order, but he cannot raise a debate.

SIR HARRY VERNEY begged to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he would consider the question of appointing a Member from that side of the House?

MR. CHILDERS: I have not looked upon the appointment of this Committee as a political matter, and the fact that I have chosen the hon. and gallant Gentleman who sits opposite shows that I have not been actuated by any political motives. Three Members of the Committee will be officers of the Army; the secretary will also be an officer. I consider, therefore, that I have strengthened the military element sufficiently, and it is my duty to hold the balance justly between the different military and administrative departments. I think the House will agree with me that the Committee is now as strong as it can well be.

STATE OF IRELAND—FAMINE IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to reports in the public journals of wide spread distress and imminent danger of famine in the West of Ireland, arising from the extraordinary pressure of poor rate and seed rate, the wide spread failure of the potato crop, and the disastrous effect of recent storms on the harvest; whether he has noted the condition of things on Tory Island, nine miles from the mainland, where the bulk of the inhabitants are already deprived of every means of subsistence; whether the Government are sensible of the necessity of taking immediate steps for prevention of death by hunger; and, what measures, by way of reproductive works or otherwise, they propose to institute for that purpose?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, with regard to the first portion of the Question of the hon. Member, I have been in communication with the Local Government Board, and I am told that there is no reason to apprehend that there is widespread distress and imminent danger of famine in the West. With regard to the remainder of the Question, the attention of the Government has been directed to the statement respecting the condition of things in Tory Island. One of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board has been instructed to proceed at once to the Union to which it belongs and make immediate inquiries and report upon the subject. The Admiralty has placed a gun-boat at the disposal of the Government, and should there be any difficulty experienced in transporting provisions to the island, the gun-boat will be used for the purpose.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

MR. O'KELLY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government will order the dismissal of the chief constable of Gibraltar from the public service as a mark of their disapprobation of his conduct in illegally surrendering to the Spanish Government General Maceo and his companions?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I do not quite know whether the hon. Member in his Question points to the acting police magistrate who was reported to have given the order, or to the Chief Inspector of Police who executed it; but, whichever the hon. Member means, I would point out that until the inquiry which has been directed to be made is completed, it would be premature to apportion the blame and its punishment. I may add that the acting police magistrate who is supposed to have issued the order in question is no longer in that office, which he only held temporarily, as his successor was appointed about a fortnight ago.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask whether the refugees in question were given up on the application of the Spanish Government, or spontaneously by the English Magistrate; and, if given up on the application of the Spanish Government, whether that Government applied that they should be treated as common prisoners or as political offenders?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: As far as the report we have goes, what took place was this. The Spanish authorities communicated to the Colonial Secretary at Gibraltar the statement that certain prisoners named had escaped, and were expected to arrive at Gibraltar, and calling upon him to apprehend them in order that they might be claimed under the Extradition Treaty. The Colonial Secretary wrote to the police magistrate informing him that this application had been made, and giving directions that these men should be apprehended on their arrival. He only intended that they should be apprehended in order that due inquiry might be made to see whether there was anything in their cases to warrant giving them up. It appears that the acting police magistrate, without any further communication with the Colonial Secretary, or Governor, acted in the manner I described yesterday.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Did the Colonial Secretary at Gibraltar give any instructions as to the course to be adopted?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: He gave instructions that they should be apprehended.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: On what ground, unless there was some criminal accusation against them, could these men be arrested? They were purely political exiles.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: My hon. Friend's Question would lead me into a long discussion. When a friendly Government comes forward and asks another friendly Government for the arrest of certain men, undertaking to make a case for their extradition, it is usual for that friendly Government to comply with the request. ["Oh!"]

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Might I ask if my hon. Friend would apply that rule to the arrest of political exiles in this country?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I need hardly assure my hon. Friend that in the bare information we received there is no statement by the Spanish authorities that these men were political prisoners. On the contrary, they said they were convicts who had escaped, and the Colonial Secretary naturally expected that an inquiry would take place.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: By the Extradition Treaty with Spain, political offenders are expressly excluded. If, therefore, the Spanish Government have obtained these prisoners without stating that they were political offenders, they have obtained them under a false pretence. I want to know whether, by the Extradition Treaty, prisoners thus arrested are not to have the opportunity of applying for the *habeas corpus?* Was such an apportunity given them, or has a strong representation been made to the Spanish Government on the subject?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, Notice would have to be given of these Questions.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Under what provision of the Treaty were the prisoners given up?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It has been already stated that they were wrongfully given up, and therefore they were given up under no provision of the Treaty.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. BOURKE wished to ask a Question arising out of the Question which had been put by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said that the Government had nothing to do with the trial of Arabi Pasha. He would ask whether some representation would not be made to the authorities in Egypt to the effect that the Press ought to be admitted to the proceedings at the trial? Otherwise the public would be kept entirely in the dark as to what took place.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would repeat that Her Majesty's Government had no reason to suppose that the Press would be excluded. There was nothing to that effect in the rules which had been laid down, and which had been sent to the Foreign Office. With regard to making representations on the subject, without having reason to suppose the Press would be excluded, the right hon. Gentleman had better give Notice of his Question.

Mr. BOURKE said, that surely on a subject of that kind it was very easy to telegraph to Egypt. Considering that the House knew from the hon. Baronet that the Government had interfered already a good deal, it was surely fair they should be informed of the proceedings at the trial.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already said that if the right hon. Gentleman would give us a short time we will consider this matter. If he will give Notice for Thursday, I would be prepared to answer. I must point out the enormous difficulty that there would be in trying to conduct the government of Egypt from this country by telegraph.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—RETURN OF APPLICATIONS.

Mr. LEWIS gave Notice that on Thursday he would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland to lay on the Table of the House a Return of the number of applications that had been made under the Arrears Act, and the results of those applications.

Sir William Harcourt

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was anxious to give all information possible upon the subject; but he had received an earnest appeal from the administration of the Land Commission not to ask for more Returns than could be helped, for the time for getting through the immense mass of the business of the Commission had been very short indeed. Some Returns, however, he would ask for. He was very glad to be able to say that a member of the Land Commission had informed him that day that a large number of investigators—eight or 12—had just been appointed to carry on investigations, so that the Act had already been taken advantage of. He would write to-morrow and ask for Returns.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [ELEVENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. WARTON moved, as an Amendment, to insert in line 7, after "Question," the words "That the Question be now put." The object of the Amendment was to give clearness of expression to the Resolution, and to avoid confusion. At present the Resolution, like the Ghost in *Hamlet,* "came in questionable shape." It was important that close attention should now be given by the House to making the Rules clear in expression, for the House would have no Report upon them, and, what was more important, there was no other House to correct them.

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "Question," in line 7, the words "That the Question be now put." —(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was certain that no one could mistake the drift of the Resolution without this Amendment. Unquestionably, however, the Amendment placed the matter beyond all doubt, where doubt might possibly arise, and therefore he was prepared to accept the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. GIBSON: In rising to move the Amendment which stands in my name, I am very pleased indeed to find that the Prime Minister has commenced the proceedings to-day by being convinced; and I hope that will be an augury that he will be influenced by the arguments that I propose to address to the House. I make no apology for asking to be permitted to occupy the time of the House while I state, as shortly as possible, the arguments by which I hope to show that the Amendment I have put upon the Paper is one worthy of the acceptance of the House of Commons. The Government themselves, by the very step they have taken, show the importance they place upon these Rules. Those Members who attended on Tuesday and the two following days must have been conscious that there was a settled spirit of impatience abroad on that side of the House. I am sure that hon. Members who sit on the Government side will recognize that it is not fair and not legitimate, even from the Government standpoint, to give the arguments against the Government proposal anything but a fair hearing. The Prime Minister admitted to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) that for this Autumn Session there was only one precedent to be found in the present century upon which he could rely. [MR. GLADSTONE: No, no!] At all events, I am entitled to say that the Prime Minister only quoted one precedent, and admitted that during his own long Parliamentary career of half-a-century there was no precedent to be found. Therefore, when we are on a matter of such supreme importance, I am justified in saying that those who speak upon the matter are entitled to be heard at the fullest length that is necessary. Now, if hon. Members will reflect on these Resolutions, and consider a little what they will find in the most ordinary text-books on the history of the House of Commons, they will readily arrive at the conclusion that the changes proposed by the Prime Minister and the Government are the greatest ever proposed to the House to be made in its constitution. Unquestionably these Resolutions suggest to the Opposition the gravest alteration in their status ever suggested in the history of Parliamentary life; because up to this time it has been a wise and a great tradition of Parliament that both sides of the House have a duty to co-operate in the maintenance of order, and are equally bound to insist on its honour. And these Resolutions, and particularly the one under discussion, relegate and confine those duties mainly to the Party which chances to be in power at the moment; and if the minority are at all regarded, it is for the purpose, on the essential and fair construction of these Rules, of issuing against them a decree of practical outlawry. If the Resolutions are passed in the shape in which they stand at present, assuredly they must leave in the Opposition — what is most undesirable in the public interest—a rankling sense that they have been treated with harshness, injustice, and unfairness. I shall make no apology for discussing the Resolution, certainly at no length that I can avoid, but at a length that will enable me to submit my arguments to the House; and the very fact of the way in which this discussion has been carried on, looking at it broadly, in other parts of the House, renders it more necessary that those who speak from these (the Opposition) Benches should speak with complete fulness and at sufficient length. I make no reflections on those who do not speak. Hon. Members from Ireland, my own countrymen, exhibit, of course, characteristics that might be expected from the Representatives of a down-trodden people —reserve and taciturnity. I make no comment on that; but, possibly, we may find some of them overcoming the difficulties of their position, and taking part in the debate before it closes, and I reserve my judgment upon that. As to the Gentlemen of the Radical persuasion who sit below the Gangway, they have certainly exhibited a faith in their Leaders and in their conduct of affairs somewhat alien to the spirit of independence they have manifested on other matters. I read in the Recess an interesting speech of the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) at Reading, and it pointed out that owing to noisy, blatant, and talkative demagogues—he had not mentioned their nationality, but he had suggested it—thoughtful and eloquent Radicals had not a chance. Now is the golden opportunity for the thought and eloquence of the Radicals; but they appear to have been thinking so much of their eloquence that up to this time they have said little or nothing in the House on this matter. Therefore, it is but reasonable, when the Representatives who usually honour the House with their confidence and speech have not said much, that they should, at all events, when they cast nearly the whole burden of discussion upon these Benches, learn that our responsibility is considerable, and our duty, as we believe, to the House of Commons and ourselves is very great. Now, everyone admits that there is a necessity for reform—that some of the methods of the Procedure of the House are susceptible of improvement, and that abuses should, as far as may be, be corrected. But these admissions must not be taken as in the slightest degree an admission of the whole case of the Government. No one has ever denied on these Benches that they are willing to co-operate in any fair and legitimate reform; but we have suggested that caution and prudence are desirable and essential, bearing in mind that we are not dealing with a new Colonial Legislature created yesterday, nor with a Continental Lower Chamber having only a history of a few years, but with the great House of Commons of England, which has existed for centuries, and which has grown with her growth, and strengthened with her strength. I admit fully that whatever reform is now adopted should come up to the necessity of the case, but should not exceed it; and that it is absolutely necessary that the House and the Government should take the greatest possible care, and exhibit the most extreme caution, to avoid interfering with that legitimate freedom of speech which is our absolute right at present. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The first Resolution that stands upon the Paper the Government indicated themselves, by their speeches and by its position on the Paper, and the position they have given it in their utterances outside the House, is a Resolution of supreme importance. The construction of that Resolution is also a matter to be borne prominently and clearly in mind all through these debates. I wish, in a few sentences, to draw the attention of the House to it. My Amendment has been in print for a considerable time, as well as the Resolution. What is the construction of the whole Resolution as it stands? In a House of 100 Members —this is the deliberate judgment of the Government—a minority of 1 can prevent the application of any *clôture* whatever. In a House of 200 it requires a majority of 5 to 1 to apply the *clôture.* And then, by a sudden spring, without any degrees, once the House passes the magic number of 200 a bare majority of 1 suffices to apply this most drastic measure. There are many Amendments on the Paper challenging the propriety, the prudence, nay, the justice and fairness of applying it by a bare majority in the way I have stated. Some propose to sweep away the distinctions of 100 and 200, and to say that in no case shall the *clôture* ever be applied except on a two-thirds' majority. I have approached the question from a different point of view. I have listened most earnestly to all the debates on this question, and have recently read the speeches of the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and other Ministers, delivered in the months of February and March last; but the speech, if I may presume to say so, which most brought home to my mind what was in the mind of the Government when they framed this Resolution, was that of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. John Bright); and, desiring to place on the Paper an Amendment which would, as far as possible, run in the groove that the Government had laid out for themselves, I put an Amendment on the Paper which retained every syllable of the Government reform, which retained all their checks in favour of small minorities, and applied myself solely to take away the bare majority, which was in the first instance to operate when the House exceeded 200. The right hon. Gentleman to whose speech I have referred has indicated that the way the Government are going to meet the Amendment, which simply proposes to sweep away everything and substitute two-thirds, is to appeal to those who sit on these Benches below the Gangway, and say to them—"Oh, the Amendment which substitutes the two-thirds sweeps away the protection we have deliberately given you;" and they are prepared also to appeal to small minorities in other parts of the House, and say the Government have bought their battle by preserving the right of one man, in a House of 100, to prevent the application of the *clôture.* I recognize the force of that argument in the House of Commons; and, therefore, retaining all those limitations and checks which the Government have thought fit to apply to the protection of small minorities, I have sought to provide the additional protection that in no case shall the House, or any section of it, be silenced by a bare majority, or a very trivial or small majority. Anyone reading the Prime Minister's speech on the 20th of February, made in introducing these Resolutions to the House, will see that he approached the inquiry with an anxious desire not only to support himself by every argument which could suggest itself to his own ingenuity, but also by every appeal to authority which his own research or the research of others could place at his disposal; and it will be found, on an exhaustive examination of that speech, that the Prime Minister thought it necessary when proposing so immense an innovation in all the proceedings and modes of action of the House of Commons, not to rely on inconveniences which had been proved, not to rely merely on the necessity of reform, but to support his case by an appeal to every precedent and every authority that could be found, whether in foreign countries or in the Colonies. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman appealed to the action of the British Colonies, in which, he said, the British character and the British love of freedom are reflected. Sir, that appeal is one which should be closely examined at the present time. That appeal to authority cannot stand investigation. The Prime Minister mentioned six Colonies in which the power of *clôture* existed, although he said at the close of his speech that he would correct in some details the minutiæ of his assertions; but I find that there is only one of our Colonies, and certainly that not one of the most important, in which there is any form of *clôture* whatever, and there it is, more or less, of a paper form, introduced in the first paper constitution and not from any actual experience. But, more than that, he said it would not be found that any Chamber in our Colonies which had adopted this measure had ever discarded it. That was a very unfortunate appeal, because two of them, Colonies of considerable importance—Victoria and New Zealand—have tried and discarded the *clôture*; so that the Prime Minister, when asking the Parliament of England to make the greatest change it has ever made in its constitution, found it necessary to appeal to the Colonial Legislatures, and that appeal comes back against himself. The Colonies, however, supply us with this information—three of them never applied the *clôture* at all; two tried it and abandoned it; while in only one, and that not the most important, has it been retained. The Prime Minister also led us to suppose—he did not actually say so, he suggested—that this was a measure that was in frequent and vigorous and healthy operation in Europe. How does that statement stand the test of any examination? Of the 13 Lower Chambers in Europe, in only three is there anything that has any semblance to *clôture* by a bare majority. It will be, indeed, a strange thing that there should be at least five of our Colonies in which fuller freedom prevails than it will with ourselves if this proposal of the Government becomes law. The Resolution, then, of the Government is not supported by an appeal to the Colonies, while it is opposed to the practice of the vast majority of European Chambers. But I do not put this question of *clôture* by a bare majority upon any appeal to authority, or the failure of any such appeal. The suggestion that the minority should be silenced by a bare majority is opposed to the whole genius and habits of English public life. It will impair—it must impair—that freedom and independence of speech which is necessary for the discharge of the duties of public men. For it often happens that Members have to speak truths, and unpleasant truths, to Ministers; and if the legislative machine is to be interfered with in this way the House of Commons will lose one of its most important duties in the eyes of the people—that of being the grand inquest of the nation. No one recognized that fact more fully than the Prime Minister himself when in Opposition. These were his words, forcible and clear, shortly before he came into Office—

> "The prolonging of debate, even by persistent reiteration of arguments, was not necessarily an outrage or an offence, or even an indiscretion."

[Mr. Gladstone: Hear, hear!] I should like to know, if this Clôture Resolution is passed in its present shape, will the Prime Minister instruct the Speaker of the future, or the Chairman of Ways and Means of the future, that "persistent reiteration of argument is not an offence or even an indiscretion?"

Mr. GLADSTONE: "Not necessarily."

Mr. GIBSON: Not necessarily! No; but I venture to say probably. But these sentences of the Prime Minister are framed in the best possible way. He is always able to put his unerring finger upon some trifling word which enables him to give, shall I say a colour to his sentences? And it will be found as one of the great ornaments of the Prime Minister's style that, in almost all his interesting sentences and most nicely expressed arguments, there is a "substantially," or "in the main," or "as at present advised," or "not necessarily," as in the present instance. Well, I shall have to take the sentence with the Prime Minister's infirmity in it, and anyone who reads it will take it as a suggestion that persistent reiteration might be all right; but I venture to think, so long as he is in Office, that the right hon. Gentleman will not think so. It is rather startling to find the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) putting the question in an unusual way. He put it that it would be fair to speak so long, and so long only, as there was a chance of obtaining conviction; but when conviction was hopeless then it was right to stop. But that is a dangerous way of considering the matter. Suppose the Minister of the day gets up and says—"I am right; I know I am right; I know I am never wrong. My Party know and believe that I am never wrong. It is impossible to bring home to them the conviction that the Government measures are wrong—it is hopeless"—then Obstruction begins almost the very moment that debate begins.

Mr. DODSON: You have not read the whole of the sentence.

Mr. GIBSON: No, it is rather a long one; but I think I have read the important pearl. Then another revelation has been made to the House. This Rule we understood to be introduced to put down deadly Obstruction. We have been told now frankly by the Home Secretary, and with frankness and vigour by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, that this is all a mistake, and that this Rule is not to put down Obstruction at all, but to facilitate the legislation which the Government think desirable; and, as the noble Lord put it, to prevent that reiteration which the Prime Minister stated before he came into Office might not necessarily be even an indiscretion. I hope the House will take distinct note of that. If you ask nine people out of ten in the country what is the justification for the revolution that is sought to be worked in the liberty of public speech by this 1st Resolution; if you read the speeches which have been made on many platforms by responsible men on the Ministerial side of the House, you will find that the great justification persistently, prominently, and steadily put forward for this change is Obstruction. It cannot be too clearly understood that this is not the justification now put forward in the House of Commons, but something else, and that not once only, but repeatedly, by the Ministers of the Crown. The great argument advanced in favour of the *clôture* by a bare majority is that the present state of things is intolerable. Is that an argument for a Rule which denies all toleration? Then it is argued that a majority of 1 can decide the fate of the most important legislation. It is true that a majority of 1 can at the present moment decide the most important measure; but why? Because the House of Commons and every Member has been fully heard, that is why effect is given to the Votes of Parliament—because every one has been fully heard and, it may be, beaten, but fairly beaten. I ask the attention of the House to the difference between that argument and the arguments of yesterday and the day before, when we were told that the Government could not accept any Amendment that was not due to the action of the whole House. Similarly, when it was suggested yesterday by an hon. Member opposite that Parliament had a right to expect that a Minister should rise in his place and declare openly before the House what was whispered in the House, we were told—"No; the application of the Rule is to be the act not of a Party, but of the whole House." But how can such arguments be consistent with the principle that a majority of 1 should deprive the minority of free speech? Your previous argument was that the *clôture* would be the act of the whole House; your argument now is that a Party majority of 1 will suffice. Then it is argued that the Government and Parliament would prefer a simple to an artificial majority, and that it is simpler and clearer to have a bare majority. What has the Government done in the very Resolution before the House, compared with the closing lines of which my proposal is simplicity itself? Why, they recognize all sorts of complexities and refinements; and it is rather too late to say that minds capable of grasping such complications cannot understand the proposition that two-thirds shall be able to silence one-third. As Mr. Baden Powell very tersely put it—

> "In a full House one man can stop a debate, and in a thin House one man can prevent a debate from being stopped."

The 1st Resolution of the Government really contradicts every argument by which they ever sought to justify interference with Obstruction. They always used to say that Obstruction came from a narrow section, and from a limited number of the House, and they were always willing to acknowledge that the great bulk of their opponents were alive to the obligations of complying with the traditions of the House; but what do I find? I find in this Resolution the most jealous care to guard small minorities from whom Obstruction might come, and the most immense pains taken to gag large minorities from which, admittedly, Obstruction has not come. We are told that our fears are groundless, because there are safeguards. You, Sir, are a safeguard for the present, and it is suggested that the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees will always be the safeguards of the House. Notwithstanding what the Prime Minister said yesterday, I must still uphold my own views. If you, Sir, were always to sit in the Chair I should not have so much to say in the matter, though I should vote against giving this power even to yourself; but in time to come, when the Party in power is doing its best to overcome its opponents, I decline to believe that the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees will never be alive to political influences. I do not say that the Speaker of the future will not be honourable; I do not say that the Chairman of Ways and Means will not be always a most respectable Gentleman; but, at the same time, I have a strong suspicion that his methods will be those of decorous partizanship; and I hold that it is absolutely necessary, if the House is to retain its honour and its character, that the Speaker, and the Gentleman who presides in the absence of the Speaker, should be above suspicion. I venture to assert, and I am confident it is the belief of all, or very nearly all, those who sit on these Benches, that it will be impossible for those two Officers of the House to be above suspicion if the *clôture* can be enforced by a bare majority. If ever we find a Speaker in sympathy with the Parties whose interests require the *clôture* to silence its political opponents, it will be impossible for us not to regard his action with acute and justifiable suspicion. We are asked to give one who may be a partizan despotic power, in the hope that he will not use it despotically and as a partizan; and if that hope is falsified he will be allowed to work his wicked will, for no one will be able to undo what may be his mistake, his error, or his offence. The Speaker of the future, if the bare majority is retained, will be in this dilemma—if he does not apply the *clôture* when the whispers of the Whips tell him it is desired by his Party, he will be open to the censure and frowns of his political friends; while, if he does apply the *clôture* against the consciences of those whose voices he silences, he will be exposed, necessarily and justly, to the contempt of the whole nation. [Mr. Gladstone: Hear, hear!] And besides, the Speaker is not left even to his own regulated sense of public duty, or to the trained discretion of his conscience, or to his own reading of what he thinks justice requires. His duty is to be indicated to him unmistakably, and we are to be safeguarded by the fact that he is to be fortified—or shall I say driven?—by the "evident sense of the House." What is the meaning of that, and how is that evident sense to be brought to the ears of the Speaker? Yesterday an hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bryce) suggested the propriety, nay, the decency, of openness, and argued that the Minister of the day should rise in his place and say —"I am of opinion that the time has now come, and that the evident sense of the House is that the debate should be closed." The "evident sense of the House," if that is not to be done, can be shown only in two ways—either by noisy clamour or by secret and sinister whisperings. That is an absolutely exhaustive statement, and it is impossible for anyone to say how the "evident sense of the House" can otherwise reach the ears of the Speaker. However, the Minister will not rise in his place, and it is denied that the Whips on the Treasury Bench are to communicate to the Speaker in whispers the "evident sense of the House." What, then, is left but menagerie cries for the *clôture* to be met by similar noises in favour of the continuance of the debate? It will be a question of clamour and counter-clamour, of screaming and counter-screaming. The Prime Minister, when in Opposition, used an admirable phrase, which, for once, was not qualified by the word "necessarily." The evident sense of the House will be indicated by "obstreperous disorder."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Will you give me a reference to that, please?

Mr. GIBSON: I am answerable for everything except "obstreperous disorder." And what is the meaning of the word "evident?" It means, according to the Prime Minister yesterday, not a bare majority, not the clamour of one side, but the general sense of all parts of the House. I think I am justified in saying that that was the meaning of what the Prime Minister more than once stated to the House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will explain my own meaning, if you please.

Mr. GIBSON: As a mere matter of political precaution, and, I may say, of admiration, I hardly ever go anywhere now without being armed with some quotation from the Prime Minister. I heard the right hon. Gentleman say yesterday that, by the "evident sense of the House" he did not mean the clamour of one Party; and that would indicate that if it was not to be of one Party, it was to be the clamour of more than one Party; and I merely put my gloss on that expression, and concluded that the "evident sense of the House" was to be indicated from all parts and from both sides. On February 20 the Prime Minister spoke of—

> "Resistance to the unquestioned will of the House—not to the will of one Party in the House, or of a mere majority, but to what may be called the evident sense of the House."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 1139.]

I think, then, that I have correctly stated the meaning attached by the right hon. Gentleman to the words "the evident sense of the House." That indicates that the majority that is to ratify the evidence of that sense should not be a bare majority—that the evidence of the majority who are to evidence that sense that is not to be confined to one Party shall not itself be confined to one Party. If that is so—and that is really what my Amendment says—why not say so in the Resolution? It is admitted that if there is only a bare majority to support the Speaker's judgment of the "evident sense of the House," that that is a grave scandal; the Speaker has made an immense mistake; and it is a circumstance that would be regretted as a scandal if on a great policy, or on the discussion of a great Bill, one half the House were silenced by a close and narrow majority. If that be so, is it not well to provide, as my Amendment does, that the Speaker's error in interpreting the "evident sense of the House" shall be rendered impossible by putting in such a majority as my words would indicate, instead of leaving the Speaker's error to be stereotyped without the possibility of rectification? Whether my figures are taken or not—whether it is a two thirds' majority or any other—I say it would be monstrous to pass this Resolution against political opponents in a shape in which such an injustice would be plainly and distinctly possible. The "evident sense of the House"—what does it mean? It will be found by a most superficial examination on the part of anyone who reads with the plain desire not to misunderstand what he is reading that there is a contradiction in terms between the "evident sense of the House" which the Speaker is to interpret, and the bare majority which would indicate the existence of that sense. Is it fair, reasonable, or just that the Opposition should be excluded from giving the natural evidence at their disposal on the Speaker's judgment by walking into the Division Lobby? Why should the voting be all confined to one Party? Can a single reason be given that is based on justice? If this Resolution is examined by anyone who comes here to make up his mind for himself, he will find that it contains within itself a most powerful argument in favour of the Amendment. The "evident sense of the House," when the House consists of 100, may be set aside by one man; and when it consists of 200, it may be set aside by one-fifth. Is it not monstrous that, by a bound to the opposite direction, one man can indicate against 300 the "evident sense of the House?" We are told that the Speaker is to have regard to both sides of the Chair. How is the general sense of the House to be known if he confines his attention to the clamour of one Party and cannot appeal to a division, which would tell whether he had judged correctly or erroneously? He will have judged—it may be fairly and honourably; but if the argument of the Government is honest, he will have judged erroneously if it is found that there is a mere Party and bare majority. I would fain hope that hon. Members opposite have the honour and character of the House of Commons in their minds as much as we have. I hope they are anxious to be satisfied in their own minds that what they are passing is a legitimate reform of the whole House of Commons, and not the forging of a mere weapon to be used against their political antagonists; but I would ask every one of them this question—If the Conservatives were in power, and they proposed this Resolution, how many of you would support it? If you would not support this Resolution if it were proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, must not that be an admission that you are passing this measure, not for the reform of the House of Commons—nor for the advancement of its honour and dignity—but to strengthen the hands of your own Party against your political opponents? On the 6th of May the Prime Minister, in a deliberate and considered letter, volunteered to the Leader of the Opposition, stated that he was willing to accept the Amendment which I am now moving, with the intention of allowing the Rule thus altered to be tested by experience.

Mr. GLADSTONE: State my reason, if you please.

Mr. GIBSON: I have not got the quotation with me; but I am perfectly sure I have taken those words correctly. Why did the Prime Minister write that letter? Why has he qualified and withdrawn that letter? Was it from the difficulties and the weakness of the Government at that moment he wrote that letter? Or was it from a sense of public convenience and public justice? If that was the deliberate opinion of the Prime Minister, written with all the weight of his representative position, and if that had been adopted in the earlier portion of this Session, it would now have been a Standing Order of the House, and it might have governed our deliberations for years. What were the arguments of justice—he is bound to put it upon justice—that satisfied him that he was then bound as Prime Minister to make that statement; and why has he now thought it necessary to change it? He was wise when he proposed to allow the Rule thus altered to be tested by experience; but is it not strange to find that now, instead of proceeding experimentally by steps, as is done with every institution in the world, the Prime Minister suggests that the experiment shall be tried at once in its final and most drastic shape? In the letter the Prime Minister proposed to try the Rule thus altered, so as to have it tested by experience. Why not test the Rule, as altered by my Amendment, by the experience then appealed to, instead of abandoning the appeal to experience, and trying brute force at once? When and why did the Prime Minister change that deliberate opinion for which he gives a reason? Was it slowly, painfully, reluctantly? On the 14th of July he was asked a Question; but he postponed an answer to a more convenient season. On the 2nd of August, again, the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) asked, with the greatest precision, what the Government would do on this question; and the Prime Minister replied that later on he would announce the decision of the Government. It was not until the 14th of August, months after the proposal had been made, that the Prime Minister said that he would take the course which has now been adopted. The reasons given by the Prime Minister on the 14th of August are alike painful and curious. He stated that the terrible occurrence in Phœnix Park had altogether altered the course of Public Business. Is that a reason why a proposal deliberately put forward to the Leader of the Opposition should be abandoned? Is a change in the course of Public Business a sufficient reason for the withdrawal of a suggestion so deliberately made? Is the freedom of the House dependent upon the accident of events? Is a great National deliberative Council to be fettered by a crime? Are we to be told that a terrible crime not only killed two distinguished and honourable public servants, but that it gave to the Minister of the day an excuse for withdrawing a concession which he had announced he found it just to make? Why is this change made in the deliberate opinion and suggestion and offer of the Government? What has the House done that it should be so treated? I am entitled to ask from this Bench what has the Opposition done that they should be so treated? The Leader of the Opposition was deliberately written to by the Prime Minister, who made a certain offer on the 6th of May. I ask what have those who follow the lead of my right hon. Friend done since the 6th of May to justify this withdrawal of a legitimate concession? Sir, this Resolution of a bare majority is a grave and a serious one. It makes the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means—I say it again because I feel it strongly—more servants of a Party than servants of the House. It makes a private Member little better than a nonentity. [Mr. R. N. Fowler: Hear, hear!] It drives away the Opposition from co-operation, and everyone who has thought on this question knows that it must imperil the finality of legislation. Legislation is accepted by those who have been beaten in opposition because they have been fairly heard and fairly beaten; and if this Resolution is passed with a bare majority, unamended and unchanged, this House of Commons will be little better than a kind of superior Department of the Government of the day. Sir, I am opposed to this *clôture* altogether. I think it interferes with the independence of Parliament and the freedom of its Members; and I do venture to hope that many in this House will be found to support an Amendment which tries to maintain as far as still may be some of that independence and some of that freedom.

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, I am desirous, in the first place, to recall the attention of the House to the nature and scope of the question which is before us. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in his closing sentences, has fairly avowed that he is opposed altogether to the introduction of any closing power whatever. I would remind the House that although a considerable portion of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was really addressed to the question whether there should be a closing power or not, yet that is a matter which, after five nights of debate, the House has decided by a large majority; and the question now is, whether the closing power should be exercised, under the safeguards which we propose, by a simple majority of the House, or by some form of artificial majority, the right hon. and learned Gentleman having selected an artificial majority of two-thirds. Now, Sir, some portions of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman are really of that character which, I think, though impressive in point of oratory, have little bearing on the subject in debate. The right hon. and learned Gentleman appeals to Gentlemen on this side of the House, and says—"How many of you would have supported these Resolutions had they been proposed by a Conservative Government?" [*Opposition cheers.*] An excellent Party taunt; but open at once to the retort, which those Gentlemen do not seem to have anticipated—"How many of you who are now opposing the Resolutions would have opposed them if they had been suggested by a Conservative Government? I think the House will feel that we may allow these arguments to pair off together. Let me begin by making admissions to the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He says, and says truly, that these are the greatest changes, taken in the mass, that have ever been proposed in the Procedure of the House of Commons. It is perfectly true; and why, Sir, is it true? Because they are proposed under the greatest necessity; because upon every other occasion when change has been discussed it has been matter of convenience and relative advantage. But we have now arrived at a point when the question really is, whether the House of Commons is to discharge its work, or whether it is to leave that work undischarged? I affirm that the history of the last few years, and the history of the last two years in particular, distinctly shows that that, and nothing less than that, is the question. Therefore, I admit frankly to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that these are the greatest changes that ever have been proposed. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman came to the argument of precedents abroad, and he reproved me to some extent—I do not complain of it in the slightest degree—for having imperfectly and inaccurately stated to the House the case of the Colonial Assemblies. But accurate information on these points is not always to be had at short notice; and I am sorry to say that though the notice has been a long notice, the right hon. and learned Gentleman is not accurate in the state and the information at which his mind has arrived. It is not true that two Assemblies have adopted and rejected a closing power. What is true is this ——

MR. GIBSON: Having adopted it for purposes of urgency.

MR. GLADSTONE: Having adopted it for purposes of urgency. That is quite a different matter. Neither is it true that in only a single Colony is there a closing power, for the closing power obtains in both Houses, I think, of South Australia, and in one House in the Elective Legislative Council at the Cape. But I quite agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman to this extent—that the practice in the Colonies will not afford me a positive argument; and I am bound to say I do not think the absence of that practice will afford a positive argument to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because why are we asking the House to adopt a closing power? Not because we think such a thing to be *per se*, and in an ordinary state of things, desirable and advantageous; but because we think that under the pressure of strong necessity, when the question is whether the duties of the House are to be discharged or not, it is better to adopt a closing power than to leave those duties undischarged. But that dilemma has not been presented to the Colonial Assemblies. In those comparatively infant and slightly-developed societies and institutions, the business of their Legislative Chambers is usually easily managed, and no such question has arisen as a question of necessity for those Assemblies in general, as the question that is now before us. Now, with regard to the practice of foreign countries, I am not able at all to concur with the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. On the contrary, we are prepared to challenge that statement seriously; but I will not enter upon the details of the subject, because I wish rather to go through what are, after all, the more vital points of the argument, and then in a few words to state distinctly to the House what is the position of the Government in relation to the question now before us. Sir, the right hon. and learned Gentleman has argued against the present proposal from the precedent supplied by us in the offer we made last May; from the little confidence that can, under a Resolution like this, be reposed in the character of the Speaker; from what he considers to be the gross inconsistency of our provisions with respect to a House under 200, and our provisions for a House over 200; from the evident tendency, as he thinks it, of our plan to gag, as he terms it, a large minority of this House; and likewise from what he says amounts to a contradiction in terms—a contradiction, so he phrases it, between our binding the Speaker to look to the "evident sense of the House," and our insisting upon it that on a division that evident sense shall be shown by a simple majority. These, I think, were the principal arguments as between a two-thirds and the simple majority which were employed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I will refer first to that which, although it has the least weight in itself, yet I admit has the greatest force as an argument *ad hominem.* The right hon. and learned Gentleman says truly that in May we made an offer to the Opposition that, provided they were prepared to accept the Resolutions—I have not got my letter; but, generally, it was to the effect that, provided they were prepared to accept the Resolutions generally in a spirit of co-operation, and to forward their passing through the House, we, although we had not dropped our objections or any of our objections to the two-thirds or any artificial majority, yet we were willing to take it upon trial. Now, why did we do that? I admit that we offered to pay a very high price for the object we had in view. I admit it to be extremely doubtful whether we were right in offering it. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has spoken of the withdrawal as if our taking a different course were a great wrong to the Opposition. But he will allow me to remind him that till this hour—till I heard the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman—I never had the right to say that the Opposition were willing to accept that offer. According to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, the offer was to remain hanging in the air. I am not finding fault with them for not accepting it, but with the right hon. and learned Gentleman for attempting to show that although it was not accepted yet our freedom was impaired. It was apparently, according to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, to remain hanging in the air, and to be taken up according to the way in which it might be of advantage to his Party, and it was to be brought forward against us as if it were in the nature of a contract.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The letter stated that the offer was to be made in the House, and it never was made in the House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Certainly; but that is totally irrelevant to my observation. I am not complaining of not having had an answer. But I say that no answer was given, and that to-night is the first occasion on which I have heard that it was the intention of the Opposition to accept it. Consequently, it is not to be supposed—as it would have been supposed from the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman—that for five or six months this matter has stood as an arrangement proposed by us and accepted by the Opposition. The reason which induced us to make the offer was a practical reason, and it was this. We had the months of May and June—the greater part of June—which we then hoped would be available for the general business and legislation of the country, if we could get Procedure out of the way. We saw—I am obliged to say it—that there was a disposition on the other side of the House to discuss Procedure at a most unnecessary length; and therefore we had to reckon, if we were to proceed with our Resolutions at the rate at which we were dealing with them, on a lost Session. Well, Sir, we were most anxious to gain the Session. There was not at that moment any certain necessity for Irish legislation to be dealt with immediately. We hoped, if we could get rid of Procedure, we should have six weeks or more available for the general business of the country; and, as a choice of evils, we did make the offer to give the two-thirds' majority a fair trial, believing, as we did, without any doubt, that experience would show that it would entirely fail in its operation and prove to be no satisfactory solution of the question. I have said plainly what was the motive that led us to offer that important concession. Circumstances had occurred, and were forced upon the House of Commons, requiring immediate consideration which deprived us of the possibility of reaping any of the fruits which we hoped for from a concession of that kind; and, that being so, it really would have been absurd on our part had we attempted to persevere with such a plan of action. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has gone back, and back, and back, and 100 speakers almost have gone back, and back, and back, upon the question of the Speaker of the future. It is quite plain, I think, that the main argument between the two sides of the House almost turns upon that subject. But I find it really difficult to understand the position of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to this matter. We have said that the Speaker, the one great impartial authority of the House—I am now speaking of the full House, and not of the House in Committee, though we think the Chairman follows in the train of the argument—shall exercise this function; but in the exercise of this function that he shall appear as what he is—the Officer of the House, not of the majority of the House. We will carefully keep away every semblance of a connection between the Speaker and the majority in the formation of his judgment or in inciting him to move. But we have been met with the argument that such will be the recognized, or the unrecognized pressure, of the majority, that it will overbear the authority of the Speaker in the Chair. Yet, having an opportunity yesterday while I was speaking against the Motion of my hon. Friend, the Party opposite, with a few exceptions—I must say, considerably to my surprise—gave a vote under which the Minister of the day, backed by his majority—because I undoubtedly admit that the Minister of the Crown can ascertain the sense of the majority from my noble Friend near me, or whoever may hold the Office which he holds —may, by a formal application, put the Speaker in motion on this subject. We fundamentally and practically object to such a scheme; we would rather at once throw over this proposal with regard to the closing power than contaminate it by bringing the action of a Party and Party influence into connection with the Chair. Our contention about the Speaker is simple, and at the same time full. We say the Speaker will not, and cannot, deviate from the impartiality of the Chair. That he is infallible we have never stated. The Speaker may err under the Rules which he has now to administer; he may err under the Rules which he will have to administer; but we say he never can deviate from the impartiality of the Chair. The man who, in mature life, is chosen to preside over this House has a character which is worth something to himself no less than to the House. And it is charging upon him that he is a fool to throw that character away for the purpose of flattering the passions of the majority, while he knows that it is the first condition of his Office that, at every time and in every way, he is to avoid flattering. He has the whole traditions of the House to repress him, and to put him to shame, in case he follows such a course. But if hon. Gentlemen do not believe in force of character combined with mature life; if they do not believe in the force of the traditions of this House in governing the action of the Speaker; if they believe—as they do believe—that he will be ready to make himself the blind instrument of what he believes to be Party passion in the majority of the House, well, then, I say—if I must descend to such an argument—a degrading argument, but a conclusive one—I say the Speaker dare not do that. If he does it, he must cease to be Speaker. Does not the right hon. and learned Gentleman know that if the Opposition in this House—aye, when it is in a much weaker state than it is at this moment—if any considerable Party in this House, and any Party discharging the functions of the Constitutional Opposition, smarting under a sense of injustice, exhibit it by their speeches and their arguments, on an appeal to the public sense of the nation, throughout which all intelligence from within the walls of this House is circulated from moment to moment—does he not know that it would be as possible for a despot or a tyrant——

MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear! [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Name!"]

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope the hon. Member for Cavan will graciously allow me——

MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear! ["Oh, oh!"]

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a kind of closing power which I think it is not desirable to introduce. It would be as possible, Sir, for a despot or a tyrant under our Constitutional laws to sit on the Throne of this country as it would be for a Speaker to retain the Chair of this House when once he had visibly and appreciably and practically made himself the slave of Party passions? Now, Sir, it is a strong thing to ascribe to your opponents a total blindness—I do not say to the public interests—but a total blindness to the consequences of their own acts, to their own Party interests. I will refer to the speech made when this question was under consideration by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). The right hon. Gentleman said, and fairly said, that if these Rules were to be abused by us, he did not envy us the time we should have in the Autumn, when the public came to discuss the subjects of this Session. Indignation would visit not only the Speaker, but the majority with which he was in presumed co-operation. The consequence of such a miserable pollution of the consecrated traditions of the Chair would be the total and rapid ruin of the Party which had attempted so nefarious and insane a scheme. I think I have said enough on the argument with respect to the Speaker. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) then said that there were provisions for a House below 200 and for a House below 100, but a want of provision for a House above 200. But there is no inconsistency in our provisions. The provisions below and above 200 are distinctly founded upon a principle which crosses and limits the principle of the closing power. We deemed it to be a power so grave that it ought only to be exercised in a House of considerable numbers; and as that is so, we introduced special provisions applicable to a House below a certain number. But when the House is 200 or more we thought there was a state of things in which it is qualified to exercise satisfactorily, upon the motion of its highest Officer, any function whatever that belongs to it as a Legislative Chamber; and therefore it was not because we wanted to establish an inconsistency between a small number and a large one, but because, as now we deny to any assembly of Members less than 40 the power of forming a House, so we go on to deny to any assembly of Members less than 200 the absolute right of exercising the closing power. Then, Sir, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said we were going to gag a large minority of this House. My hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) said the other night that this was an undisguised attack—I think, or, if a disguised attack, so much the worse—but a vital attack on the Tory Party, and that they would resist it. Now, I am going to make an offer; but I do not know whether he will attach much value to it. If it should prove that this Rule is really a piece of Party machinery, and is calculated to silence the Opposition in this House, I promise him that he will find me among the first—whether in Office or out of Office—to join, to co-operate heartily, with those who attempt either to subvert or alter this Rule, and to deprive it of all its noxious operation. But what astonishes me is the want of faith hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite exhibit in their own position and powers when backed by a just law. I say that no power on earth is sufficient to put down a minority in this House, exercising the functions of a Constitutional Opposition, and pleading for liberty of speech. And if that is so, and if we agree in asserting it, why do hon. Gentlemen opposite persist in charging upon us that we are deliberately setting about the accomplishment of that which we all loudly proclaim to be impossible and absurd? The gagging of a large minority is impossible. There never has been an occasion in this House when a large minority wanted protection. It is in the power of a large minority, smarting under injustice, that injustice being derived from the Chair itself, within a month to put the Speaker out of the Chair. ["No!"] No; not by the vote of a bare majority, not by the vote of two-thirds, but by making the Speaker feel, as he would feel, that he has lost the confidence of the House; that his position has undergone an essential change; that he no longer possesses any confidence except the confidence of a Party; that his position is totally untenable, and, consequently, that he must abandon it. And not only would they have the power of making the position of the Speaker untenable, but the power, with the greatest facility, to make the Business of the House impossible. Why, Sir, we had last year in operation, under the Rules termed the Rules of Urgency, a system of extreme stringency, qualified, it is true, by a majority of three-fourths. [*Opposition cheers.*] That is perfectly immaterial in the circumstances in which we stand. I grant you at once that, for an exceptional case of that kind, where a very limited section of the House is in conflict with the enormous majority of the House, the majority of three-fourths is as effective—indeed, more effective—than a bare majority, because it represents the action of a very large proportion of the House, instead of leaving the majority of the House responsible, as it ought to be, for its own acts. But what happened under those Rules of Urgency? Have hon. Gentlemen ever considered the great delay in the debates of last year upon the Protection of Person and Property Bill which was disposed of under those Rules? Do they remember how many weeks were spent on that Bill, which only contained two clauses? That was the effect of the co-operation of a set of Gentlemen, perhaps not more than about 30 or 35 in number. I do not know that they were smarting under any special sense of injustice. [Mr. BIGGAR: Oh, yes.] Well, I think, at any rate, this—that they did not succeed in bringing home to the public mind that they were suffering under injustice—[Mr. BIGGAR: Oh, yes.]—with as much efficiency—and that is the point of my argument—as a Constitutional Opposition would be able to bring home that under which they were suffering—[An hon. MEMBER: They are English.]—to the bulk of this country. [An hon. MEMBER: English.] Very well; but that does not touch my argument. My argument is to show how much was done by a set of Gentlemen who admit they could not bring home the sense of injustice they were suffering to the public mind. [An hon. MEMBER: English minds.] Very good; but the English and Scottish mind is the mind of 30,000,000 of people; and the fact that they brought it home to the minds of 5,000,000 of people would be a very limited operation, compared with the operation which this minority would be able to effect. What I want to make is a "rule of three" sum. I want to show that a minority, insignificant in numbers, though, I grant, with an abundance of talent and courage and admirable organization—I freely give them that amount of praise—and not having, as they say they have not, the ear of the 30,000,000 of people of this country, nevertheless was able to detain this House for many, many weeks in discussing under the Rules of Urgency two clauses of the Protection of Person and Property Bill. Then we are told that, under these milder laws, with nothing to prevent them from appealing to the entire population of the Three Kingdoms, a minority six or eight times as large as that of the Irish minority of last year would have no power, smarting under a sense of injustice received from the Chair and from the majority, of vindicating itself by stopping, arresting, and retarding the Business of the House. In my opinion, nothing can be more absurd and unjust on the part of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite towards themselves, their Party, and their cause, than the apprehensions they entertain, that what they call a gag is to be put into their mouths by the operation of the Rule of Urgency. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman says there is a contradiction in terms between our acceptance of the "evident sense of the House" as the criterion to determine the Speaker's action and our determination to press the House with all our might and main to accept the principle of a simple majority. The right hon. and learned Gentleman contends that amounts to a contradiction in terms. I say it does nothing of the kind; and I will point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the fundamental fallacy of his argument. His assumption is this—that all those who desire or are willing that the debate should close are ready, on a division, to vote that it should close. If that assumption be sound and true, then the right hon. and learned Gentleman is not far from being right. But his assumption is totally without foundation. I will not follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman into his play upon the different meanings of the word "Obstruction." He said—"You admit this Resolution is against Obstruction, and yet you are going to force it upon those who never obstruct." The word "Obstruction" is sometimes used in the sense of penal offence, and sometimes in the sense of offering general impediments, needless and frivolous procrastinating speeches to the Business of the House. We have stated, I think, that the chief business of this Resolution is to get rid of tedious and frivolous speaking thrust upon the House in the elongation of debates without necessity and without justification. For the purposes of my argument, I must suppose—although I have no persons in particular in view—that there are Members in this House who may occasionally fall into that error, and who, when a debate has reached its natural close, are willing, against the "evident sense of the House," and are disposed to force themselves upon it and carry it forward. But those Gentlemen—those offenders, if I may so call them—are Members of the one or the other political Party. In order to simplify my argument, I do not speak of the Third Party in the House. Apart from questions of Irish policy, they are Members of one political Party or the other. But what happens upon these occasions? The fact is notorious. The Front Bench opposite, if a body of their Party offend by prolonging a debate that ought to close, would not join in intelligible manifestations of their desire that it should close; they would leave that to other people, and if it formed the subject of division, they would not vote against those Gentlemen. It could not be done. To be passive, or quietly to accept the decision of the House in conformity with their own nominal wish, is what is to be expected from them; and, therefore, I differ entirely from the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and I assert that, in the practical working out of this matter, there are numbers of men who wish a debate to terminate, but who cannot, from the relations of Party subsisting among us, vote that the debate should terminate—they wish the speakers to be done, and out of the way; but they cannot vote them down, and therefore I entirely repel and repudiate the assumption of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the number of persons ready to vote that a debate should terminate is a proper test of the number of persons who wish that it should terminate. I must state very briefly my objection to the plan of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I have dealt rather fully with his objections to our plan. Our objections to his plan are two. I might, indeed, fall back upon authority here. I do not know what the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon now are; but I find him reported on the 27th of July, 1877, thus—and there is much weight to be attached to his judgment in any matter connected with the Business of the House, which he knows so thoroughly. He then said, on the proposal that a penal regulation should be made—

> "I would lay special stress upon the importance of avoiding the introduction of a distinction between an absolute majority and a majority of two-thirds or three-fourths. I cannot help thinking that there would be great danger in introducing such a distinction, because it might be the beginning of a system to which I should very much object—giving to a majority of two-thirds or three-fourths power to do that which we should not like to do with an absolute majority."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxxvi. 68.]

That opinion was repeated at a later date, for on the 26th of February, 1880, just before he quitted Office, when moving a Standing Order as to the suspending of an individual Member, the right hon. Baronet again said—

> "The hon. Member for Plymouth (Mr. Sampson Lloyd) proposes another thing which I do not agree with. He says that when this Motion is made it shall not be carried except by a majority of two-thirds. I think that is a very awkward Rule to lay down. It would be an entirely new practice in this House. We know of no such thing in this House as majorities of two-thirds. I should be exceeding sorry to see the introduction of such a principle as that in our proceedings, of which we at present know nothing."—[*Ibid.* ccl. 1460.]

That was the impartial, responsible, and deliberate judgment of the right hon. Gentleman, and I think that it is one that may very well weigh with the House. But my objections to the Motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman are two—first, its injustice, not to all minorities, but to small minorities; and, secondly, its injustice to the majority of this House. For I do venture to think that the majority of this House, who are the persons responsible to the people of the country for the things done in Parliament, have some title to be considered with regard to the rights which I contend that they possess. Now, let me look first at the plan of proportional majority in its bearing on a small minority; and, Sir, I cannot help making, I hope, an innocent reference to the curious tone of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He gave us a reason why, repelling the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), he had adopted our limitations and safeguards for the small majority; and what was that reason? That the right hon. and learned Gentleman was painfully impressed with the sense of the injustice to which small minorities would be subjected, and was desirous, indeed, that the public interest should not be damaged by the suppression of the voice of the small minorities? No; nothing of the kind. He said it was this—because he knew that if he did not do that, we should make appeals and illegitimate efforts to get hold of the Irish vote. That, said the right hon. and learned Gentleman, was what he knew would happen; and, therefore, not at all from sympathy or concern with the interests of the small minorities—not in the least degree from any large regard to the principles of political justice—but in order to bar our wicked attempts upon the Irish vote, the right hon. and learned Gentleman adopted our system in his part of the subject. I am rather amused at the manner in which the right hon. and learned Gentleman—I admit, encouraged by his no inconsiderable experience—appeared to assert his vested interest in the Irish vote. On many occasions he has enjoyed its benefit, and I do not wonder that he should be little disposed to forfeit so great an advantage. But, Sir, I do not know that the voting ever since we met on Tuesday last has been such as to make us particularly anxious to waste our breath in appeals, legitimate or illegitimate, to the Irish vote. But we have a little more to do than to consider the Irish vote. Whatever rights the Irish vote has, it has them not because it is the Irish vote—admitting it to be properly so called, though I must say I do not know that it is—not, I say, because it is the Irish vote simply, but because it is a limited minority of this House, pleading energetically and from the heart a cause to which the great majority is opposed. Not, therefore, for the Irish vote alone, but for every minority of this House, we are determined, as an absolute and fundamental condition of our plan, to adhere to the safeguards which we have inserted in the Resolution. But, Sir, the point I want to put now for the consideration of the House at large is this—I do not know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman has considered it—if we are going to have a proportional majority, what will be the ultimate form of that proportional majority? Will these safeguards continue to live in conjunction with the plan of the right hon. and learned Gentleman? I affirm they will not. And why? Consider the Resolution. We have cast upon the Speaker, by the Resolution as it stands, a very complicated, a sufficiently complicated, obligation. He has to make up his mind on the sufficient discussion. He has to make up his mind on the "evident sense of the House." He has, in many states of the House, to have regard to the numbers in the House, and form the best estimate of them which he can. For, pray, bear in mind that this is a matter, Sir, in which not even you, and no Speaker in that Chair, can afford to be repeatedly or frequently defeated. He must move with security and success, or he must not move at all; and it will be difficult enough for him to move with all these matters to consider. But now comes in the right hon. and learned Gentleman with a cross consideration traversing and complicating all the rest; and, besides all these points that the Speaker has before him, he is likewise to form his estimate upon his inspection of the state of the House, with regard to which he never has had, and never can have, the assistance of those who are familiarly called the Whippers-in. He must form his opinion as best he can as to the division between two-thirds and one-third, and an immense addition must be made to the burden of his duties in point of complication. What will be the result if the House adopts the principle of an artificial majority, yielding to the fatal seductions of the right hon. and learned Gentleman? These safeguards will be found so inconvenient that they will disappear. The only remaining safeguard will be the safeguard of the two-thirds' limit, and the ultimate and real form of the proportionate majority will not be that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but that of my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). I must say to anything which leads to that, or anything which tends in that direction, we have an insurmountable objection. I know no treason to the rights and character of this House of which a Minister or a Government could be guilty equal to that of voluntarily exposing to risk the freedom of speech enjoyed in this House from time immemorial by small minorities, which have not only made the most solemn assertion of our rights and privileges, but likewise have sown the seeds, the germ and promise of the most beneficial changes introduced in the progress of ages into the legislation of this country. Therefore, my objection to the simple action of the majority of two-thirds, combined with the strong conviction I entertain that the Motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would only be the stepping-stone to that simple action, is one fundamental reason why I cannot accept his Resolution. I have objected on the part of the small minority. I have contended that the large minority is absolutely safe, not, indeed, in governing all the proceedings of this House, but in securing absolute freedom of speech and action. I now turn to consider the bearings of this Motion on the rights of the majority. And, Sir, what is our objection to this Motion, in the name and on behalf of the interests of the majority? I observe that these interests of the majority are, after all, the principal interests of Parliament, because it is the majority that governs the proceedings and acts by which the Members of Parliament will be judged when they come before their constituents upon the next Dissolution. Now, Sir, I tell you my objection to the Motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. It is that it hands over the rights of the majority to the minority. It paralyzes absolutely in respect to the closing power the majority of this House, unless they can obtain the concurrence of the minority; and that, Sir, is not the worst of it. Sometimes there is more than one minority in the House. There is now a majority—I am thankful and glad to say not an inconsiderable majority — and there is also a small minority. We have very seldom had the pleasure of agreeing with that small minority off the ground of Irish land, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman guards that particular preserve of his with such vigilance that he will not allow us to set foot within it. Therefore, I must presume that he will make good his claim. But suppose the case that in this House it so happened that this Rule was in force; that a debate was enormously prolonged; that the whole of this majority, without exception, desired that the debate should close; and that the whole of the small minority, two of the three Parties in the House, desired that the debate should close. I say that, with our whole force of the majority, aided with the whole force of the minority, we should not be able to close the debate if it were opposed by the Constitutional Opposition—that is to say, therefore, the claim of that Party is, that without a whole majority and a small minority of some 35 Members in another part of the House are agreed in joining to close a debate, they claim for the minority the absolute right of determining whether the debate shall close or not. And, Sir, they speak of the abuse of power by the majority; but if the majority might abuse its power to go forward, may not the minority abuse its power to hang back? There are personal securities against our abuse of power. What is the security against your abuse of power? You are to be entitled to set up your judgment against the judgment of the sheer majority of the House, sitting on this side of the House, even when that happens to be backed by the equally unanimous judgment of another minority, and you claim the right of stopping absolutely those proceedings. Therefore, I say with regard to the closing power, this claim which appears to be so modest, and which always founds itself upon the supposed case of a majority of 1, when stripped of all its disguises, is a simple demand that the power of the vote of a majority, and the right of the majority to put forward the Business of the House, shall be arbitrarily and absolutely arrested by the minority. Now, Sir, I do not deny that there may be a possibility of injustice in the action of a majority. God forbid that I should deny it. It is for that reason that, knowing how well by usage and tradition the Speaker is held apart from every Party in the House, we have insisted on the necessity of keeping him apart from the majority. A majority may abuse its power in pressing a thing forward, and the minority may abuse its power by holding it back; but if the majority abuses its power it is abusing a power which naturally belongs to it. If the minority abuses that power, it is abusing a power which it gets under a factitious arrangement in opposition to all the principles that govern the proceedings of this House. And, Sir, I am bound to say, and I hope it will not be thought an exaggeration, that I hope the House will not adopt this proposal. But, if it were possible, I should suggest that when the question of *clôture* was about to be decided, the majority might just as well save themselves the trouble of voting at all. Let them leave it to be settled by the minority among themselves. It is the minority that, as a body, will settle it; and it will be just as well for every practical purpose if they were left to settle it among themselves, and tell us at once when we come back to the House what they had resolved to do. Sir, it is to be borne in mind what is the normal attitude of the minority and the majority of this House. It is generally constituted by two Parties;

therefore, I will suppose it is so constituted. There is a Government and an Opposition; and this, Sir, is a principle now so rooted in the working of the British Constitution, ever since it came to be a popular Constitution for the self-government of the country, that I, for my own part, am so stupid as to believe that it is a permanent principle of the Constitution. What is the normal relation of these two Parties? Happily, there is a great mass of the Business of the House which they are agreed upon—most Executive and administrative matters, a great many legislative matters, and of all the legislation which now forms such a bugbear with Gentlemen opposite in my belief upon four-fifths we are thoroughly agreed. To take the Corrupt Practices Bill—a Bill about which differences of Party were apprehended—yet when we came to discuss it we found there was no Party difference at all. Therefore, upon a very large portion of our Business there is no question at all, and there can be no motive, either on the one side or on the other, to pursue a system of contrary and vexatious action. But I must look to the greater part of our Business, which is Party Business. Now, in Party Business, the business of the Government and the majority is to press it forward. The normal attitude of the Opposition, who resist and dislike it, and want to get rid of it, is to keep it back; and this cool proposal is, that it being the normal attitude, and the business and even the duty, from their point of view, of the Constitutional Opposition, or the large minority of this House, to keep back the Business of the Government, their title to keep it back shall now for the first time be sealed by the solemn vote of the House, and the right of the majority handed over to the minority. We cannot upon any terms or on any conditions, or in the spirit of any precedents, be they what they may, consent to this system of proportionate majorities as a mode of regulating the Government Business of the House. Now, Sir, one word more only on the subject of the position of the Government, which I hope may be sufficiently understood from what I have said, but three sentences more will enable me to make it plain. I have stated, Sir, that, after deliberate examination of this question, being confident of the disposition of the House to give us what it may think an efficient plan, we do not think that, when we come to the point, we should be justified in endeavouring to force the rejection of this Motion by saying—"Unless you choose to pass it, we shall cast overboard the care of the affairs of this great Empire, and place our resignations in the hands of Her Majesty." We think that would be an excess of pressure, and a trespass on the just jurisdiction of the House. Were this a legislative measure, we should be entitled to follow our own judgment; but, as we have said before, this is a matter which concerns the House itself—the public and the private conscience of the House. This House has a character to maintain, and a dignity to maintain, and a tradition to maintain far different from that of any man or any Ministry, and far superior even to that of any Party in the country. It must be the judge of its own duty in the matter, and we wish it shall be the judge of its own duty in the matter. But while saying that, we cannot conceal our conviction—for my part I have the deepest conviction—that closure by a two-thirds' majority would be not only an inefficient system of amendment in Procedure, but a deterioration of Procedure. I would rather have no closure at all than a closure by two-thirds' majority. Practically, it would come nearly to the same thing, because it would be a dead letter. But the bad principle we had sanctioned would remain on record against us. I beseech and entreat the House not to give its sanction to that bad principle. Sir, there is not a man who speaks in this House who speaks, or there can be few men in this House who speak, in this matter with so little personal interest as I do. My life is in the past, and not in the future. I am not thinking of measures I am to propose, and for which I am to be responsible. I am thinking of the great duties which year by year, and Parliament by Parliament, will be performed in this House by other and worthier men, with the deep conviction of the necessity of maintaining the sound fundamental principles upon which our great legislative system has been constituted, and especially upon which this Assembly has been founded from the first. Let it be careful to maintain every safeguard, every just extraneous restraint upon the action of the majority. Let it maintain absolute freedom of speech. Let it be slow to abridge the power of multiplying the occasions of debate; let it cherish that admirable and wonderful system by which its acts and its words at once become the property of the nation and the world. Let it invite the action of public opinion and public privilege; let it avail itself of all extraneous observation as among its best and most valuable guides; but let it adhere to that which sense and usage and tradition alike dictate—that the majority and not the minority should prevail.

Mr. ECROYD said, he wished to examine the proposals of the Government in a fair and candid manner. It would be contrary to his duty, and could only weaken the cause he desired to advance, if he were to impute motives to those who had placed these proposals before the House. The difference of opinion between those on the Opposition side of the House and the supporters of the Government might be summed up in a very few words. The question was whether the *clôture* already resolved upon by the vote of the House should be put in force by the vote of a mere Party majority against the judgment of a large minority. He would like to examine the effect of these two modes of dealing—first, upon the temper and character of the House itself; secondly, upon the character and the permanence of its legislation; thirdly, upon the public estimate of its spirit and impartiality; and, fourthly, upon political opinion in the country, and especially on the adherents of the Party in Opposition. First, as to the effect on the temper and character of the House. Every Member was the guardian of freedom of debate; and, surely, they might be permitted to hope that questions so exasperating as those with which they had had to deal during the last three years were not to be continually presented to the House; that the great sacrifices they had made, the extraordinary measures they had passed for the pacification of Ireland would have some effect, and that there would be less probability of Obstruction. Might they not hope also that those powers which the House had possessed, during the years in which Irish questions had formed the chief subject of debate, might be found sufficient to rule their proceedings in the discussion of less burning questions in the future? The objection which he and others entertained was not to well-considered reforms of Procedure to meet an acknowledged difficulty in dealing with the vast and varied Business which increasingly pressed upon the House, but to the adoption of a particular form of Rule which would have the effect of subjecting the speech and the proceedings of the minority to the regulation of the majority, who must always be the supporters of the Government. One quality was absolutely essential to the success of any Rules that might be adopted by the House, and that was, they must command the confidence and loyal assent of both the great Parties. They must be lifted above all possibility of being regarded in the country as Party instruments for the suppression of unwelcome debate. The most imperfect Rules that would answer to those requirements would be found more advantageous to the proceedings of the House than the most stringent Rules open to such an imputation; and no argument had been adduced to prove that such changes as would have obtained the sanction of both Parties would have failed to remedy the evils about which complaint was justly made. They ought, he contended, to distinguish carefully between Obstruction and legitimate opposition, and their Rules should be such as to act only against Obstruction, and not against fair and reasonable opposition. It was clear that the freedom fully and fearlessly to debate all important questions was most dear to those constituencies who returned Members of the Opposition; and, if it should be in any degree impaired by the action of this Rule, the opinion of those constituencies would certainly be that the Speaker had unjustifiably intervened to check the further examination of questions raised by the Opposition. Any Opposition would always be objectionable to a powerful Government with a large and impatient majority at its back; and, whatever the safeguards by which the Rule might be surrounded, there would be frequently successful efforts on the part of the majority to close a discussion which was becoming inconvenient. It was true that, in a technical sense, the initiation of the proceedings leading to the *clôture* was vested in the Speaker; but the real initiation lay in the "evident sense of the

House," which could only be manifested in the conduct and cries of the adherents of the Government, and might be inspired by the Government itself in times of great pressure and difficulty. Therefore, the real initiative force would be the desire of the Government to stop further discussion and criticism; and, that being so, what became of the independent initiative of the Speaker? An impatient majority might, by their cries, render the proceedings of the House so difficult as to compel the Speaker to intervene in the interest of Order, and thus to meet their wishes by suggesting the *clôture*. The Prime Minister had told them that no Speaker could ever afford to be mistaken in his judgment of the "evident sense of the House;" and it was quite clear that, under a system of *clôture* by a bare majority, the Speaker would very soon find that he was always justified in proposing *clôture* when it was suggested by the cries of the supporters of the Ministry in power, and extremely dangerous to suggest it under any other circumstances. The proceedings of the House had two ends in view. It was an Assembly not only for the actual work of legislation, but also for the public discussion of great questions which were exciting interest, in order to enable the country to form an opinion as to the desirableness of legislation; and, if this Rule were to be voted by a bare majority, the tendency must be to restrict the debating power of the House, and to degrade it more and more into a mere instrument for the mechanical passing of measures adopted by the majority, and by the societies connected with them out-of-doors. Its acceptance would mean the transfer of the great business of debate from this august Assembly to the Press, to periodicals, and to local committees and bodies, who would press their views upon the Ministry of the day with all the power of the conferedated Caucuses, and the result would be the degradation of the character and proceedings of the House. Then it should be remembered that there might be Obstruction in more ways than one, and there was already manifest a dangerous form of Obstruction which sought to curtail debate and to deprive this Assembly of its debating character. Was there not an increasing tendency to impatience of debate—a disposition to to force measures through the House, with very scant discussion, because they had been brought there in obedience to the demand expressed in certain centres outside? Had they not seen also the attempt to obstruct and stifle debate by one Party in the House systematically refusing to take part in it? These forms of Obstruction were more dangerous and more insidious than all the open Obstruction which they were endeavouring to combat. If the character of the House as a debating Assembly was to be changed in that manner, its authority must continually diminish, and the country would no longer be governed by the open decisions of a free Parliament, but by secret coteries and cliques, which would become hotbeds of corruption, and would degrade the whole political life of the country to a level no higher than that of the United States. For his part, he did not fear that any intentional unfairness would occur in the administration of the *clôture*. The danger he feared was that of political impatience. Although impatience was a most untrustworthy guide in all human affairs, yet it was clearly manifest that, at the present moment, the great moving power behind these proposals was the impatience which was felt by the Liberal Party because the Government had been unable to carry into effect the numerous measures which they set before the country at the time of the last General Election. He did not believe that they would have heard of the Resolutions in their present form if it had not been for the embarrassment in which the Administration had been placed by their non-fulfilment of those promises, many of which, he thought, were of an extremely rash and unwise character. It had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), the other evening, that in his opinion such a restraint would be exercised by these Resolutions as might practically prevent the necessity for putting them in force. That was his (Mr. Ecroyd's) greatest fear. He feared that it would prevent the Members of the Party in Opposition from fully and fearlessly discharging their duty to their constituents. The representatives of special interests and the setters forth of grievances little understood in that House would no longer be able to obtain a hearing, for they would be suppressed not with any intentional unfairness, but because it would always be deemed that their representations on questions affecting their constituents were inopportune and of secondary interest. But that would not be the opinion of the constituencies, and what he feared was not more the effect upon the House of such proceedings as upon the political temper and feeling of the country. They knew what excitement and danger had arisen in times past in the contests between capital and labour, and he feared that similar excitement might occur again, even, perhaps, to a more serious extent; but how much greater would be the danger if the safety-valve of free discussion were removed from that House; if proposals deeply interesting to great masses of the people, however dangerous and impracticable they might be, could not obtain a full and fair hearing in that House? With respect to Ireland, he had not been satisfied that the course pursued by the House towards the Irish Members had always been consistent with the highest wisdom; and if this Amendment had involved the possibility of the House acting with injustice to the small minority of Representatives from Ireland he should not have supported it. The scope of the Amendment, however, was not to take anything from the safeguards provided for small minorities, but to extend those safeguards—indeed, the question of safeguarding small minorities was one that had not, in his opinion, received too much attention in these discussions. He believed that if, by any Rules of a stringent character, they were to succeed in forwarding legislation at the cost of suppressing all unwise and inopportune expressions of opinion, they would be put in the position of an engineer who tied down his safety-valves. He would appeal to those moderate Members, who were the strength of both Parties, that they should be content with the adoption of the Rule in a form which would carry to the minds of all men the conviction that this violent interference with our ancient freedom of debate should never on any occasion be carried into effect by the will of a mere Party majority. He desired to point out to them how much more authoritative and efficient would be a Rule which could be carried, if not with the entire approval, yet with the hearty and loyal assent of the great Constitutional Opposition, and he entertained the most profound hope that they might not have cast upon the floor of that House a torch of everlasting distrust and discord. He regarded the proceedings of the last few years as a mere passionate episode brought upon this country by the misfortunes of Ireland, and he thought it would be a source of never-ending regret if that should lead them into steps that would involve the permanent deterioration of the character and feelings of the House. He would also appeal to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), himself one of the most distinguished ornaments of that ancient Assembly in any period of its history. Let him not, in the fulness of his career, after having rendered such great and noble services to his country, and while occupying in its estimation that high position which he (Mr. Ecroyd), as one of his political opponents, was as free to recognize as any man—let him not take measures which might weaken, and possibly destroy, the character of that mother of all free Legislative Assemblies. It might be that they of the Opposition were mistaken in their estimation of this Rule; but that was a matter of secondary consequence. The very fact that they had so real and so terrible a sense of the evils to which it must lead, if passed in its present rigid form, was quite sufficient to render it both inadvisable and imprudent — at least imprudent — to force it on the House by the assent of only a Party majority.

Mr. BUXTON said, that, as an independent Liberal Member, he desired to express his hearty satisfaction at the introduction of this new Rule as now proposed, and hoped to see it carried by a good majority. He was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had stuck to his guns in this matter, and had repudiated the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. It was true, as had been written, that "one of the proud results of our free Constitution has been the development of Parliamentary oratory." Undoubtedly that development had contributed largely to the rapid increase of the wealth and prosperity of the country; but the time had now arrived when some healthy check must be placed on the unhealthy tendency to loquacity in that House. Down to a comparatively recent date, the good order of the House of Commons was recognized by all; but in place of the former system, which permitted two or three recognized Leaders in debate to monopolize the time of the House, all now wished to take a part, some for the mere love of notoriety. He thought the necessity for reform had been chiefly brought about by certain hon. Members, who had shown an evident desire—he might almost say an avowed determination—to bring the Parliamentary government of this country into discredit, if not to make it altogether impossible. He did not know whether certain hon. Members who sat below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House would deny such a charge; but, after pretty constant attendance in that House for the last three Sessions, that was the only conclusion as to their conduct that he could come to. It was impossible without reform for that House to fulfil the many duties imposed upon it by the country. Serious disorders required strong remedies, and he admitted that the proposed remedy was a strong one; but he believed that its effect had been very much exaggerated. In the first place, they had this great security against its abuse—that the Speaker must take the initial step under this Rule. Further, he must perceive that "it is the evident sense of the House that the Question be now put" before he could allow the Rule to be used; and with the experience and acquaintance which every Speaker must necessarily have had with that House before he could be placed in such an honoured position, they might rest assured that he would rightly interpret the "evident sense of the House," and not permit himself to be swayed by mere noise or unruly conduct. Then, again, the opinion of the Speaker must be ratified by the majority of the House. It was here that they joined issue with the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), whose Amendment proposed to make it impossible for any majority of the House to close debate. He believed that the time had now come when they could no longer get on without giving the power of closing a debate to some proportion of the House. What that proportion should be was the question raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who proposed that closure should only be carried by two-thirds of the House. It seemed to him that to limit the power to such a proportion of the House would be to make it impossible to close debate without the joint action of the Government and the Opposition. They would thereby directly introduce into every question an excited Party feeling, which would impede dignified action, and be likely to hinder the advancement of Public Business. Further, it seemed unwise to introduce into that House, where hitherto all questions, whether great or small, had been decided by one arbitrament—the decision of the majority—any other decision of a different proportion of the House. If they could, by a bare majority, pass a Reform Bill which was to alter the whole balance of power throughout the country, why might they not also, by a bare majority, put an end to the Obstruction of a handful of men who were intent on destroying the dignity of that House? It was not conceivable that this Rule could ever be enforced against the legitimate discussion of any great question by the recognized Party in Opposition acting in concert with their Front Bench; and he believed that whenever this Rule might be used for the advancement of Public Business, it would be found that the Leaders and the main bodies of both political Parties would act together. He thought the only statesmanlike way to deal with this question was to put it in the hands of the Speaker and a majority of the House. One argument against the proposed Rule had been that it was possible that the Office of Speaker might be rendered more liable to the heat of Party politics; but he thought the contrary result might be expected. The mere possibility of such a departure from all the dignified precedents which the present occupant of the Chair had taught them to look on almost as a matter of course would be considered the very reason for especial care on the part of both political Parties to select a Speaker of the most honourable and impartial character. Indeed, the love of the English nation for fair play would make it impossible for a Speaker, however desirous to serve his Party, to act as the tool or instrument of any Minister, however powerful. He also thought that the proposed Rule would be a distinct gain to the Speaker. The House could never forget the extraordinary scene of February 2, 1881, when, after a debate of 41 hours, the Speaker, acting wholly on his own responsibility, stopped the debate. That act, arbitrary as it might be called, unprecedented as it undoubtedly was, was nevertheless received with satisfaction by the whole country. What had occurred once might occur again; and he thought it would be an immense relief to the Speaker to feel that he could not be called upon to close a debate entirely on his own responsibility, but must have the support of a majority of that House. But it was urged that a Party would blindly follow the lead of a Minister without conviction or independence on their own part, and it had been insinuated that the Liberal Party was a Party of that nature; but they had on other occasions been told that their Party was breaking up, and that they would shortly have to appeal to the country. He admitted that there was independence of opinion on their side, and if they were so independent as had been said, that very independence would be the safeguard of the proposed Rule. Believing in the independence and honourable feelings of a majority of that House, whether Conservative or Liberal, he was prepared, as an independent Liberal, uninfluenced and uncaucused, to give his hearty support to that Rule.

Mr. GREGORY said, he approached the question in a spirit of fairness and candour. His sole interest in it was that of a Member occasionally taking part in the Business of the House, and therefore desirous of facilitating the conduct of Public Business. The question which suggested itself to his mind was this—whether, if they carried out the propositions of Her Majesty's Government, they would not be going too far in assenting to the Rule under consideration, and beyond the necessities of the case. He regarded the Resolution as followed by a series of Resolutions which, although stringent, yet he could not say they were too stringent for the conduct of the Business of the House. This present proposal, however, was an entirely new one, and an innovation of the ordinary Rules and proceedings of that Assembly; and he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had gone too far, in assuming, as he appeared to do in the course of his argument, that this was not an innovation—not a new thing, but something which was inherent in the constitution of the House, and that it would be but the revival of a something they had had before. In his (Mr. Gregory's) view, what they were dealing with was an entirely new subject—it was an innovation in the proceedings of the House, and he might say an innovation of the Constitution of the country, and he felt compelled to regard it entirely from that point of view. It was impossible for the House, in considering the proposal now before it, to entirely disregard the existing state of things, and the machinery employed in maintaining the condition of matters generally. In spite of what had fallen from the lips of the right hon. Gentleman, he most certainly should treat the proposition submitted to the House as one entirely and beyond all question new. And what was the question with which they were now dealing? It was one which, in his estimation, was of no little importance, and one for which he could not see that any necessity had arisen; for was not the issue to be decided this—whether or no a bare majority should be able to act with absolute power over a minority, in closing their mouths upon any subject which might be under discussion? Hitherto, so far as his experience and recollection went, there never had been any difficulty found in bringing a debate to a close at some fixed period. When it was considered that a debate had been sufficiently prolonged, and that the time had arrived when it should conclude, it had been the practice to arrange a day for its termination, and that regulation had been strictly adhered to on both sides of the House. That, up to the present, had been the state of affairs, so far as the two great Parties in the House were concerned; and if there were only two Parties to be taken into account there would be no need for alteration. But then he was prepared to admit that the old condition of things had somewhat changed, had been disturbed within the last year or two, and a new, though a small, Third Party had appeared upon the scene who had not acted upon such understanding. That some change was requisite in the Rules of the House, therefore, he would not deny; but, surely, where the Party was numerically so weak a one, would not the two-thirds' majority of the House accomplish the purpose they had in view? Such a sweeping proposition as that made by the Government was not necessary, and even if it were it should not be passed without the general concurrence of the whole House. What they had to ascertain was whether the opposition on the part of a certain section of Members was continued against the manifest feeling of the House, and he did not know of any safer and better test than of a proportionate majority. He ventured to think that, in that manner, they could effect all that they desired to attain in restraining the undue prolongation of debate, and that it was unnecessary to apply a more stringent rule. Between the two great Parties there never had been experienced any difficulty in making an arrangement to close a debate on a certain day, and a two-thirds' majority would beyond doubt meet any extreme case they might be called upon to deal with, or that had ever occurred in the House in the course of his experience. The fact that the power created under that new Rule would be exercised by the Chairman of Committees ought to make them more cautious about allowing it to be applied at the will of a bare majority; and he respectfully appealed to Members on both sides whether by conferring so great a power they would be really promoting the better regulation of the Business of the House, or whether it would not be preferable to put in force a Rule in which all concurred, and which would meet all the exigencies which might arise?

MR. SALT said, he did not rise with the intention of dealing in detail with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, because, of course, that duty would fall upon somebody on the Front Opposition Benches; but he could not help, early in the debate, making an observation upon the main argument with which the right hon. Gentleman supported the position with regard to the two-thirds' Rule. He said, in the first place, that if the Rule were carried into effect, the Speaker and the House would often be placed in the difficult and discreditable position of the Speaker having misjudged the opinion of the House, and so finding his judgment incorrect. But while the argument proceeded, he (Mr. Salt) could not help calling to mind what was proposed under the Resolution with respect to small minorities in that House—that if the minority were less than 40, a majority of 100 should be sufficient to carry the *clôture;* and that if the minority exceeded 40 a majority of 200 should be necessary. It would clearly be much more difficult for the Speaker to arrive at a correct judgment with regard to those circumstances, than to give an opinion, from his long experience, whether two-thirds of the Members present desired that the debate should be closed. The second argument of the Prime Minister was that the Amendment would place the majority in the power of the minority; and, of course, he (Mr. Salt), in common with everyone else, admitted that the House must be ruled by the majority. But the case in which it was proposed to apply the two-thirds' Rule differed, in a great degree, from a vote upon a Bill or a Resolution which was intended to have some practical effect. The question would be, how far the desire of the minority to put their views before the House and the country should be curtailed; and, as the practice now proposed would be entirely new, it was only reasonable that the stopping of a debate should only take place when two-thirds of the Members so wished. He rose, however, rather for the purpose of suggesting that it was very important, in the consideration of the Amendment, to understand clearly the object of the Resolution. They had been told that it was to put down Obstruction; but no one seemed to have a very clear idea of what the Obstruction was that was to be put down. He did not think Obstruction was the right term; but, using it for convenience, he wished to remind the House that there were many kinds of Obstruction. There was legitimate Obstruction, and there was Obstruction that was altogether illegitimate. Illegitimate Obstruction appeared to be where an individual, a small number of men, or a Party, combined together to stop all Government Business and all the Business of the House until they were able to carry some favourite scheme of their own. That was a kind of Obstruction which experience showed was resorted to only by a very small number of Members, and it was that which the country really believed Parliament was aiming at in these Resolutions. If that class of Obstruction could be dealt with at all by Rules, a two-thirds' majority would be quite sufficient; and the power would not appear to be too stringent, though it was probable that the Obstructionists in such a case would fall under the other provisions of the Government scheme. But there was also another and legitimate kind of Obstruction or opposition which had been for generations associated with the ideas and habits of the House. It had grown up with the House itself, and the Forms of the House seemed to have been actually designed for it. One of the most remarkable features of the House was its respect for minorities, and there was reason for it. Supposing a Conservative Government, in face of a strong Radical Opposition, attempted to deal with a question generally considered Liberal or Radical, the Opposition, feeling that the proposal did not go far enough, that it was not thorough, and would not settle the question, would be justified in using all the Forms of the House that it properly and reasonably could avail itself of to prevent the measure from being carried. Again, a Radical Government, opposed by a strong Conservative minority, might desire to pass an exceedingly Radical and revolutionary measure, upon which the country had not been consulted, or which formed no part of the task which the Government was commissioned by the electors to perform; and, in that case, he (Mr. Salt) held that it would be perfectly legitimate for the minority to use the Forms of the House in order that the country might be consulted before the measure became law. That would, no doubt, be most disagreeable to the Party in power, and might probably have the effect of stopping the way of Government Business and of private legislation; but it would be quite legitimate Obstruction, and in accordance with the habits and traditions of the House, and within the Rules under which they had been in the habit of acting for many years. They should, therefore, be very careful to understand what it was they wished to hinder. The real question before the House was, whether it was intended not only to put down that illegitimate Obstruction to which he had referred, but to overcome, in a summary manner, legitimate opposition also. The two-thirds' majority was eminently applicable to the kind of Obstruction which was illegitimate and disloyal to the House and to the country; but if the object was to hinder the other kind of Obstruction of which he had spoken, he was strongly of opinion that interference with the existing Rules had better be avoided altogether. One word as to the length of speeches and debates. It was, no doubt, most unfortunate that debates should be long and speeches tedious; but the Resolutions following the 1st were amply sufficient to deal with those evils. He could only hope that the good sense of the House would some day curtail both speeches and debates; but, in the meantime, it was well to remember that all constituencies expected their Members to speak more or less frequently, and that, as long as they acted under the erroneous impression that the usefulness of a Member was to be measured by the number of his speeches debates would continue to be long and tedious. Those constituencies were apt to lose sight of the fact that Members might be doing even better work while they were silent than when they were making speeches; and, that being so, it would be well to bear as patiently as they could with the evil of tedious speech, instead of introducing stringent Rules, which might be found to go further than was intended. Then, as to the alleged unproductiveness of the Session, he was disposed to contest the Prime Minister's assertion that Public Business was in a deplorable state. Bringing that statement to the test of actual facts, he (Mr. Salt) found that a considerable number of useful measures had been passed during the present Session, and among them he might mention the Act for the Consolidation of the Municipal Laws, the Settled Estates Act, the Act with regard to conveyancing, and a number of Scotch Acts, in addition to which there were the Irish Acts, with which they were almost too well acquainted, but which were Acts of great importance to Ireland. Then there was the Parcel Post Act, an Act that would bring competition home to every small trader in the country, and bring confusion into every post office in the country; but then it was a very important Act, and he could mention others. But he had mentioned enough to show that the Session, which had been said to be so deplorable, was rather rich in useful Acts than otherwise; so that there was no such great need to establish in a hurry this very stringent Rule, in order to check the natural tendency of the House to talk a good deal, or to enable the legislation of the country to be carried on with great rapidity. In the amount of discussion hon. Members must be guided by the wishes and good feelings of their constituents, and so also they must be guided, to a great extent, as to the amount of legislation. He had very great doubts, notwithstanding what had been said in public speeches and printed in public addresses to constituents—he had very great doubts whether the constituents really required a great mass of legislation. He had had experience himself in many ways; he had been the victim of legislation; he had had to initiate legislation from the commencement, and had conducted it in the House; and he was very strongly of opinion that what the country really wanted was not so much a great mass of legislation hurried through the House without full discussion, and against bitter opposition, but legislation on certain questions thoroughly well digested and thoroughly well thrashed out both by friends and opponents; and in order to carry out legislation of that sort, which was really beneficial to the country—and he spoke specially with regard to commercial matters—it was not necessary to accompany it with such a stringent Rule as this Resolution.

MR. A. MORLEY said, that so many insinuations had been thrown out as to the silence of supporters of the Government below the Gangway, that he had no hesitation in rising to refute the suggestion that they were under any undue pressure. He entirely agreed with one remark from the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Salt), and who had added a most temperate and moderate speech to the debate, that there was a danger in these days of a too great length of speeches, and possibly a necessity might exist for lessening that length of speech. In the remarks he had to make, he would endeavour not to fall into the error referred to. It appeared to him that there was a great danger of losing sight of the evils that it was the intention and object of the Government Resolutions to put a stop to, by having too prominently put forward by speakers from the Opposition Benches the consequences which would, according to their belief, result from the adoption of the Rules under discussion. Some hon. Members, speaking from that side, and among them the right hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment, had been candid enough to say they objected to a *clôture* of any kind whatever; and he said, although he was moving an Amendment with the object of lessening the effect of the 1st Resolution, he personally would be glad if the 1st Resolution were done away with altogether. But it appeared to him (Mr. A. Morley) that the evils of the present system were at least as great as any evils that had been predicted by hon. Members on the other side. Shortly stated, the evils they had pourtrayed were—first, the oppression of one Party in the House by the other; and, secondly, the limitation of the freedom of debate. It seemed to him that if hon. Members would review the proceedings of the past two years, they would come to the same conclusion as himself—that the very evils that they had put forward as their strongest arguments against the Resolution were the very evils the House of Commons had suffered from during the past two years. The evils pourtrayed by the Opposition as the consequences of the Resolution were oppressions of the minority by the majority; but, as had been well pointed out by the Prime Minister, the evils from which the House of Commons had been suffering was an oppression of the majority of the House, and the Party in the House from whom the country expected legislation—an oppression of that large Party by a minority sometimes very small, sometimes rather larger, but still always a minority of the House itself. Turning to the second evil predicted, the limitation of the freedom of debate, that limitation existed at present, for, under the existing Rules, a small minority could occupy the whole time of the House in order that no legislation should be carried on at all; and many hon. Members who had strong claims to be heard and to influence what was being done had been compelled to remain silent at the risk of being supposed to neglect their duty, not merely to their constituents, but to the public interests with which they were identified. They were told of another danger to be apprehended from the passing of the Resolutions. The House of Commons, it was said, would deteriorate in character. Now, he would appeal to the hon. Members opposite, and to what had so often been said—was not the House of Commons in danger of deterioration if the present state of things continued? No doubt, there were many who thought the House of Commons suffered deterioration when a Liberal Government was returned by a large majority; but the deterioration they had mentioned was of a different kind. They had frankly stated that men of position, from a patriotic sense of duty to the State, would not be likely to undertake the hardships of life in the House of Commons if it continued in the state it had been for the last two years. The objection he felt most strongly to this Amendment was that it was introducing a totally new system into the Procedure of the House; and he must say that any doubt which he might have felt on the subject would have been entirely removed by the speeches from the Leader of the Opposition, and he looked forward to hearing how the right hon. Gentleman was going to face his utterances of two years past, and how those who followed him and acted on his usually wise advice would see their way out of the difficulty those speeches had imposed on them. It was said this was not a new principle, because, under the Urgency Rules, the Government accepted the same principle; but the Urgency Rules were passed for very special circumstances, and for a limited period. They were passed at a time when it was absolutely necessary to fortify the Speaker in dealing with the terrible state of affairs into which the House had drifted, and it was necessary for the Government to make such modifications as would secure the co-operation of the Opposition. It was for this special reason that the change in Procedure was inserted. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in objecting to the Resolution as it stood, said it would reduce every private Member to something little better than a nonentity; but really the strongest argument in support of the Resolution was that, instead of doing this, it would considerably increase the rights and the powers of private Members. What private Members wanted was more time for the discussion of questions in which they were interested; and how could that be more facilitated than by introducing Rules lessening the waste of time, which waste of time obliged the Government to ask year by year for more time for their own Business, to the reduction of the time at the disposal of private Members? The right hon. and learned Gentleman also tried to answer the objection to his Amendment that it was an acknowledged principle that the most important questions were decided by a bare majority, by stating that in an ordinary sense no legislation was carried until the matter had been thoroughly thrashed out, and every Member heard upon it; but that was not the case. In order to carry through Business in the present state of the Rules, it was absolutely necessary for many Members well qualified to speak on the subject before the House, and thoroughly competent to express their own ideas on it, to remain silent in their seats, in order to allow sufficient time for necessary measures to become law during a Session. The right hon. and learned Gentleman took occasion to remind the House that they were not dealing with a Colonial Assembly or a Legislative Chamber of a few years standing, but with the ancient House of Commons; and not for a moment would he (Mr. A. Morley) suggest that the Procedure of a Colonial Legislature, or even of the United States, formed any strong argument for the House of Commons to imitate their Rules; but he could appeal with some confidence to the experience of the House of Representatives in the United States, which had been in existence for more than 100 years. The work of the House of Representatives was as nothing compared with that which the House of Commons had to deal with. There they had a complete system of Home Rule for each State. Each State transacted its own business, and the House of Representatives had only Imperial questions to deal with, and they were really only small questions of which the House of Representatives had to take cognizance. Notwithstanding that, when the House of Representatives was constituted, a Rule was passed called "The Previous Question Rule," and it had been in existence for more than a century. He took some interest in ascertaining how this Rule had worked, and what was the opinion of it, held not only by those who now formed the majority of the House, but by the Party previously in the majority, and he wrote to one of the leading Members of the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives to ask how the system worked, and how it was viewed by men of position on either side. He answered to the effect that the Democratic Party did not consider the Previous Question Rule worked harshly, that it was engraved on the consciences and habits of the House, that it was accepted as a matter of course, and no Member was prepared to advocate the abolition of the Rule. The Rule, he added, worked well, because an understanding was always reached in advance of its application as to the time a debate should extend, and this usage had caused the Previous Question Rule to become a secondary matter. The understanding was always arrived at after a preliminary and informal discussion, inasmuch as public opinion would not justify either Party in making dilatory Motions, prolonging a discussion that ought to be concluded in a reasonable time. The inference of this statement from Mr. Hewitt was that this Rule, whether it were called the *clôture* or the "Previous Question," would not actively be put in operation any considerable number of times, but that by its very existence it would lead the two great Parties to come to an agreement as to the reasonable length of discussion before the House was asked to come to a decision, and the Rule would be held over those only who would not become parties to this general arrangement, and against such would the evident sense of the House be expressed that the debate had been long enough.

Mr. WHITLEY: I think, Sir, that no apology is necessary from any Member for submitting a few observations to the House on a question of so much importance as the present. This is not a petty question. I strongly feel that the Privileges of this House should not be intrusted to a bare majority, and should not be restricted in the debates upon it. That which affects the freedom of discussion should be debated by the whole force of the House. It appears to me that the Resolution of the Prime Minister, if adopted, would change altogether the character of this House; and therefore, although I have only been a short time a Member of it, it is my duty to express the feelings I entertain, and which, I believe, are shared by many hon. Members. The arguments throughout upon the question have been all on one side, while the action of the Government has been entirely on the other. The Prime Minister introduced these Resolutions, and said he was very sorry that Resolutions of this kind should be necessary. Other Ministers are of the same opinion. They admitted that the change is a serious change, and said that nothing but a case of absolute necessity could be brought forward as a justification for a measure of this kind. I think we should separate, as far as possible, the arguments by which this change is justified. I am in the recollection of the House when I say that the original justification for these Resolutions was Obstruction. Nothing was said, originally in the House by the Government, nor outside the House by Members of the Government, or their supporters, as to any other ground on which such an inroad on the freedom of debate could be justified. It has been admitted by Members of the House that there has been no Obstruction by the Opposition; but it has also been admitted that the Obstruction has been only by a small minority. Now, is it necessary, for the sake of stopping the Obstruction of a small minority, to interfere with the liberties and freedom of all the Members of this House? With regard to the bare majority, by which this Resolution, if carried, is to stop any debate, I quite agree with my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). It is a very different thing to have a majority on a question to be discussed, and a majority on a question of closing the mouths of Members. The arguments of Ministers are on one side, and their action is on the other. They say the Speaker is to be guided by the "evident sense of the House." Why do they shrink from the natural consequences of the "evident sense of the House" being shown by a majority of two-thirds? I think there is no fear whatever of its being brought into action by the "evident sense of the House." I cannot help thinking—indeed, I feel quite confident—that there are, on the opposite side of the House, hon. Members who are as proud of the freedom of discussion here as anyone on this side can be.

I am very sorry this debate has fallen into the category somewhat of Party questions. In that we are making a great mistake. If these Resolutions had been introduced by the Conservative Government, I feel sure the Prime Minister would have opposed them. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) has admitted that, if these Rules had been proposed by the Opposition, he should not have accepted them, because he did not trust the Opposition. Why, therefore, should the Government complain that these Rules should be opposed by the Conservative Party, who cannot be expected to have confidence in the Government? The President of the Local Government Board very naively said this—"To-day we have these Resolutions. You, when you come into Office in a short time, will find that these Resolutions will suit you." I was very sorry to hear him say that. To all of us the freedom of the House should be the great thing, and that remark of the right hon. Gentleman's has not, in any sense, removed my indisposition to vote for the Resolution. The Prime Minister has made a most eloquent speech, and has defended the rights of small minorities. Well, we do not want to trample on the rights of minorities. We are prepared to defend the rights of minorities as much as any hon. Gentleman on that side of the House. But I contend that this Resolution is a very arbitrary Resolution indeed, and the arguments in favour of it do not commend themselves to the judgment of the House. The Prime Minister, I am sure, feels no confidence in the Resolution himself. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. A. Morley) adduced the system of other countries, and referred to America. I trust the English House of Commons is not going to follow the example of the customs of other countries, and, least of all, that of America. The traditions of the House of Commons extend over 600 years. During that number of years, freedom of debate has been preserved up to the present time intact. Whatever has happened, no Minister, until now, has interfered with that freedom of debate which is the glorious inheritance of the House of Commons. I do hope that the House of Commons of to-day will remain true to its antecedents, for I feel that no good argument has been advanced for the introduction of this new mode of *clôture.* Depend on it that anything that closes debate will, in time, depreciate the action of the House and the confidence the country feels in the House. I hope and believe that the majority of the House will see that no satisfactory reasons have been given for the adoption of the Resolutions proposed by the Government. I hope the majority will say this is not a Party question, and that the Amendment of my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) will be carried by a considerable majority.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, that he felt he owed an apology to the House for speaking on this subject, owing to the short time he had been in the House; but, perhaps, as he was somewhat new to the House he was also somewhat new to the Rules which already existed; and he should confess that, like many others, he was somewhat at a loss to recognize the very great value which older Members of the House put upon them. Still, he quite allowed that any alteration in the Rules of the House should be carefully made. The aspect in which he rather looked at the question was that in which people outside looked on it. What was the interest which the people of this country took in the subject under discussion? Shortly, they had seen that as a matter of fact, in the past two years, the Business of that House had been impeded by two causes—by organized Obstruction, and also by what the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India described as licence of debate. They had been told that what they were wanted to do was to restore to the House the capacity for adequately doing its Business. Looking once more at the public interest in reference to this question, he was perfectly sure the country would receive with as much satisfaction as the great bulk of the Members of the House received with satisfaction the speech of the Prime Minister. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman therein adequately expressed the views which prevailed far and wide through the country, as well as through the Party which he led. Had they a right, as a majority returned by a majority of electors, to give up its power over the transaction of their own Business in the House? Had they the right to forego the control which the majority exercised over everything else, and which they ought to have over the character and mode of legislation? If the Conservative Party opposed them in the matter, then they would have to go to the country, and take to themselves the blame for whatever legislation they might have frustrated by the very great lengths to which debate was carried on in the House. The supporters of the Ministry had been taunted by the other side that they were not taking their part in the debate, but were observing a "portentous and unnatural silence." As against that charge, he maintained that the arguments advanced from the other side had been adequately met by the speeches already delivered from the Government Bench and other Benches, and that, therefore, it would have been mere waste of time if more speakers from the Government side had got up to make further reply. Another point he had to notice with regard to the two-thirds' majority proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. As they knew, in the case of first-class Party debates, the Opposition generally mustered 200 Members, and in Divisions they very seldom fell under that number. Now, that would necessitate 400 Members in the majority. That was to say, there would require to be a House of 600 Members. Now, everyone knew there had not been a Division since the Reform Bill in which there had been over 600 Members voting, and even Divisions in which 550 took part were of great rarity. The two-thirds' majority, moreover, he pointed out, would add considerably to the difficulties of the Speaker, as he would not only have to determine that a subject had been adequately discussed, and the "evident sense of the House," but he would also have to assure himself that there was a two-thirds' majority in favour of it. Now, those who, like the present Speaker, had been long in the House, could determine with considerable accuracy the number of those who were in the House at a moment; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had referred to an occasion in which he said, as Chairman of Committees, he would have been called upon to put into operation the Closure Resolution, and that was in connection with the Irish Sunday Closing Bill of 1878. On the 1st of April of that year, when the House sat till 6 in the morning, there were 12 Divisions which took place, and all of these would have come under the two-thirds' Rule. On the 13th May, when, again, the House sat till past 9 in the morning in Committee upon the Bill, there were 10 Divisions; but only two of these would have come under the operation of that Rule. He therefore submitted to the Government that it would be desirable to widen the latter part of the Rule. For his own part, considering the great number of safeguards already put in the Rule, he should prefer to see no provision at all, unless it was one to the effect that the closing number should be fixed at 80 or 100 Members, because, if they were to make it effectual against Obstruction, it should be made effectual against Obstruction developing at late hours in the morning, when the House was thin, and when, unless the Rule were so widened, it would be difficult to put the Rule in operation.

COLONEL ALEXANDER said, he must confess he was not a little surprised at hearing the Prime Minister say, in answer to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), that he made the mistake which he acknowledged he had made with reference to the practice of the Colonies on the ground that he had no sufficient information on the subject. He was quite prepared to admit that what the right hon. Gentleman said really was the case; but what he would contend was that the right hon. Gentleman might have had the information on the subject, and that there was information close at hand. As the Prime Minister was not present, he would ask the Secretary of State for War, and his right hon. and learned Friend the Judge Advocate General, whether it was not the case that on the 8th December, 1881, Government had received a special despatch from the Cape, stating that the Rules of Practice of the House of Assembly being substantially the same as those of the House of Commons, there was no authorized mode of procedure for directly interfering with the freedom of debate, or for abridging or terminating discussion by closure. That was two months before the Prime Minister spoke. The Prime Minister also alluded to the practice in Victoria; and he would ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as early as the 2nd of February this year, the Government did not receive a special despatch from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria stating—

> "That the *clôture* had been adopted as a Standing Order confined to the Session of 1875-6, but that no Standing Order having a similar object has since been adopted by the Assembly."

So that, in point of fact, the *clôture* in Victoria was an experiment; and as that experiment had not been repeated, he would ask the House whether they might not, under these circumstances, reasonably infer that the experiment was not considered by those who did try it to be altogether a success? The same thing also occurred in respect to New Zealand. Of 16 Colonies originally enumerated by the Prime Minister as possessing the *clôture*, there was only one with the power of closing a debate at present. The single exception was the Colony of South Australia, and against the practice of that not very large or very important Colony he thought they were entitled to set off all the other five Colonies. A good deal had been said as to the effect which was likely to be produced by the introduction of the *clôture* into the Procedure of the House, and also as to the possibility that under this system the impartiality of the Chair might be impugned. He should like to direct the attention of the House to the operations of the system in a country where it had been some time established — the United States of America. He found in that favoured country an All-night Sitting was quite as common as in this old country, and that Obstruction also was in full swing. In the American intelligence of *The Times* for May 31 there was conclusive proof, as the extract he was about to read would show. It was stated that—

> "The House continues dead-locked over the contested Election Question. The Republicans to-day proposed a change of the rules in order to break the dead-lock; but the Democrats continue to oppose progress by presenting dilatory Motions."

With regard to the possibility of what had been said as to the partiality of the Chair, it was said that "the Democrats then endeavoured amid uproar to censure the Speaker for arbitrary ruling." Well, he ventured to think that the day would come—sooner, perhaps, than some of them expected—when there would be found men in the House who would endeavour amid uproar to censure the Speaker for arbitrary ruling. They were preparing, not for the present Speaker but for his successors, not only an odious but an impossible task. The "evident sense of the House" might mean, under those circumstances, superior shouting or howling power—greater lung power on the part of the minority. In short, the system introduced would be a premium upon every kind of uproar in the House. It was sometimes asked, why should not the *clôture* be decided, as in any other question, by a bare majority? But there was very considerable difference between deciding a question after full discussion and deciding whether there should be adequate or, for the matter of that, any discussion at all. They knew what occurred in France in the Second Empire, where the *clôture* was used, or rather abused, to prevent M. Thiers and his Colleagues from making themselves heard in the Assembly; and what had happened in France might equally well happen in this country under a Constitutional Monarchy. What would have become of Lord Cochrane, of Sir Francis Burdett, of Mr. Brougham, and the very small band of Radicals in Parliament at the beginning of the present century, with the *clôture* in full operation? They never would have been allowed the chance of ventilating their Radical opinions, and thus preparing the way for the introduction of the Reform Bill of 1832. Another argument adduced by the Prime Minister was that the Ministry had been known to resign when placed in a minority of 1; but he would ask whether the same Ministry would not have considered a majority of 1, or even of 2, on a vital question actually equivalent to a defeat? The Prime Minister, having taken his stand on a bare majority as the only sound principle, had proceeded to depart from that principle; for he said that when he spoke of a bare majority as the only sound principle upon which they could on this matter proceed, let it be understood that he did not mean a bare majority without safeguards. The safeguards of the Prime Minister were to exempt small Houses from the operation of the proposed Rule; but everyone having experience in either this or the last Parliament must be perfectly well aware that it was precisely in small

Houses where the evil had made itself most felt. He would add that it appeared to him that the principle which must be propped up and surrounded with safeguards was virtually and practically no principle at all. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had pleaded that, after all, it was, in fact, a very small measure, and that it would very seldom be put in operation. Possibly not in ordinary times; but he thought he could tell the right hon. Gentleman two occasions upon which it would certainly be put in operation. It would certainly be put in operation, he thought, at the dinner hour. He believed that—

> "All softening, overpowering knell—
> The tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell"

would have the effect of an unanswerable cry that the *clôture* be put in immediate operation. There was another and a much more serious occasion upon which he thought the Ministry might sometimes be tempted to use it. The Ministry might be tempted to use it on the eve of a General Election, and just as they were going to the country. What, for instance, was to prevent the Government, in the last Session of a moribund Parliament, from rushing a lot of crude and ill-digested measures through the House in order to give them an opportunity of placarding throughout the constituencies a long and triumphant array of legislative achievements? The Prime Minister had said that he no longer staked the existence of his Government on the success or failure of this measure, and he released his followers from the obligation of voting against their honest convictions in the matter. This was very kind of the Prime Minister; but he was much afraid that the kindness came too late—too late to undo the mischievous effects produced by the Party styling itself the National Federation of Liberal Associations, which, during the last six months, had worked upon the fears and apprehensions of weak-kneed Liberals, to whom, at the eleventh, or even at the twelfth hour, he would say very respectfully, but very earnestly—"Emancipate yourselves from the intolerable tyranny of an insolent Association. Tell the pretentious busybodies who shroud their insignificance under a pompous and high-sounding title that you are not the delegates of a Caucus, but the Representatives of a free people."

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, the object of the *clôture*, or, as he preferred to term it, "the gag," was no longer disguised. It was to gag the minority, not the Irish Party—who, according to the Prime Minister, had only done their duty—but the Conservative Opposition. That was clearly the intention both of the Prime Minister and of the Liberal Party. It was now proposed to gag the Conservatives, for the purpose of forcing through the House a certain number of Liberal measures which were contained in the programme of the Prime Minister. And when the programme of the Prime Minister was exhausted, the more far-reaching one of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would be brought forward. He wished to remind the House that during the existence of the Parliament elected in 1868, notwithstanding the proposal for the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland—which he looked upon as a national crime—was brought forward and passed into law by the Liberals, no complaint had been made of undue Obstruction being offered to it on the part of the Conservative Party. He could not conceive any measure to which the Conservative Party were more deeply and conscientiously opposed. If the minority were gagged, they would cease to have any responsibility for the good order of the House; and if the Members of the Opposition were not treated as gentlemen, hon. Gentlemen opposite could not complain if the gentlemanly feeling of the House ceased. *The Daily News* was the leading organ of the Government, and it was exercised in its mind as to the state of the Conservative Party. He thought what they read in *The Daily News* and *The Spectator* should be regarded as an intimation to the Tory Party to do the exact contrary, for that which was advocated in those papers was the blindest veneration for the will of the Prime Minister. Hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to regard the Prime Minister with the same feelings of blind reverence as those with which Horace regarded Augustus—

> "Præsenti tibi maturos largimur honores,
> Jurandasque tuum per nomen ponimus aras,
> Nil oriturum aliàs, nil ortum tale fatentes."

In those circumstances, hon. Members opposite could not complain if those who sat on the Opposition Benches were determined to give this Resolution their most strenuous opposition.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that hon. Gentlemen opposite taunted the Liberal Party with the Caucus, but appeared to forget the two meetings which had been held at the Carlton. The majority of the Liberal Party disliked the Caucus as much as the Conservatives. He was willing to admit that this proposal was a great change in Parliamentary Procedure; but when he was returned to Parliament, after an absence of 12 years, he had been much struck with the change which had taken place in the House. He found endless talk and no work, and for that state of things a remedy was required. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said that the Government proposal was the greatest change which had ever been proposed in that House. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman had underestimated the change which the adoption of his proposal would bring about, in setting up an artificial majority, unknown to the traditions of the House, which had always decided questions by the majority of votes. If any exception to the general rule were to be adopted, it ought to be in the suspension of Members, which was now decided by the bare majority. If any exception should be made in the case of the *clôture*, it might be in the adoption of the Ballot in voting upon it, so that Members would be able to vote according to their convictions, instead of leaving the House. The Amendment would render the Leader of the Opposition supreme, while the Leader of the Government would be helpless. It would act unfairly to small sections of the House and independent Members, because there was always a sort of honourable understanding between the two Front Benches which would enable them to put a stop to any discussion which was not entirely acceptable.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, that a Constitutional mode of putting the voice of the House into effect had been long established, and the burden of proof lay with those who would introduce another method. Hitherto the voice of the majority had prevailed, and there ought to be the strongest reasons given for substituting a different majority from that which had hitherto decided all questions. He would not attempt to go in detail through the arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman opposite—to do so would be to water away the effect of one of the most magnificent speeches that ever resounded in that House; but he could not agree in thinking that the proposal of the Government would tend to stifle discussion. He was as opposed as any Member in the House to anything which would stifle freedom of discussion, which was the breath of the Liberal Party. But in his view freedom of discussion did not mean freedom for a dozen Gentlemen to express the same views a dozen times over. He believed that the *clôture*, so far from restricting debate, would promote freedom of discussion, and he meant by that, freedom of discussion on a variety of topics; whereas, under the present system, many Members who were competent to give valuable information to the House were precluded from doing so. Some questions were discussed at inordinate length, while other subjects of equal or of greater importance were either not discussed at all, or were brought on at a late hour or in a thin House, when real debate became impossible. The House was thus deprived of the valuable assistance which could be given by many Members, and a few speakers were allowed to monopolize the whole of their time. They were told that the measure was brought in for one purpose, and would be used for another; but he believed that charge to be wholly unfounded; he had always understood that the Resolution was aimed at the more specious kind of Obstruction. With respect to the Circulars of the National Liberal Association which the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Alexander) had referred to, he could only say that he had never received one, or even heard of the Association, and he believed that this bugbear of the hon. and gallant Member was a perfect mare's nest. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) entirely failed to support the burden of proof which lay on him of showing some strong reasons for departing from the ordinary methods of coming to a decision upon any question. He objected to the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman on several grounds. If a closure by a two-thirds or any other artificial majority were adopted, the Government of the day would throw the blame for not passing measures which the country desired upon the Opposition. Moreover, such a *clôture* would be unfair to the Speaker and the Chairman, to whom the initiative was intrusted. It would also be unfair to the Government of the day, who could not be expected to place themselves in the power of the Opposition. If the concurrence of the minority were necessary, the effect would be that their consent would have to be bought, and half-measures satisfactory to neither side would be the result. At present the majority was all powerful in the House, and it would be anomalous and strange to say that the power of closing debate should reside in the Speaker, backed by the voice of the House, and not trust the majority to say under what circumstances the closure should be applied. It was said that the vote on the question whether the *clôture* should be applied would be a Party vote, and no doubt that was true; but he believed that for the successful conduct of Parliamentary government, the division of Members of that House into Parties was necessary. It might be that the Resolution imposing *clôture* would be a Party vote; but he thought too highly of his countrymen not to believe that in either Party there were men who preferred honesty to partizanship, and who would refuse to prostitute their sense of fairness and of justice even to the ties of Party.

MR. GRANTHAM said, the mask had now been thrown off on the other side of the House. From the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey), and that of the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), it was clear that, so far as they were concerned, the earlier part of the Resolution was perfectly irrelevant, and that the principle advocated by them was not that these questions should be determined by the Speaker and the "evident sense of the House," but that the power of closing debate should be entirely in the hands of the Ministerial Party or of the majority of the House. When these Resolutions were first introduced they were told by the Prime Minister that they were wanted to put down Obstruction. Nothing was then said of the desire by the Government of the day to have the power to close debate when they thought right. With respect to the Prime Minister's speech that evening, although he admitted its brilliancy, he was surprised at its audacity, for he had given the Members of that House credit for forgetting everything that he had said before. He now said that it was of the utmost necessity that this Resolution should be passed, and that it was perfectly impossible for Parliamentary government to continue in consequence of the great delays in legislation. Why, in introducing these Resolutions last February, he put this Resolution and the question of Obstruction in the back, ground, and told them that the power to delegate their work was of more importance than to put down Obstruction; and only three or four years ago, when in Opposition, the right hon. Gentleman made it a charge against the then Government, which had been obstructed every bit as much as the present Government, that there were a great many measures which ought to have been introduced, and had not been, not in consequence of Obstruction, but because of the incompetence of the Government to introduce measures of importance to the country. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Not at all.] At that time the right hon. Gentleman favoured Obstruction, and in an article he wrote he directly exonerated certain hon. Members from the Obstruction with which they were justly charged by the House and country. The only alteration he suggested at that time was that the then Government should be hurled from power in consequence of their incompetence. Now, however, the right hon. Gentleman and his Government, in consequence of their own incompetence to govern, were obliged to appeal to the House to help them out of their difficulties, and to pass most drastic measures, and to interfere with the ancient Privileges of that House, because a Radical Government were unable to govern under the same conditions that had satisfied all preceding Ministers and Parties. They had been about 10 months discussing this Rule, and they were now at the 10th line. That looked as if it had been fully discussed, and Amendments had emanated almost as much from the one side of the House as from the other; but yet the Rule stood in the same position as it did at first. It was pretty clear that the Government did not intend that this Resolution should be the result of the feeling of the "evident sense of the House." The speech introducing the Rule was at variance with the Rule itself. The reason of that was that the speech represented the views of the Liberal element in the Cabinet; but the Resolution was drawn by the Radical element, though whether it was to be modified or not to suit the Liberal element was dependent upon the state of the political barometer. In the damp and rainy days of June and July the Radical barometer was low and at "stormy," and the Government were willing to modify it; but now that they believed the reflected glory of our troops in the Egyptian campaign had driven the barometer up again the Radicals thought they had the power to force their views upon the Cabinet and the country. The Rule was not intended for the purpose of putting down Obstruction, but for the purpose of enabling the Government to pass any measures they desired. This Resolution, it appeared, did not generally commend itself to the Liberal Party, for the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had stated that at least 100 Members on the opposite side of the House did not approve of it. The Rule, as it stood, was utterly inconsistent, for it contained two principles that were antagonistic to each other. The first part of the Rule placed the matter in the hands of the Speaker, and took it out of the range of Party strife, whereas the second part at once brought it back again to Party strife, by stating that the Speaker's opinion was to be that of a majority of the House. He would be content if the Rule stopped at the fourth line. He would much prefer the matter being left in the hands of the Speaker to the responsibility being frittered away and placed in the hands of the Minister of the day. The Rule was clearly being made the battle-ground of Party. There would be two fights over every question that was brought forward—first, as to the length of the debate; and, secondly, when the Question was put from the Chair. It was singular how the right hon. Gentleman's change of views had corresponded with the variations of the Radical barometer. This change reminded him of the lines—

'The Devil was sick, the Devil a saint would be,
The Devil got well, the Devil a saint was he."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Monk, not saint.

Mr. GRANTHAM begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his correction. He would only add, in conclusion, that, whatever effect this Rule might have upon the history of the country and of Parliament, he could not help remembering the brilliant services rendered to the country by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; and he regretted, therefore, all the more that this stab in the heart of one of the oldest Privileges of that House—the right of a minority to freedom of debate—should have been given by him; and the House might say with the poet Waller—

"That eagle's fate and mine are one,
Which on the shaft that made him die
Espied a feather of his own,
Wherewith he wont to soar on high."

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, he could assure his Friends on the Ministerial side of the House that he very deeply regretted to find himself on the present occasion unable to concur with the majority of those with whom it was usually his pride and privilege to act. The Prime Minister, in proposing that Resolution, had disclaimed any personal motives, and stated in a touching and pathetic passage that it was impossible that he could long preside over them. For himself, he hoped the day when the right hon. Gentleman would leave them might be still far distant, and he must say that if they could hope always to retain his right hon. Friend as their Leader his fears would vanish. He did not for a moment believe the right hon. Gentleman would abuse the power of the *clôture* by a bare majority, nor, he might add, did he think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would do so. But in giving the power they intrusted it not only to those two right hon. Gentlemen, but to all their successors. Now, what was the evil under which they were suffering? A small number of Members, in their desire to disintegrate the Empire, had set themselves to obstruct the Business of the House; and at length, last Session, the affair having on one occasion come to a climax, the Speaker intervened, and with the general approval of the House put the Question under discussion to the vote, the Leaders of the Opposition unanimously supporting Her Majesty's Government. Therefore, the evil complained of was the action, not of the Leaders of the Opposition, but of a very few nearly irreconcilable Members. That was the evil. But the remedy proposed, while so hedged round with safeguards in the case of small minorities that it could only with great difficulty be applied against those who had offended, was of the most drastic character against the Opposition who had not offended. Of course, it was theoretically possible that the Leaders of the Opposition might join in an organized Obstruction. Such an hypothesis seemed very improbable, and, at any rate, the case had not yet arisen. If such a calamity should occur, if the two-thirds' majority was found insufficient, then, indeed, they must go further. But as regarded the existing evil, the Amendment which stood in his name would clearly make the Rule more effective. It had much surprised him that most of those who had criticized this Amendment appeared to be under the impression that it would render the Rule much weaker, and, in fact, almost inoperative. So far from that being the case, in nine cases out of ten it would immensely facilitate its operation, and render it much more useful. If it would be, perhaps, less stringent against opposition, it would be more effective against Obstruction. Indeed, in a House of less than 250 Members it would be very difficult to apply the Rule as it now stood. Suppose an obstructing minority of 30 or 35, and a majority of 100, or even 150. It might be a very fair case for the *clôture;* but would the Speaker or Chairman feel himself able to interfere? There might be half-a-dozen Members in the Library or the Lobbies; even while the sand was running half-a-dozen Members might come in, and, the number of the minority being thus raised to 40, 200 would be required, and consequently the *clôture* under the Resolution of the Government would not be carried. The Government did not ask for *clôture* by a bare majority unless there were at least 400 Members in the House. Now, if hon. Members would refer to last year's Division Lists, they would see that, out of between 30 and 40 Divisions in which more than 400 Members took part, there were only, he thought, three or four in which the discussion lasted over more than one night. He doubted whether the Government would have attempted or wished to apply their Rule to any one of those, excepting that in which the Speaker intervened, and on that occasion the right hon. Gentleman had himself told them that the *clôture* would have been carried, not by a bare majority, but by 10 to 1. They had almost all of them come, more or less reluctantly, to the conclusion that some change in their Rules was necessary; but he believed that the Government proposal would fail just where it was wanted. In the small hours of the morning, and late in the Session, it would be almost impossible for the Government to apply their Rule; and, in fact, while with the Amendment now proposed the Rule would much less infringe upon the rights of free discussion, it would more effectively put down the wrong of unjustifiable Obstruction. It would interfere less with the liberties of the House, and yet in 19 cases out of 20 would more effectively aid Governments in conducting the Business of the country. If, however, it was hereafter found that the character of opposition in the House was so fundamentally altered that *clôture* by a majority of two-thirds was insufficient, then, on the principle that the Queen's Government must be carried on, he should be prepared to vote for it. He believed, however, that with the Amendment now proposed the Rule would be as effective for all justifiable purposes; certainly it would be passed with less opposition; and for the satisfactory working of the Rule it was most desirable that it should be adopted as far as might be with general concurrence. Again, it must be remembered that by Rule 5 the Speaker or Chairman of Committees in any case of

> "Continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member may direct the Member to discontinue his speech."

Moreover, under Rule 9, the Speaker and Chairman of Committees might Name any Member who was obstructing the Business of the House; and the House might then, and no doubt would, suspend such Member. In fact, therefore, the 1st Rule which they were now discussing was not necessary in order to put down irrelevance, or tedious repetition, or wilful Obstruction. Those proceedings were dealt with by subsequent Resolutions. The 1st Resolution applied to a Member wishing to speak neither for wilful Obstruction nor to repeat what had been already said by others. Surely they should not silence a man who was honestly addressing himself to the Question, who was not repeating what others had said before him, and who was not wandering from the subject, if one-third of the House really desired to hear him. Much stress was laid on the protection afforded by the Rule to small minorities. But how long would such protection last? Once grant the principle of *clôture* by a bare majority, and the privileges of small minorities were doomed. The Rule, as proposed by Her Majesty's Goment, could hardly ever be applied unless they had at least 200 supporters in the House. Very soon, therefore, a Party would arise and ask—indeed, there were many already who did so—why should so much favour be shown to small minorities? The Government would have the power to close debate by a bare majority, and the temptation would become irresistible to deprive small minorities of the special protection which for the present they left them. Though, therefore, for the moment, it might seem that those who expected to find themselves in small minorities would be in a better position by supporting the Government proposal, it was for them to consider how long they would retain their peculiar privilege, and whether before long the power of the *clôture* would not inevitably be applied to bring them under the general Rule. Without some such alteration as that which was suggested the Rule would be quite inconsistent with itself. It was proposed that the *clôture* should only be applied when it was the "evident sense of the House" that the debate should be brought to a close. And yet, if the Speaker or Chairman misinterpreted the general wish—as even with the best intention was quite possible—if a noisy but narrow majority could succeed in conveying an erroneous impression, then, though the division would prove that there was no general desire for the *clôture,* that it was certainly not the evident sense of the House that the debate should be closed, still the *clôture* would be carried because the Speaker or Chairman made a mistake. They had been frequently told that this Resolution would be but seldom used. He quite believed that was the intention, and would be, no doubt, the practice of the present Government. But they could not answer for or control their successors, who would certainly use whatever power was given to them. Indeed, it would be difficult for them to avoid doing so. They would come into power with certain pledges; they would have described certain measures or changes as of great, perhaps vital, importance. The use of this Rule would enable them to carry out their pledges, and surely they would be severely blamed if they were not to use the weapons which were about to be placed in their hands. And what would be the position of the Speaker himself? If he should know that the *clôture* would be passed, though but by a small majority, and if he should decline to apply the Rule, he would inevitably be told that he was the one impediment to the passage of some great measure, and he would be ridiculed for his absurd and mischievous scruples. He would be told that the minority were using the Forms of the House, and that the majority must, therefore, do so too; he would be asked why this Rule was passed if it was never to be used; and he would be stigmatized as a traitor to his Party, as sacrificing the interests of his country, and as false to the opinions which he professed to hold. On the other hand, what would be his position if he should yield, and if he should put the *clôture* to the vote, to be carried by a small majority. They could imagine how indignant the Opposition would be under such circumstances. It seemed to him that the Speaker's position would be quite intolerable. On the other hand, if the Amendment now before the House were accepted, all these difficulties would vanish. If the Speaker should think that there was a two-thirds' majority, and should be mistaken, no harm would be done, and no bitter animosity excited; while if the majority should be two-thirds, the minority could not, of course, complain. He feared lest the change now proposed should injuriously affect the character of the Opposition. At present, after a sufficient discussion, the minority permitted a vote to be taken, and acquiesced in the decision of the majority. But was there no danger that under *clôture* by a bare majority they would, knowing that the *clôture* was unpopular in the country, think it politic to endeavour to attach to any measure they greatly disapproved the additional stigma of having only passed it by means of the *clôture?* Another consideration to which he attached great weight was that the proposed Amendment would render the Resolution much less objectionable to hon. Members opposite. It was most desirable that any changes in their Rules should be made, as far as possible, with general concurrence. A Rule so passed was obviously more likely to work satisfactorily. They were told that, as the most important questions were settled by a bare majority, there was no reason why the *clôture* should not be so settled. Well, if hon. Members saw no difference between settling a question by a bare majority after discussion and stifling discussion by a bare majority, it was probably impossible to make them do so; but he should have thought that the more evenly opinion was divided, and the more important the question to be decided, the more desirable it was that there should be a fair discussion. However that might be, those who used this argument seemed to forget that the Government did not themselves propose *clôture* by a bare majority, except in a House of 400 Members. The Prime Minister characterized a two-thirds' majority as something monstrous and unheard of, yet, up to a House of 300 Members, he himself required a majority of two-thirds. His right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had referred to the conduct of public meetings. There, of course, the chairman of a public meeting could put it to those present to decide whether they wished to hear a speaker any longer or not. He doubted whether such a speaker would be compelled to stop if one-third of those present wished him to continue; but, however that might be, there was a fundamental difference between their deliberations in that House and the discussions of any public meeting. A public meeting was responsible to no one; it could do what it liked, while Parliament was responsible to the electors and the country. Many of those who had supported the *clôture* by a bare majority had done so under the impression that *clôture* by a bare majority had been found to work well abroad and in our Colonies. The National Liberal Federation, in their pamphlet, had, he was told, gone much further, and, in defiance of the facts, had stated that our Colonies "had found it indispensable." But the very reverse was the case. As Mr. Baden Powell had pointed out, the Province of South Australia, containing less than 250,000 English, was the only Colony which now had the *clôture.* Victoria and New Zealand had tried it, but, finding that it would not work, had given it up. Moreover, in South Australia the *clôture* was not adopted because it was found necessary, but was a part of the original Constitution. The experience of the Continent had also been relied on; but that argument had utterly broken down, for only three out of 13 Legislative Assemblies had *clôture* by a bare majority as now proposed. Switzerland had *clôture* by two-thirds, and in four places there might be *clôture* by a bare majority after further debate. The evidence from America adduced by the hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. A. Morley) seemed to him to be open to doubt. Whether that was so or not, they should remember that in America there were such things as dilatory Motions, which they in that House would not have at their command. The *clôture,* as it existed in America, was subject to checks which the Prime Minister did not propose to introduce in this country. It was, therefore, really quite different. Moreover, he greatly doubted whether it worked well. Not many months ago the majority in Congress, after a scene of great disorder, refused to allow the minority to discuss the Bill for the exclusion of Chinese labour—surely a very important subject, and one which required most careful consideration and discussion. Some people argued that the *clôture* must have worked well, because it had never—so they said—been given up where it had once been instituted. He could not admit the fact, and was told that the very reverse was the case. But, even if it were so, it would prove little. Every majority naturally approved a Rule which gave them so great an advantage. Hon. Members opposite now opposed the *clôture;* but if it should be carried against them, depend upon it they would not abandon it when they came into power. They would naturally say—"This Rule has been used against us, and probably will be used against us again. Why should we surrender the advantage it gives to the Party in power?" His fear was that, not being responsible for the Rule, they would use it even more severely than the present Government. The majority of hon. Members on his side of the House were now in favour of the Rule as it stood; but then they were now in a majority. Let them wait till they should again be in a minority. He did not suppose that they would at first complain of the Rule itself; but if it should be used at all against them, doubtless they would consider that it was being abused. If the *clôture* by a bare majority had existed in ancient times, the history of England would have been altogether different. Instead of reforms, we should have had revolutions. Instead of Acts of Parliament, we should have had civil wars. The whole progress of the nation in the great achievement of self-government would have been indefinitely retarded. In conclusion, he once more appealed to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government to accept that or some similar Amendment, because he believed that in adopting the Resolution as it stood they would abandon a great principle to the exigencies of the moment, and would be making a retrograde step which, once taken, they might bitterly regret, but would never be able to retrace; while, on the other hand, if they should accept the Amendment, they would restore efficiency to their deliberations, while sacrificing as little as might be that freedom of discussion to which they owed the liberties of their country, and which, if in some respects a source of inconvenience, yet was in the main the very life and strength of the House of Commons.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), with whom he was sorry he was not able to agree, was not irreconcilably opposed to all forms of *clôture*, but rather appeared to entertain a fear that a downward course would be taken if the two-thirds' majority were not adopted. His hon. Friend, in one part of his speech, found fault with the care taken by the Government to shield small minorities from oppression; but surely such minorities required protection much more than large ones. In the few remarks which he (Mr. Whitbread) wished to make, he would like to allay some of the exaggerated fears which had been aroused by the proposals of Her Majesty's Government. In the first place, he must confess that of the two proposals now before the House, it appeared to him that that of the Government involved the smaller innovation. He would admit that it was an innovation that they did not like, and probably it never would have been proposed in a normal condition of the House; but the supporters of the Amendment, besides proposing the closure of debate, also desired to introduce the principle of giving to an artificial majority greater powers than were possessed by the simple majorities which determined all the other questions ever submitted to the House. The principle being once admitted that a two-thirds' majority should be armed with exceptional powers for a given purpose, could it be supposed that further proposals would not be made with respect to such majorities in the future? There was evidence of the possibility of conflict between the two Houses of Parliament in legislative matters. Upon the discovery of the exceptional authority of a two-thirds' majority, was it altogether outside the range of possibility that those exceptional powers should be appealed to to enforce the authority of the House in its external relations? The truth was that there was no saying how far the effect of that new principle might reach. With respect to the proposals of the Government, the unfounded fears of the Opposition had conjured up spectres in all directions. They were to have a partizan Speaker, a partizan Chairman of Ways and Means, and a Minister in power with a majority at his back, reckless of all consequences, and determined, at all hazards, to pass revolutionary measures by the aid of these New Rules. Such were the fears of the Opposition; but they were altogether contrary to past experience. The political temper of the nation, and of the House, would not be so changed by the New Rules as to make majorities overbearing, and minorities meek and long suffering. The latter, as long as they retained their power of moving Amendments, would always be able to defeat arbitrary legislation; and a minority against whom the *clôture* had been enforced would so crowd the Paper with Notices and Amendments as to render progress impossible. Very erroneous ideas had evidently been formed of the practical result of the *clôture*, which would always be accompanied by natural safeguards. The enormous power of retaliation which minorities possessed ought not to be forgotten. It had been said that it was quite evident the Government did not intend to move these Rules in order to put down Obstruction, but that they intended to use them for quite another purpose—namely, to press forward new measures which they contemplated the introduction of. He should like to say a word upon that view. The majority of the House had certain duties to perform, and amongst those duties there was none greater than their care of the time of the country. They were as much the guardians of the public time as of the public purse. When a General Election took place, the majority returned to Parliament was returned there to carry out certain measures which they had promised upon the hustings; and it was their duty, by all fair and legitimate means, to press forward those measures. If they failed to do so, they failed in their duty; and, as guardians of the public time, it was their duty to press forward those measures as rapidly as possible. But that any new measure, any new line of legislation was contemplated by the Government, and that these Rules were to be passed to enable them to carry such new measures, seemed to him to be about as absurd a statement as could be made. He was not given to prophecy, and he was not in the secrets of the Government; but this much he would prophesy—that whatever measures the Government would have thought it their duty to introduce in the normal condition of Parliament as to Business would be the measures they would introduce after the New Rules were passed; and he could assure hon. Members opposite that the bitterness of the draught would not receive the addition of a single new ingredient from them. The House was now, and had been for the last six years, in an abnormal condition. The most that could be hoped from these New Rules would be to bring back Parliament to its normal condition, as regarded the transaction of Business, which existed prior to the year 1874. Before sitting down, he wished to protest most strongly against one line which had been taken by two hon. Gentlemen opposite; and that was the line of prophesying that, although there was an impartial Speaker in the Chair at present, in the future they could not guarantee the impartiality of the Chair. He welcomed the words which fell from the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham); and he joined the hon. and learned Member in the strong protest he had made against that line of argument. He did that for several reasons. In the first place, the argument was unseemly and undignified; and, in the next, it was unwise and even dangerous. It must be remembered that, in public life, men were very apt to live up to the expectations that were formed of them; and he was not sure that it was a wise thing to endeavour to take away from the position of the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means, by merely prophesying, night after night, and in speech after speech, that, although the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means at present were impartial, they could not expect the continuance of that impartiality in the future. A great effect was produced upon men holding high positions by the expectations that were formed of them. If they desired to see impartiality in the future, let it be clearly shown that they expected it—that they would look for it, and that they would bitterly resent any departure from it. Besides, they must remember that the time would come, in the nature of things, when hon. Gentlemen opposite would be called upon to appoint both a new Speaker and a new Chairman of Ways and Means; and how would they then be situated if they had previously disclaimed any likelihood of impartiality being exercised in the case of either? If they went on saying—"We expect you to be a partizan after the passing of these Rules; you must be a partizan in the future; you will be nothing but the servant of the Government and of the majority," what was the result likely to be? He believed—and he hoped he might confidently believe—that the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means of the future would be as they were now, and as they had been in the past. He believed that they would show that impartiality which was recognized on all sides, and in every quarter of the House. Still more, he believed that they would show even that watchful and jealous care for the rights of the minority and the weaker Party that he had heard recognized, even, he might say, in the most unexpected quarters. It was a strange argument for the right hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced this Amendment (Mr. Gibson) to use—a strange argument, he (Mr. Whitbread) thought, in the mouth of a Member of that learned Profession which the right hon. and learned Gentleman adorned, when he said that, in the future, the Speaker would be alive to the wishes, and even to the prejudices, of the Party who put him into power. What would the right hon. and learned Gentleman have said if any hon. Member pointed to the legal luminaries on the Bench, and said that, although the Judges on the Bench at present were impartial, in the future Party bitterness would enter into the discharge of their duty, and the country must not look for that impartiality hereafter? Surely a Member of that Profession, of all others, might have remembered that a Judge dropped the Advocate and all his Party feeling when he was appointed upon the Bench; and he (Mr. Whitbread) thought it was a little too much for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to deny to the whole body of Members of that House the power of selecting a man to preside over their deliberations, who should be as impartial in the Chair as the Judges selected from the Legal Profession were impartial upon the Bench. He, for one, refused to believe that the whole political temper of the nation would be changed, and that circumstances would hereafter exist which would deprive persons placed in high positions of the impartiality they had hitherto exercised. He saw nothing to indicate that the conduct of debates in that House would be on other lines than it had been heretofore. He could not understand that there was anything in the simple power of closing a debate which should lead the House to abandon all that forbearance towards one another which had made Members of the House of Commons, above all other Assemblies in the world, tolerant of each other's opinions. He was sure that they were not going to enter into an era when the stability of our legislation would be in jeopardy; but he hoped and believed that they would continue to enjoy and deserve the high reputation they had hitherto possessed. He supported the Resolution as it stood: first of all, because he believed that, in arriving at some simple means of closing debate, they were, in reality, saving the freedom of debate from the peril in which it had been placed by the licence of debate in recent years; secondly, he supported it most cordially on another ground—namely, because he believed that, of all the plans which had been suggested to the House for closing debate, it was the one which gave the greatest protection where it was most needed, and that was to the smallest number.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had observed that all the speakers who had supported the Resolution as it stood had fallen back on the so-called disorders which they had experienced in recent years; and if he asked them to put their finger on what it all came to—although they did not like openly to avow it—there could be no doubt that the motive power of those hon. Members who had spoken in favour of the Resolution was the action which had been resorted to by what was known as the Irish Party. It was all very well to conceive it; but it was quite true, and the House would never have heard a word of these Resolutions if it had not been for the action of that Party. If that were what was called Obstruction, it was quite different from the expression of honest opinion in that House, which, according to the language of the Prime Minister, might not be necessarily wrong. The simple way to deal with Obstruction was to put it down; and the Opposition were as much agreed upon the necessity of doing so as the Government themselves. He hoped, however, to be able to show, before he sat down, that the Resolutions, as they stood, went a very great deal further than that, and that they also went far beyond the circumstances of the case. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Whitbread) said the Opposition had proposed a far greater innovation than the Government; and the hon. Member charged them with proposing two innovations, whereas the Government had only suggested one. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) begged to deny any proposition of the kind. They had proposed nothing. The Government had proposed the *clôture*, which was undoubtedly an innovation; and what the Opposition said was—"If you have the *clôture* you must have another innovation, in order to render the *clôture* comparatively harmless;" that innovation being a majority of two-thirds. He quite agreed that a great deal might be said *primâ facie* against that proposal, unless the *clôture* was to be forced upon the House as it was at present. The hon. Member said that a two-thirds' majority might be used to further very important matters, and he instanced a conflict with the other House of Parliament. But that was a matter which might be brought forward any day. They might depend upon it that if the Prime Minister of the present day was anxious to enter into a conflict with the other House, he would do so, whether there was a two-thirds' majority or not. But that was not a matter to enter into now. It was quite true that they must make Rules for their guidance, and the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) said that the Government of the day—as at present constituted—were not likely to use the Rules of the House in a way in which they were not intended when they were passed. True; but when engaged in making Rules they should endeavour to make them for evil times, and not for good times only. He apprehended that the object of making Rules was to guard against further evils. They had Rules existing already. The hon. Member said the New Rules would not be abused. What ground had he for saying that? It was the abuse of the existing Rules which made the Prime Minister bring forward new Rules now, and it was the duty of the House to frame the Rules with such safeguards as to prevent them from being abused in the future by being used unscrupulously by ambitious Ministers. At any rate, they ought to guard the House against being placed in a position that the Rules which they intrusted in the hands of the Minister in power might not, some day or other, be used against the interests of debate in that House. The hon. Member also said that it was the duty of the Ministry to press forward the measures they had promised the constituencies on the hustings. Quite true; but they were not to press forward those measures until they had undergone adequate discussion in the House. The whole question was this—and let there be no mistake about it—they were as strongly impressed as the Prime Minister was with the necessity of putting down Obstruction; but they were determined, as far as lay in their power, to maintain that there should be perfect freedom of discussion in regard to all the measures that were brought before them, in order that they might obtain that most desirable thing, which had always been the case hitherto when measures had been passed by the House, that a change of Government should not produce the reverse of good. He was one of those who deeply regretted that the Government had not presented to the House the other Rules before they proposed this one, because he believed that if the remaining Rules had been discussed, the House would have felt that Obstruction had been in a great measure dealt with by them, and that there was no occasion for this Rule at all. With reference to what had fallen from the Prime Minister, he should like, with all due deference and respect, to make three observations upon it. In the first instance, he could not help thinking that, although the House was much impressed with a good many of the arguments used, when the Rules were introduced early in the Session, in the month of February, it seemed now to turn out that many of those arguments, and arguments which had led the Government to the conclusion they had arrived at, were arguments that were only furnished after the Government had come to the conclusion that New Rules were necessary, and they were arguments upon which the Government had built up the edifice they had since constructed. No one could imagine for a moment that if the Prime Minister had set to work for the purpose of forming an opinion as to what the Rule was that ought to be established, he would have alluded to the Colonies in the way he did, because it was quite clear that he would have had more accurate information as to what had taken place in the Colonies before he would have ventured to mention the case of the Colonies to the House. The same might be said of the reference by the right hon. Gentleman to Foreign States. At the present moment, the question was in the most hazy condition possible; and the House had no accurate information as to the state of the question in connection with the Foreign Governments of Europe.

All that they had was an assertion on one side of the House which was disputed on the other. Anyone who had heard the assertion of the Prime Minister, or who had read it in the country, would conclude that he had built up his view of these Rules from the practice of other countries—that it was his knowledge of the practice elsewhere that had led him to the conclusion he had arrived at. It now turned out to be nothing of the sort. Certain statements had been laid before the right hon. Gentleman in the first instance; and, as it often happened in other cases, the arguments upon which he had based his conclusions were now shown to be utterly fallacious. The other day they had the opinion brought forward of a very high authority—the opinion of Lord Eversley, who, as early as 1848, was said to have pointed out that the *clôture* was the proper remedy for the evil. But when the opinion of Lord Eversley came to be examined, it turned out to be a totally different remedy from that proposed by these Rules. It was simply that a Member should give Notice that, at some future time, he would move the closing of the debate. Anyone who had read the speech of the Prime Minister would believe that Lord Eversley's opinion backed up the conclusions of the Government; whereas, upon examination, it appeared that the arguments of the Prime Minister, based upon Lord Eversley's opinion, fell entirely to the ground. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had no wish to weary the House, and he only desired to make a few remarks, which would be very short indeed. The second observation he desired to make was this—the Prime Minister said he was asked how many Liberal Members would have voted for the *clôture* if it had been proposed by the Conservatives when they were in power? The Prime Minister said he would answer it by putting another question—How many Conservatives would have objected to it if it had been proposed by a Conservative Government? He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would answer that by saying that more than one-half of the Party would have objected and voted against the Government in such an event, and the Government would have had no chance whatever of passing it if they had proposed it. The third observation he wished to make was this—the Prime Minister objected very strongly, and so also did the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Whitbread), to all the remarks which had been made upon the impartiality of the Speaker. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair would know very well that any observation which had been made in that direction did not apply to himself, but to future Speakers who might be elected under totally different circumstances, and under totally different conditions. The Prime Minister said the Opposition were always harking back, back, back, upon that. He was quite ready to give it up if the Prime Minister would give up another argument upon which he was always harking back, back, back. The Prime Minister objected to the proposition of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) upon two grounds. He said, supposing the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman were carried, how could it possibly be that the safeguards he had proposed could ever be brought to bear? That was the question the Prime Minister propounded; and his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) rejoinder to it was this—the right hon. Gentleman said the Speaker would make up his mind that it was the "evident sense of the House" that the debate ought to be closed, and then he added that the Speaker could not afford to be deceived in the matter. He said quite truly that it would be a very difficult thing for the Speaker to make up his mind whether two-thirds of the House were in his favour or not. It would often be more difficult to know this when a division was called, because when the division bell was rung other people would come into the House, and they might absorb the balance of Parties, and so put the Speaker out of his calculation; and it would be unfortunate if the Speaker were deceived under such circumstances. But he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) did not think that anyone, even in such a case, would charge the Speaker with having wilfully made a mistake. It would be very natural to say that the "sense of the House," as it was constituted before the division bell rang, was in one direction; and, as often happened, when the bell rang it was in a totally different direction. He did not think that anyone would be prepared to make any charge against the Speaker under such circumstances. And now he would ask the Government what would happen under the Resolution which was proposed? The Speaker would say—"I believe it is the 'evident sense of the House,'" which would mean the evident sense of the vast majority of the House—not the sense of one Party, but the general sense of the House. A division would be called and taken, and if it should then appear that there was only a majority of one, two, three, or four, or some other small number, what would become of the authority of the Speaker? If that argument was worth anything against the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), it told with ten-fold more force against the propositions of the Government as they now stood on the Paper. The Prime Minister said that he had two objections to the Amendment. First, that it would do an injustice to small minorities. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would remind the House that the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend did not affect the Government provisions as to minorities at all. The hon. Member for the City of Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) was of opinion that there ought to be no provisions for small minorities at all; and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) was of the same opinion. The Amendment left that question entirely as it was proposed by the Government; and, therefore, that observation of the Prime Minister might be dismissed. But then the right hon. Gentleman said it was unjust to the majority. Why? That was the most extraordinary statement they had heard. The right hon. Gentleman said the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin would hand over the rights of the majority to the minority. What rights had they? They had no rights whatever; and if they had any rights, how could those rights be handed over? What the Prime Minister really meant was that the Amendment did not place in the hands of the majority the rights which he thought they ought to possess. That was a totally different thing from handing over existing rights to the minority; and what the right hon. Gentleman meant was that he would like to hand over to the majority rights which they had not got at present, and which, if the Amendment passed, he would be prevented from doing. That was a totally different thing from handing over to the minority rights which the majority now enjoyed. But, in discussing the question, the right hon. Gentleman had really let out the whole secret of what it was he wanted. The Opposition had been asking, over and over again, exactly what it was the Prime Minister wanted. The noble Lord who sat next to him (the Marquess of Hartington) some time ago did give an exposition of the powers of the Speaker, and it was one which the House ought to consider carefully. The noble Marquess said that a great deal of time was often wasted in discussing certain propositions that were brought before the House, and that the time employed in discussing the questions to which he referred might be much better employed in discussing other Motions that stood on the Paper. Therefore, the Speaker, according to the noble Marquess, was to take the responsibility, not of deciding whether a question had been adequately discussed or not, but whether the time of the House would be better employed in discussing the Motions which stood next on the Paper. That was the view of the noble Marquess; and not only did the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India put that view before the House, but he gave examples of what he meant. He said that the House did not want to hear the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) on Russia, nor the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) on Free Trade, nor the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) on patent medicines. The noble Marquess thought that the time of the House would be better utilized by going on with other Business than that upon the Paper. That was altogether a different thing from the Speaker taking into consideration whether or not a question had been sufficiently discussed; because, in the opinion of the noble Marquess, he was only to consider whether there were other matters on the Paper more worthy of being debated. What the Prime Minister really wanted was not simply the power of putting down Obstruction, but power to shorten the legitimate discussions which had hitherto gone on. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Whitbread) said there had been no complaint of the action of the House until the year 1874, and that that was the time at which the Obstruction began. No greater compliment could be paid to the Opposition which lasted from 1868 to 1874, and nothing tended to prove more satisfactorily how little justification there was for the coercion it was now proposed to place upon them. During all the years the former Liberal Government were in Office, from 1868 to 1874, there was not one word that could be said against the course pursued by the Opposition. Then, what had happened since 1880 that called now for the passing of Resolutions that were not directed so much at the little knot of Irish Members as against the Conservative Party in general? There were Conservatives who might object to a course of Obstruction; but when it came to a vote the Conservative Party would not vote against it. It was said that the responsible Members of the Opposition, although they were not prepared to justify protracted debate, when it was proposed that a debate should be closed, were not prepared to say so. That was as much as to say that the responsible Members of the Opposition were not prepared to do their duty. What he had always contended to be necessary in order to restore debate to its old position was that, when the Leaders of the Opposition got up to close a debate, the debate should be closed. That was the old *clôture,* and it was done by agreement, and it was what they wanted to return to now. By the present Resolution, so far from inviting them to accomplish that great object, the Government were taking all the responsibility from them, and they would no longer be prepared to rely upon the good faith and honour of a Party. He should have been glad if several Members who occupied seats on the Liberal side of the House, but who were not in their places at that moment, could have been present. He had heard the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) express a strong opinion in opposition to the *clôture,* and an opinion that was by no means complimentary to those who sought to introduce it. He had also heard the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) altogether repudiate it, and the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had entered a similar protest against it. He would remind the hon. Member for Swansea of the opinion he had expressed on the subject when it was under discussion on a previous occasion. The hon. Member said "he trusted there was no sort of possibility of its being adopted," and he added "that any such proposal would meet with his most determined opposition." Those words were uttered by the hon. Member in the year 1880, and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) wanted to know what had occurred since to change the views of the hon. Member, and what had induced him to make the speech which he made the other day in favour of the *clôture?* So far the hon. Member for Swansea had not given the smallest reason for his change of opinion; and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) ventured to say that the views expressed by the hon. Member for Burnley and the hon. Member for Swansea some time ago were identical with those of a great number of Members who sat in that part of the House. The Prime Minister had said—and he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was glad to hear the statement that this was not to be made a question of want of confidence—that although the Government pressed the Resolution very strongly, still it was not a matter of want of confidence. He hoped the Liberal Members would remember that, and that they would vote according to their consciences. He also wished very much that they could be able to vote by ballot on the question. He believed, if that were possible, they would see very different results than those which were likely to be brought about. There were some very sensible remarks made by a Member of the Government on this matter not long ago, which he should like to bring under the recollection of the House and under that of the Prime Minister also. This was not a question that could be decided by a mere Party vote, but it was a question which must be decided by the general opinion of the House, and if the House was to be bound for all future time to act loyally under the Rule, it was a question which could not be decided simply by Party exigencies. He would remind the House of the opinion expressed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department not long ago—observations made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman only three years ago on the matter—or, rather, on a much smaller matter than the *clôture*—being simply upon the question of altering the Rule whether the House should go into Committee of Supply on Mondays without previous discussion. The right hon. Gentleman said then—

> "It was quite impossible that a matter of that kind could be satisfactorily settled merely by a majority. They should depart from the ancient Rules of the House only by general consent."

He still hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would get up in the course of these discussions—for he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not spoken yet—and that he would repeat the words he had made use of with so much force in 1879—that they ought not to come to any conclusion to depart from the ancient Rules of the House except by general consent. There was only one word more he wished to say on the question. They had heard from the Prime Minister a very strong expression of his objection to the *clôture* by a two-thirds' majority. The right hon. Gentleman said it would put everything in the hands of the minority, and that nothing would induce him even to accept a *cloture* at all, if that proposal were carried against him. At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman refused to make it a question of confidence. He looked upon *cloture* by a two-thirds' majority as actually worthless, and he would rather not have *clôture* at all. Under those circumstances, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) wanted to know how and why it was that the right hon. Gentleman ever suggested to his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), who sat near him, that he would accept a two-thirds' majority? The hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Davey) had made use of some words which he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would not have ventured himself to apply in any form or shape. The hon. and learned Member had implied that if the *clôture* were passed in the way proposed by Her Majesty's Government, there might be arrangements, and Lobbying, and alterations in the course of Business. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought that what was present in the mind of the Prime Minister was this—that if he could get the *clôture* passed in the way suggested by the Amendment, it might be possible in the months of June and July to carry out arrangements very like those which the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch had described as Lobbying, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would rather not have the *clôture* at all than *clôture* under such circumstances. It was a great pity, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman ever made the suggestion he did to the right hon. Member for North Devon, or that, having made it, he ever departed from it. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) sincerely hoped the House, notwithstanding what had been said, would adhere to the Resolution so far as it would put down Obstruction, but that they would still allow every legitimate opportunity for fair discussion. He was quite sure of this—that it was upon that principle, and that principle alone, that the Business of the House could be conducted with satisfaction either to the House or to the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would accept the Motion.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 1st November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, some remarks of mine in reply to my right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) are misreported in one morning paper of to-day. The reports and the summaries in the other papers correctly give in some cases my words, and in all my meaning; but in one important journal I am made to speak of—

> "The enormous difficulty the Government experienced in trying to conduct the government of Egypt from this country."

A reference to the other reports would show that my argument was against trying to conduct the government of Egypt from this country "by telegraph." As long ago as the 13th of October, Her Majesty's Government instructed Sir Edward Malet to insist that the trial of Arabi should be public. I was asked yesterday if the Press was to be excluded, and I replied that we had no reason to suppose that it was, and that the conditions agreed to by the counsel for the defence did not say so. My right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn insisted that I should at once promise to telegraph again upon this subject, and it was then that I asked for Notice of his Question, and added the words to which I have just alluded.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I do not think my hon. Friend quite understood my Question as to the exclusion of the Press from the trial of Arabi. I did not ask whether the Government would insist on the admission of the Press, but whether they would use their good offices—that is to say, urge on the Government of the Khedive the desirability of allowing the Press to be present.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That was done on the 13th of last month. What I said was that, not having heard of any intention to exclude the Press, I did not think it necessary to refer to the subject again. I did not complain of the Question, but of the misreport of my answer.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: The Question of my hon. Friend is not answered. It is, whether the Government will use their influence with those who are to conduct the trial for the purpose of making sure that the trial shall be conducted publicly?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already said three times that as long ago as the 13th of October we made strong and distinct representations on that subject.

Captain AYLMER asked the Government, whether they had got any further information as to the state of affairs in the Soudan?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That is a Question of which Notice ought to have been given. There is no further information as to the state of affairs, although we have received certain opinions.

Captain AYLMER gave Notice that he would repeat the Question on Thursday.

Sir Charles W. Dilke

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWELFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that a great change had certainly come over the spirit of the Government in connection with the Amendment now before the House. He could not help thinking that the attitude now taken up by the Government was largely due to the success which had attended their recent active foreign policy. A few months ago the Premier was ready to accept the limitation of the Opposition, and to surrender the Government pretension to stop debate in that House by the vote of a bare Ministerial majority. The Government now, however, was no longer under the shadow of many defeats; it no longer rested under the depression resulting from the surrender of Candahar or the rout of Majuba Hill, but throned itself magnificently upon a pyramid of 5,000 slaughtered fellaheen, butchered on the principles of peace. He could not but associate the present stiffness of the Government purposes with their consciousness of standing on the moral attitude of that new position. They were told that the question before the House did not involve any Vote of Confidence, and the Premier appeared to think that the House ought to be indebted to his magnanimity for refraining from putting the Government screw on the Liberal Party. He, however, was not sure that the House at large had any particular reason for being grateful to the Premier for that exhibition of magnanimity. He strongly suspected that this refraining from putting on the Government screw at the present moment would not deprive the Government of more than a very small number of Liberal votes; while, on the other hand, it was hoped that by this show of magnanimity a certain number of Irish Members, who certainly would not give a Vote of Confidence in Her Majesty's Government, might be induced to support the Government, for they were carefully told that even a defeat would not involve a fall of the Coercion Ministry. Therefore, this refraining from putting on the Government screw would not lose the Government more than some half-dozen Liberal votes, while it was calculated to secure the accession of those of several dozens of trustful Irishmen. In vain, however, was the net spread in the sight of wary birds, and the Government manœuvre upon this occasion was so transparent that he trusted that it would deceive none but the most confiding souls. There was nothing more remarkable or more admirable among the many remarkable and admirable qualities of the eminent man who directed the Government of the country and led the Liberal Party whithersoever he pleased than his capacity at all times of turning his back upon himself. But when the right hon. Gentleman asked the House and the country to turn their backs upon all their traditions, he thought that he ventured a little beyond the limits of that indulgence which, of course, he could always claim in his own case. The Premier made a fundamental proposition, and based it upon a fundamental fact, which could be accepted as a fact only by virtue of the exercise of his own remarkable faculty of forgetting the past and supposing that others could do the same. For instance, in commenting yesterday upon the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), the Premier characterized it is an innovation brought forward for the purpose of enabling the minority to resist the right of the majority to close a debate when they thought fit. But, so far from this being the first time that a right had been claimed on the part of the minority to resist the will of the majority in such a matter, this was the first time that there had been claimed on the part of the majority a right to stop discussion which the minority desired to continue. Therefore it was the Premier, and not the right hon. and learned Gentleman, who was the innovator. He confessed that from an Irish point of view it was a misfortune that this Amendment should have been brought forward by a Gentleman of the political antecedents of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin. He yielded to none in fully recognizing the high political character and the great abilities of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but from an Irish point of view he must regard him as a head-centre of that Irish faction which absolutely opposed all Irish reform, and whose connection with the English Conservatives caused the latter to be regarded with suspicion throughout Ireland, and prejudiced them in the eyes of the Irish people. The accident that this Amendment, limiting the operation of the *clôture*, had been brought forward by a Gentleman of anti-Irish antecedents, was being utilized at that very moment throughout Ireland by the supporters of Whiggery for the purpose of inducing the Representatives of Irish popular feeling to give their votes to the Government out of hostility to the standard-bearer of the Opposition on that occasion. For his own part, however, he could only judge the Amendment upon its merits, irrespective of the political character of its introducer. The first argument that was brought forward by the admirers of the Whig Administration in Ireland against this Amendment was that if it were accepted it would secure a form of *clôture* which could be easily applied to suppress Irish opposition to coercion. On that point he should wish to remark that, thanks to the action of Her Majesty's most Liberal Government, the Irish Party, even if they had the fullest licence for Obstruction, would have no opportunity for opposing coercion for the next three years, during which the Coercion Act would remain in force. He was also of opinion that none of the new proposals of the Government could increase the power of the Chairman of Committees to suppress the voice of the Irish popular Representatives at a critical moment in a discussion. The Chairman had already the power of suppressing and of expelling Irish Representatives—those who were absent as well as those who were present. He had already the power of deciding *in foro conscientiæ* that any Member from Ireland, whether loquacious or silent, was obstructing the progress of Public Business, and he could remove him from any further discussing the most important Irish affairs. And when the action of the Chairman of Committees, or possibly that of the Speaker, was challenged in this House, the Minister of the day would come forward and prevent any reversal of the proceeding of the Chairman or of the Speaker in suppressing Irish representation. It was said there was a possibility of the Irish Party being worsened by the proposed Rule; but he denied that possibility. The Government had reduced the Irish Party to such a condition that as regards Obstruction on Irish questions it was impossible to place it in a worse position. So far as the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin proposed to place the opposition of a minority, however small, at the mercy of a majority, however large, he did not approve of that Amendment; and if that Amendment was coupled with a declaration of the right hon. and learned Member's hostility to all propositions for the *clôture* whatever he should still regard that Amendment with very considerable suspicion. He wished formally to protest against the idea that any majority, however large, ought to be able by brute force to suppress any minority, however small. And in doing so he was merely following the expressed opinion of the Premier himself, when the Premier was another man. It might be not only the right, but the duty of a minority, however small, to dare the *clôture*, to dare suspension, and to dare expulsion, in order to concentrate public opinion upon an Act which ought to be a subject of popular detestation, and which ought to rouse the national indignation against a Ministry desirous of suppressing the voice of an oppressed nation. But he had to oppose, above all, the proposition of the Government to make a discussion in that House dependent upon the vote of a bare majority—that was to say, of a Ministerial majority. The Premier declared in the first instance, and magnanimously pledged himself, that if the *clôture* by a bare majority were too oppressive to the minority he would himself come forward to undo what he was doing to-day. When the Premier made that gratuitous and magnanimous declaration a Conservative Member was overheard to say—"Yes, as soon as we begin to use the majority *clôture*, the Premier will start an anti-atrocity agitation against us." He concurred in that opinion. He felt positive that in all consistency and in all sincerity the Premier would act up to his declaration if the *clôture* fell into the hands of a Tory majority, precisely in the manner suspected by that Conservative Member. He, for one, was not prepared to leave the liberties of independent Members to the fluctuating intentions of Premiers in Office or out of Office. Then an artless confidence had been expressed in the immaculate conduct of the presiding authority. The Premier had stated—he had taken down his words—"that the Speaker could not deviate from the impartiality of the Chair." He thought that statement was deserving of being enshrined in some museum of curiosities. Why should not the Speaker deviate from the impartiality of the Chair? The Premier had said that to make use of the Speaker for Party purposes would be the ruin of the Party assisting in so nefarious a scheme. He would remind the House that the impartiality of the Chair was only a recent tradition. It was only the Speakers of late years who had made themselves deserving of confidence. Formerly the Speaker was the minion of the Monarch; and the intention of the Premier was to make him for the future the fugle-man of the majority. Why could not the Speaker deviate from the impartiality of the Chair? In every foreign Legislature—in every foreign country, whether of different blood or of the same blood as our own — in every Assembly where the majority was armed with the *clôture* the President had failed to maintain inviolable impartiality. And why should not an Englishman or an Irishman appointed to the Chair prove as frail and as partial as the President of any other Assembly working under the operation of the gag? It was not the deviation of the Speaker from the ordinary path of duty that was to be feared; but there was the probability of the Speaker being appointed by a Party vote in order that he might use the gag for Party purposes, and it might be that under such circumstances the Speaker would not shrink from using his power in conformity with the wishes of the Party which had elected him. Might there not be, in the present day, one or two Gentlemen supporters of the Government who would be found capable of acting as Party Speakers? He had great respect for a Liberal in the abstract, but a Liberal in the concrete was a fallible being. The eminent man who directed the Government was a master of words, whose every sentence seemed exactly formed to convey what he wished to convey, and not one iota or one atom beyond. He was a master of the English language, approaching more closely the accuracy of the Mediæval schoolmen than any other man of modern times. Therefore, when he made a declaration on any subject, such declaration must be closely scrutinized. Now, he had stated that the Government would carefully keep the Chair from any semblance of connection with the majority. That was an exact description of the Government policy. It was true the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian desired carefully to keep the Chair from any "semblance" of connection with the majority; but he intended to keep the reality of a connection between the Speaker and the Ministerial majority. The Speaker was only to act in accordance with the "evident sense" of the House; but that meant the evident sense of the Ministerial majority. Even in the case of the most high-minded, impartial, and able Speaker there was no adequate guarantee in the declaration that the Speaker should judge when a subject had been sufficiently discussed; and, therefore, they ought to require some further guarantee, such as that suggested by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin. It was not in the power of any man, whether he sat in the Chair or in any other part of the House, to say with absolute certainty that a subject had been sufficiently discussed, that all the light which might be thrown upon it had been so thrown, and that the sudden closing of the debate would not deprive the House of the advantage of hearing important arguments and information. There were, moreover, two circumstances which would singularly aggravate the operation of the Ministerial *clôture* in this country. It was the habit of the House to transact most of its Business in the evening and at night time; and it was also the habit of the Chair to choose, in preference to all other Members of the House, the Members sitting on the two Front Benches. Even under the present rule of liberty the time at which the House transacted its Business militated most seriously against the chances of independent Members getting the ear of the House. As a Rule, they were relegated to that unhonoured calm of the dinner hour, which was beneath the consideration of Irish Attorney Generals. In foreign Legislatures having the *clôture* there was some such arrangement as an impartial inscription of the names of Members desiring to take part in the debate in a list which was followed *seriatim* by the President; but even with that safeguard in foreign Legislatures the action of independent Members was practically reduced almost to a nullity; but under the proposed *clôture* here, it would be found that the Leviathans of the two Front Benches would be chosen by preference as before, and after the House had been entranced or wearied by their contributions to the subject under discussion, the moment arrived for the application of the gag, and the independent opinion of the House was shut out from further consideration of the question. The operation of the two-thirds' majority principle was sought to be tested in Ireland by the incorrigible advocates of Whiggery, by a sole application to the case of the Liberal Party being in power. The very circumscribed success of the Land Act and the Arrears Act had apparently filled some gentlemen in Ireland with unbounded confidence in the wisdom of the Government; but the proposal ought to be tested by the case of a Conservative Government being in power. Supposing a Conservative Secretary of State for India were endeavouring to prevent ugly revelations in regard to the Bengal gaols, would not the Liberal Party refuse the two-thirds' vote which would be necessary to silence inconvenient criticism? Again, under a Conservative Government, even in Irish affairs, were the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to come forward and call attention to the shortcomings of remedial legislation, although the Conservative Government might be as anxious as the present Government to prevent a discussion of that kind, the Liberal minority would no doubt refuse the requisite two-thirds' majority or the suppression of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. But even with a Liberal Government in Office he was not prepared to give a blank cheque to be filled up at the pleasure of the Treasury Bench. They knew that the views of the Liberal Party on denominational education in England and elsewhere were, at least, open to suspicion on the part of many Members; and supposing under a Liberal Government a proposition was brought forward by which the voluntary system in this country would be seriously impaired, if not destroyed, it would then be in the highest degree useful for the minority to have the power to prevent the Birmingham school from having it all its own way on the important subject of religious education. Again, on the question of the Parliamentary Oath, the minority of the House even under a Liberal Government ought to be able to prevent a bare Ministerial majority from imposing the gag on a matter so intimately affecting the most serious aspects of political and social life. He did not know whether the veneration of "the Holy Carpet" was to take the place of the older traditions of that Assembly; but whatever might be the views of the gifted man who directed the destinies and apparently shaped the convictions of the Liberal Party, he did not think that the House ought to be disarmed, or that a minority ought to be disarmed, of the power of securing a full and fair discussion on those important questions. Again, they were promised a large measure of Parliamentary Reform coupled with a large redistribution of seats. That delicate wit, known in America as "jerrymandering" was capable of application in this country in connection with a proposal for the redistribution of seats. Such a redistribution might be carried out, even by a Liberal Ministry, as would alter the whole political map of the country and totally falsify its representation. A minority without distinction of Party ought not to be deprived of the power of imposing some efficient check upon the whims of a Ministerial majority. It might be of the utmost possible importance that the Liberal Government should be prevented from closing discussion on a question which might involve the disfranchisement of the most popular classes and the most populous districts in Ireland. The application of the *clóture* by a bare majority would be especially objectionable in two classes of cases—namely, when private and personal grievances were being heard in which the great mass of the House was not interested, and in questions of vital political importance. In ordinary circumstances it would probably not be worth while for the Government to employ the *clóture;* but, at crucial moments of the Constitution, and at great political crises, when the form of the next Parliament might depend upon rushing, or not rushing, a particular measure through the House, those were the times when there would be the greatest danger of the *cloture* being used to achieve a change which would place the Government in a position independent of the defeated Party. It would be at such times of crises that it would be worth while for a partizan majority and a partizan Speaker to cast in their lot with the voice of an ambitious Minister. In Parliamentary as in private life descents might be made from which there was no return; catastrophes might be brought about of which the effects could never be obliterated; and if ever a domineering Minister, who was open to no argument, but believed solely in himself, employed the *clólure,* the danger of its conscientious use would reach the maximum. For these reasons, and because he was sure that that *clóture* by a Ministerial majority was not *clóture* against Obstruction, for that was already provided against under other forms of Parliamentary coercion, but because he believed that it was directed against freedom of discussion by Constitutional minorities engaged in inconvenient criticism of dangerous Ministerial proposals, he should oppose the proposals of the Government.

Mr. SPENCER said, he must apologize for intruding his opinions in a debate of so much importance, and also claim the indulgence usually accorded to Members when they addressed the House for the first time. The hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken with more force and more fervour than he could himself command; but, speaking for his own constituency, he might assure the House with at least equal confidence that the part of the country which he had the honour to represent was wholly in favour of the Government proposals. The question, however, was one from which Party spirit ought, if possible, be excluded. The Rules had been framed in the interests of the whole House, and not of any particular Party; for while Liberals could not expect to be always in power, hon. Gentleman opposite could not look forward to perpetual Opposition. Such being necessarily the political prospects of the two Parties, it was singular that hon. Members opposite should affect to think the present Government so dead to all the traditions of the House as to wish to gag speech and destroy that freedom of debate of which they were all so proud. Surely it must be obvious to everyone that it was not freedom of discussion that the Liberal Party wished to do away with; it was that licence which was eating into their very life. They were obliged to deal with the evil in this way, simply because they could not overcome it in any other. That, at any rate, was his firm conviction, and he felt that in supporting the Resolution he should be voting for a measure which would restore rather than curtail free speech, and would rejuvenate the functions of an Assembly which was administrative as well as deliberative.

Mr. SPENCER BALFOUR said, he was a Representative of a Midland Counties constituency, and his constituency in all commercial matters looked to Birmingham as their Metropolitan centre, so that he was sure if the action of the Birmingham Caucus had assumed the activity that was assigned to it, he should have been certain to hear of it; but he had never had one single representation of auy kind or description from any such organization. For his own part, he was strongly in favour of the Resolution as it stood, and failed to see much force in the arguments for the Amendment. Those hon. Members who had expressed their fears lest the impartiality of the Speaker should be imperilled had apparently forgotten that the Speaker himself was chosen virtually by the sense of the whole House, but, strictly speaking, by the votes of a bare majority. If the Amendment were carried, the election of a Speaker would be precisely that question for the determination of which a two-thirds' majority would be thought necessary; but until that change was made, it ought not to be said that the *clôture* would endanger the impartiality of the Chair. That being the case, there was no reason why the intervention of the Speaker should not be accepted as unanimously as his election had been. If, as some Members of the Opposition had suggested, the vote on that subject was taken by ballot, he would vote in the same way as he at present intended. As an independent Member he objected to the Amendment, because it would throw all power into the hands of the two Front Benches, and it would revive the old *clôture* by arrangement, which the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross) regretted to lose, while professing to oppose all *clôture*. Many warnings had been uttered against a union of the two Front Benches; the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) would perhaps continue to preach the danger of such a union until he sat on a Front Bench himself. The necessity would never arise to preserve freedom of debate on a question on which the two Front Benches disagreed; the necessity would only arise when they agreed. There were many questions that small minorities might be anxious to debate at length that were unpopular with official and ex-official minds. Among them were questions that were attractive to the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and the sitting Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), questions relating to the Crown, to the Royal Family, to the Army and Navy, snd to diplomatic arrangements; questions which the Front Benches were naturally anxious to shirk, and the discussion of which would be easily prevented by a two-thirds' majority. Many speakers had professed to discover the true secret of the Resolution. But what was the true secret of the Amendment? The Front Opposition Bench said—"Why should this Rule be imposed upon us?" They practically said—"Impose it if you will upon the Irish Members and the Fourth Party and upon the Radicals below the Gangway, and though we object to the *clôture* altogether we will submit to it with great resignation, so long as it is not applied to us. But the very moment you venture to make it applicable to us, we will proclaim that it violates in touching us all the principles of freedom and fair play." Such a contention seemed to him to be in the last degree unreasonable. In so far as they in that House represented the free choice of their constituents they all spoke with the same authority and were entitled to the same treatment, and feeling also that the Resolution would remedy an intolerable evil, he should vote against the Amendment.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL said, that there was no inconsistency in being opposed to the introduction of the *clôture* at all, and at the same time being anxious to make any regulations for its application as little objectionable as possible. Several speakers who had attacked the Amendment had objected to it on the ground of its introducing what they called a new principle—that of requiring a proportional or artificial majority. They seemed to have forgotten that that principle was already in the Resolution as regarded the House under its normal strength; and all that was proposed by the Amendment was to extend that principle, although in somewhat different proportions, to full Houses as well as to small Houses. But the Amendment aimed at something much more important than merely to give symmetry to the Resolution of the Government. The Amendment was required in order to make the Resolution consistent with itself, and to prevent it being a contradiction in terms. The Resolution as it stood was inconsistent. It provided that when the Speaker or the Chairman gave it as his opinion that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close a division should be taken. What was the meaning of taking a division? If there was any meaning in it at all, under the circumstances, it must be in order to ascertain whether the Speaker or Chairman was justified in the opinion he had given, to confirm his opinion if it were right, and to correct it if it were wrong. This led, however, to the question of what was meant by the evident sense of the House; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) who proposed the Amendment reminded them that they had had an explanation of that phrase from the Prime Minister, who, in his speech on the 20th February, explained it to mean something more than the will of one Party or of a mere majority. Now, the inconsistency of the Resolution as it stood was shown in this—that while it proposed to give effect only to the evident sense of the House, it provided that *clôture* should be applied in the case of a full House by a mere majority. They would then have this anomalous and somewhat absurd position—that, while the Speaker or the Chairman had given an opinion which the vote proved to have been a mistaken opinion, effect would have to be given to the opinion, as if it had been correct, in consequence of a vote which proved it to have been incorrect. The Prime Minister yesterday argued that there was no inconsistency in the Resolution. He said that the vote on such an occasion would not give the true measure of the sympathy felt for the Motion for *clôture*, because the friends and partizans of the Member whose lips were to be closed would abstain from voting for *clôture*, even although they might wish it carried. He said—"The party friendly to him"—the Member offending—"remains silent, and if a division be taken they cannot afford to vote against him." Thus the Prime Minister argued that a mere majority in favour of *clôture* might mean, or would probably mean, a much larger measure of support than was represented by the actual votes in its favour. His words were—

> "I entirely repel and repudiate the assumption that the number of persons ready to vote that a debate should terminate is a proper test of the number who really wish that it should so terminate."

That argument was, at all events, an admission that a mere majority, if that was all that could be shown to be in favour of *clôture*, would not be enough to adduce in proof of the evident sense of the House. He (Mr. Campbell) had not long had the honour of a seat in the House, and, therefore, could not speak with any confidence from his own knowledge of Parliamentary affairs; but he would appeal to those who had had experience whether the principle involved in the Prime Minister's argument was not an extraordinary novelty in Parliamentary discussion? It came to this, that in estimating a vote of the House—not estimating it, be it observed, merely for the sake of their own private satisfaction, but in connection with a regulation of Parliamentary Procedure to be founded upon that vote—they were to take into account not the vote as it was in itself, but the vote as modified by the number of Members, uncertain and unascertainable, who, in their opinion, were likely to have felt one way and voted another. This very ingenious argument of the Prime Minister, in his humble opinion, entirely failed to meet the case of which he was speaking. It applied to another case altogether. There might be some force in his argument if the question under discussion had been the silencing of a Member who had been wearying the House by his speaking. It might be a legitimate argument to use with reference to the 5th Resolution, but not to the 1st. It had no application whatever to the question of putting an end to a debate. There was no individual Member to be especially aggrieved by a proposal of *clôture*. There were no personal considerations entering so prominently into the question of bringing a debate to a close as to be likely to interfere in the slightest degree with the freedom with which all should vote for it who wished it. Then, let it be remembered to what condition of the House it was that the Amendment applied. It was only to the House when so full that as many as 200 Members or more would vote for *clôture*. It was to a House, therefore, of 400 Members at least that it would apply. The protection of minorities in Houses under the normal strength might be held to be satisfactorily provided for in the latter part of the Resolution as it stood. It was with regard to a House of over 400 Members that there was need for such provision as was proposed in the Amendment. And was it not in a full House that there was, in some respects, most need for such a provision? What did a full House mean? It meant that Party feeling was running high; that Party interests were keenly felt; and he ventured to think also that it meant the House in circumstances under which it was more than ordinarily difficult for the Chair to determine what the evident sense of the House was with reference to *clôture* Why, then, refuse a safeguard to the minority against the curtailment of their opportunities of debate—why refuse a safeguard to the Speaker against his making an irremediable mistake, in the very circumstances in which such a safeguard was most required? It was said that their fears were groundless, and that this power would hardly ever be exercised, and never exercised tyrannically. Why, then, object to having this additional safeguard? It was only a safeguard against abuse—only against the power being used when the sense of the House was not in its favour. This Amendment, he humbly thought, could not, even in the estimation of the Government, be opposed to the spirit and the principle of the Resolution, or there never would have been any expression of their willingness to accept it, even upon trial. But if the Amendment were not accepted, then, in the interests of consistency, something more should be done. There should be a deletion from the Resolution of all mention of the evident sense of the House. That was a misleading, and not altogether an honest expression, inasmuch as while they pretended to give effect to the evident sense of the House, what would be really done was to give effect to the will of the majority. It was argued yesterday that the Amendment proposed to alter the Constitutional mode of expressing the opinion of the House. There was a two-fold answer to that. In the first place, as he had already said, if there was any proposition of the kind it was in the Resolution already; but a more important answer was, that closing a debate by a vote of the House was a wholly exceptional measure in the Procedure of Parliament; and while other questions, however important, might, after full discussion, be carried by a mere majority, the question of stopping debate was something very different. Nay, more, it was something that was already recognized by the Government as requiring to be treated differently from other questions, inasmuch as it was only on the assumption that the evident sense of the House was in favour of it that a vote was to be taken—the evident sense meaning, as had been already explained by the Prime Minister, not the will of one Party or of a mere majority.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he felt sure that the hon. Member for Dungarvan would agree with him that he (Mr. O'Donnell) was one of the last Members who was likely to be injuriously silenced by any Resolution which the House might adopt with reference to the closing of debate. He had listened to a great number of the hon. Gentleman's speeches, and long ago he had come to the conclusion that he was a man of great ability. He should be glad, however, if that ability were guided by those Liberal instincts which were the leading characteristics of the political Party with which the hon. Gentleman generally acted. He was willing to admit that the Resolution owed its origin to Irish Obstruction, and he was inclined to think that in the near future, when they thought of the evils of Obstruction, it would be the opinion of the country that they were greatly indebted to the Irish Representatives for having by indirect means provided the House with a machinery which ought to be in the possession of every Representative Assembly. He wished to address a few observations upon the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), especially as it concerned those important minorities which sat below the Gangway on either side of the House. On the Ministerial side, below the Gangway, were grouped the Representatives of a larger number of electors of this country than those which supported hon. Members in any other equal section of the House. Of the four quarters of the House, that where he had the honour to sit was, for that reason, eminently the most popular section of the House. That characteristic was not due to themselves, but to the greater numbers of electors of whom they were the Representatives. On the other side, the Irish Members of the popular Party in that country formed the most conspicuous group. But they did not forget that one-fifth of the adult Irish population of the United Kingdom was resident in Great Britain, and was generally represented on the Ministerial side of the House. Therefore, in regard to these debates upon Procedure, great community of interest existed between those who sat below the Gangway on both sides of the House. Now, they had had some experience—more than he hoped they should ever have again—in the matter of two-thirds' majorities. The Leader of the Conservative Party said in 1880 that that House knew nothing of two-thirds' majorities, meaning that such a departure from the ancient usage and practice of the House should never be adopted. But, since then, they had seen it in operation upon the Rules of Urgency, and they had learned from those Rules what was the meaning of a two-thirds' majority, and they now thoroughly understood that it was the concert of the Front Benches, without any reference whatever to the minorities sitting below the Gangway. He thought they were greatly indebted to the noble Lords and hon. Gentlemen who acted as Whips; but he confessed he never felt any obligation to the noble Lord the Member for Flint (Lord Richard Grosvenor) greater than on the present occasion. By what arts the noble Lord had induced the Conservative Whips to combine with him in making a preliminary display for the advantage of the House of the peculiar consequences of closure by two-thirds' majority he could not say; but it was now known to all the world that as early as Friday last the Liberal and Tory Whips had decided that that debate was to be expedited, and the division taken at a certain hour on a certain day. It must be clear to every hon. Member that the Irish Members and the independent Liberals counted for nothing at all in that arrangement. That was closure by two-thirds' majority. He hoped the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) would not be a deserter from the interests of Members below the Gangway upon that occasion. It would be to them a great loss. He should then suppose that the noble Lord had been shown the position of the Conservative Party on a large map, and he was willing to admit that the anti-legislative interests of that Party were concerned in maintaining the Amendment. Those who desired that the House should continue to do nothing could not do better than advocate the decision of every important question by a two-thirds' majority. And that was what it would probably come to if the House were to accept that Amendment. There were some for whom he had great respect, who thought that the principal and most useful function of the House was to spin debates. As far as the people were concerned, he thought he could discuss a question as usefully in the Town Hall of Salford as on the floor of that House; but they came there for the purposes of legislation. That was the place, above all others, in which legislation could be initiated and undertaken; and he had no fear whatever that any closure of debate would ever, in this country of free speech, and of a free Press, render it even difficult to give due and legitimate expression to any grievance whatever. He would boldly put this question to the House—Which was better for the progressive interests of the country, that debate should be closed by the organized clamour of the two Front Benches, or by the clamour of the whole of one side with the assistance of the independent half of the other side? That was the choice between closure by a majority and closure by a two-thirds' majority. He declared unhesitatingly for the latter. If the two-thirds' vote were adopted, the Prime Minister need never have regard to the opinions of Irish Members who followed the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell) in encouraging the exercise of the closing power, and equally the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) need never appeal to the love of liberty which was spontaneous in that part of the House; the whole affair would be an arrangement in the Lobby between the Whips and the ex-Whips of Downing Street. He thought he had established that it was the interest and the duty of independent Members who sat below the Gangway on either side of the House to support the proposal of the Government. But that proposal had other and general claims. In the first place, it was in harmony with the ancient and time-honoured practice of the House. The sense of the House was an expression well known in the history of Parliament. Decision by a majority represented a principle, and, as the Prime Minister had said, it represented the only sound principle upon which questions could be decided in the House. The hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) said that but for him (Mr. Arthur Arnold) his famous Amendment would have been a protest against a "bare majority." If that were so, he was glad he was instrumental in preventing a loose and inaccurate expression. When they talked of a "bare" or a "simple" majority, they did not say whether they meant a majority of 1, or 10, or of 20. Once they left the safe principle of majority, they were driven to some definite proportion, and there they could find neither principle nor permanence. One Gentleman said two-thirds, another three-fourths, a third five-eighths. One was as bad as the other for the purpose of Public Business. There were three questions to be considered in deciding how to vote upon this Amendment. The first was—"Do you desire that the House, without resort to unauthorized and unsatisfactory methods, should obtain a power of defeating wilful and persistent Obstruction?" The second was—"Do you desire that the method of that power should encourage the mechanical or the independent expression of opinion in this House?" and, thirdly—"Do you desire that Procedure should have regard to precedent and principle?" These three questions would be answered in the affirmative by those who supported the Government on this important occasion. In giving his voice and vote in that direction, he had this further satisfaction—that the Opposition, whose Members and whose opinions he had learned every day that he had sat in that House still more to esteem and to respect, would never, after their coming defeat, desire the repeal of a Rule which would prove an inestimable advantage to any Administration in this country which desired faithfully to carry out the legislative behests of the great majority of the people of the United Kingdom.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: Sir, I proposed to the House in February last what I then believed and still believe to be the most Conservative way of dealing with the difficulty under which the House has laboured during the last few years. In the present case, I object to the *clôture* altogether, because I think it an odious and unnecessary Rule. Its necessity has not been proved. No doubt, the origin of its suggestion may be referred to the memorable occasion when you, Sir, after many hours of debate, took a course which afterwards received the tacit approbation of the House. Still, Sir, that was a course which, by your own confession, was a very unusual and arbitrary course, and one which the Speaker ought never to be called upon to take again. I contend, however, that the usual modes of putting down Obstruction had never been tried on that occasion. Appeals were made again and again to the Chairman to put in force the powers with which the House had invested him; but the request was refused, and many leading men on both sides left the House rather than remain parties to the deliberate abnegation of the powers vested in the Chair. The object of the present Resolution is not simply to put down Obstruction. It was introduced for Party purposes, in order to enable the majority now in power to force through the House measures which have been mentioned by name by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, and which they do not think they would be able to pass if they could not gag and silence their opponents. Although I have a most sincere desire to review the Rules of the House, with the object of getting rid of Obstruction, I believe the Resolution now proposed will not meet that evil, while it will create an amount of passionate Party hostility circling round and threatening the authority of the Chair that will be most disastrous to the House. Sir, if there is any gratitude in the Government, the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) will soon cease to be interested in private or independent Members; for in the early part of the year, by inducing the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) to tone down his Amendment, the hon. Member for Salford saved the Government from defeat, and enabled it to postpone the decision upon this question until a time when either accident or arrangement gives them a much more favourable chance with regard to the result of the debate. There is something almost cynical in the preference which the hon. Member has expressed for organized clamour on the Liberal side, reinforced by Members below the Gangway, rather than for the organized clamour of the Front Benches. If the country were told that the House of Commons were going to hand over its proceedings to organized clamour, it would surely think that the House had lost the capacity for dealing with its own Rules.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD explained that he had not recommended organized clamour, but had said that the organized clamour of both sides would be preferable to that of the two Front Benches.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE: I do not, Sir, imagine that the hon. Member desires to resort to organized clamour; but the difficulty is that no one on the Liberal side will tell us what indication other than by clamour can be given of the evident sense of the House. I, Sir, am in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, for while I am against the *clôture* altogether, I desire, if we must have it, to put the strongest check upon its exercise; but if that Amendment be defeated, I hope we shall have an opportunity of discussing and deciding against the Rule as a whole. The arithmetical puzzle contained in the Prime Minister's proposal has been dealt with over and over again. Thus, if 5 Members desire to continue a debate, it will require a majority of 20 to 1 to put them to silence; if the minority is increased to 29 it will require a majority of 2½ to 1 to close the debate. If the minority is 40 the majority must be 5 to 1, if it is 100, the majority must be 2 to 1; but if it reaches the substantial number of 200, a bare majority will put it to silence. I do not believe in the firmness of the safeguards which the Prime Minister relies upon for the protection of the small minorities, because as time goes on the absurdity will become apparent of requiring 20 to 1 to close the debate when the minority is only 5, while a bare majority can close it when the minority is 200. There is an absolute want of principle in the Resolution. Supposing that 42 Members vote in favour of continuing debate and 190 for closing it, by the Rule as it stands the debate cannot be closed. The moment that happens the House will say that it is not what was intended, and the arithmetical safeguards will be dismissed. It must not be forgotten, Sir, that as long as government by Party is the rule in this House, the larger minority will always be disposed to protect the smaller minority against the Government. The Prime Minister said that they could not accept this doctrine of two-thirds, because they would put upon the Speaker the impossible task of saying what proportion of Members in the House, or within its precincts, were in favour of closing a debate. That, Sir, is the very burden that in a House of less than 200 Members we are laying upon the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees. In such a case the Chairman of Committees must take his information from the Whips, or where else can he get it? He cannot go prowling about the House to find out how many Members are in favour of closing the debate; and he must get his information from somebody. Although the evident sense of the Members actually present in the House may be in favour of closing a debate, it may be found, on a division, when the Members who are in the Library, the Dining Room, the Smoking Room, and on the Terrace were called in to record their votes, that there is a majority in favour of ncotinuing the debate. Thus, the Speaker or Chairman of Committees will be held out to the country as having mistaken the evident sense of the House. How, Sir, is the evident sense of the House to be ascertained when there may be organized clamour on one side of the House and organized silence on the other? Suppose that in a House of 401 Members the Speaker declares that it is the evident sense of the House that the debate shall be closed, and the Motion be carried by 201 to 200, the *clôture* will be applied in circumstances under which its warmest advocate has never suggested that it should be employed. The Prime Minister has said that if the *clôture* were used by any Government for Party purposes, it would be fatal to them when they went to the country. But in this case the Ministry has not had the courage of their opinions, for instead of throwing upon the Government of the day the reponsibility of closing debate, they propose to skulk behind the Speaker's Chair, and guard themselves from the indignation of the country by holding up as the shield and cover to all their proceedings the sanctity of the tradition which, happily, has always attached itself to the Office of the Speaker. Ministers, in other words, will throw all the responsibility of initiating the *clôture* upon the Speaker, and there will be no chance of getting at the real culprit. If the Speaker should think it the evident sense of the House that the debate should be closed, and someone, perhaps an obscure and unknown supporter of the Government should move that the Question be put, and if upon a division the *clôture* were carried by 201 to 200 votes, then we are told that the minority may go and make their complaint to the country. But the moment that is done one of the Ministers will go down and, in the most suave and persuasive manner, congratulate his Party on the success with which the *clôture* has been carried out, and say that it was the impartial opinion of the Speaker which induced them to close the debate. That would be what the Prime Minister has called "a nefarious proceeding." I will not, Sir, stop to inquire how far the language of some of the right hon. Gentleman's Colleagues justifies the expression; but when persons take that course, and move from behind the Speaker's Chair that the Vote be put, they will be able to cover themselves with the authority of the Speaker. I protest against the assumption that it is the part of the minority to make known their grievances in the country or in the public Press. This House, Sir, is the place where it is our duty to speak and our right to be heard; and to tell us to make our complaint at public meetings or in the columns of the Press is to do violence to the traditions of Parliament, and will be in itself the heaviest blow that has ever been struck at the character of those Parliamentary institutions of which the people have so long been proud. With regard to the question whether a Minister should move that the Question be put, I hold that, as the imposition of the *clôture* was an important act, it should be a responsible act. The profit and the responsibility ought to go together, and as it is the Ministry, because they have the majority of the House, which will have the profit of the act, it would have been only straightforward in them if they had adopted the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). "But," says the Prime Minister, "it is not the indignation of the country only which will punish; the Speaker could not occupy the Chair for a month if he dealt unfairly with a large minority." It is, Sir, one of the painful circumstances of the debate that it compels Members to discuss the possibility, nay, the probability, of a Speaker acting unfairly. But if the Speaker should act in that way, how is the minority to make the occupancy of that Chair impossible? By the hypothesis that the majority of the House will have approved the Speaker's decision and profited by it, and if the Speaker should be attacked the majority of the House will defend him. But to what a prospect does the Prime Minister—I will not say at the end, but towards the end, of a great Parliamentary career—invite the House to look forward? The right hon. Gentleman asks the House to accept a Resolution which, it is conceded, may be abused for Party purposes, but refuses the safeguard suggested from this side of the House—a safeguard which a few months ago he was willing to accept—and tells us to appeal to other and illegitimate safeguards. Are the defeated minority so to badger, harass, and attack the Speaker as to make it impossible for him to continue to occupy the Chair? If the sanction of the Resolution can only be enforced by a course which will destroy the authority of the Speaker altogether and leave the Chair absolutely bare of those traditions which until lately have been found a useful and an effectual check upon the license of debate, that is a result which will be disastrous. Sir, the tone of the Government on this subject is very different now from what it was in February, when it was believed they were within a few votes of defeat. The question of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) has not been, and cannot be, answered—Why the concession of the Prime Minister on the 6th of May is now withdrawn? Two things, Sir, have happened since then—the Egyptian campaign has been fought and the Kilmainham Treaty has been made. These things may possibly have altered the balance of Parties and opinions in this House. Until the Egyptian campaign has been fully and fairly examined it will continue to appear a credit to Her Majesty's Government. I believe a full and fair examination will strip them of the credit; and I sincerely hope before being dismissed from the present Sitting of Parliament some opportunity will be found for discussing that wanton and unnecessary war. But, besides, there has been made that arrangement by which the aid of the hon. Member for Cork City and his Party is to be given to the Liberal proceedings of the present Government by virtue of that letter which has become notorious in the political history of the country. ["Oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] There is no use in crying "Oh!" though I can understand that the Liberal Party should begin as early as possible to practise those inarticulate noises which may hereafter be used with some effect. The letter to which I referred was read in the House at the instance of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). ["Question!"] But that letter, and what has happened in consequence, may possibly enable the Government to count upon the support of those with regard to whose position the Home Secretary spoke a little bitterly in the early part of this year. Whether that be so or not, whether the Government are going to have a large majority on this Amendment or no majority at all, the country will come to understand by these continued debates the real characteristics of the proposals which have been made. The argument from experience was stricken down when the Prime Minister confessed that, when, after mature deliberation, he brought the matter before the House, he had been misinformed with respect to the practice in foreign countries and in the Colonies. It is perfectly true, Sir, that this Rule is in operation in the United States and in France. But from our knowledge of the Parliamentary proceedings in those two countries we shall be scarcely disposed to adopt this practice from their example. There is corruption in the Parliamentary Government of the United States, paralysis in the Parliamentary Government of France. I hope the House will pause long before accepting the *clôture* in any form; but that, if it does accept the *clôture*, it will at least insist on the safeguards proposed by this Amendment.

Mr. STANSFELD said, the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) had commenced his speech by the mis-statement that Her Majesty's Government and the Liberal Party had promulgated to the country that the object of the 1st Resolution was to put down Obstruction, and he had then gone on to say that it now turned out that the object was the purely Party purpose of aiding the Government to force through the House measures which otherwise they would not be able to pass. To show the inaccuracy of that statement, it was only necessary to refer to the opening speech of the Prime Minister on the 20th of February, in which the right hon. Gentleman had carefully guarded himself against the supposition that this Resolution was to be directed against Obstruction. What he had stated was, that it was directed against frivolous, repeated, and prolonged speeches, and that with regard to Obstruction he did not think this 1st Resolution upon the *clôture* by any means the most important of the Resolutions. As regarded the charge of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth against the Members of the Government and the Liberal Party, that their object had been to force certain measures through Parliament, he did not know to what the hon. and learned Gentleman referred, unless to certain speeches of the President of the Board of Trade, who had merely said that when the Procedure Resolutions were discussed and passed into Standing Orders of the House, it would then become possible to legislate upon many practical questions as to which it had been impossible to do anything for the last few years. That statement had never been given as the motive for the Government propounding a scheme for the reform of Procedure, but had merely referred to the legislative facility that was anticipated when the change was made. The hon. and learned Gentleman had frankly stated that he was opposed to the *clôture* altogether, and his whole argument had been so directed. He had only supported the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, upon the ground that it would restrict and minimize the effect of the *clôture* as applied to debates of that House. He would not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman into the Party attacks introduced into his speech, and he need do no more than echo the advice given by the Prime Minister, that the first duty of every Member of the House upon this subject was not to his Party, nor to the Government of his Party, but to the House itself—to its first traditions, and to its future usefulness and dignity. That had been his feeling in approaching the question. He had approached it, as he believed most hon. Members had, with *à priori* repugnance to adopt the notion and the expedients of the *clôture;* but he had been forced by conviction to accept the conclusion that, with the Amendments which the Government had now accepted, the *clôture* would not be open to the objections he had originally entertained to it, and that nothing less than their proposal would fulfil the common object of both sides of the House. He had been deeply impressed with the alarm of the Opposition with regard to the effect the *clôture* might have on future occupants of the Speaker's Chair. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who had moved the Amendment had said that the *clôture* would be certain to be abused, and that seemed to be a wide-spread impression. He was prepared to agree with that impression, with a reserve. It was true that a power once granted would be used, and that if freely and unrestrainedly used, it would be liable to be abused, and that therefore the *clôture* without a check would be liable to be abused. To his mind it was not so much a question of the *clôture* pure and simple as a question of checks upon the right of voting it. The Mover of the Amendment had said the Government proposal would be a gag and an outrage, and that the Opposition would be outlawed if it were carried into effect. The Government view was that it was not to put down Obstruction—it was, if it could be fairly done, to compress debate—it was the whole object of the *clôture* to compress debate. He would put it to the House whether, if they could secure fairness in the application of the *clôture,* compression of the debate might not be attained without the suppression of any view, however extreme? His belief was that compression of the debate might be so attained without the suppression of a single view or a single illustration, however extreme, and that what would be excluded would be undue repetition and prolixity. Thus the value and weight of the debate would be increased without detracting from its fairness. There were two proposals—one for the *clôture* by a bare majority, and the other by a two-thirds' majority. Both the Government and the Opposition were justified to a great extent in their views of the course they were adopting; but neither had kept sufficiently in view the rights of private Members, who were the pioneers of all improvements in legislation and of all reforms. Now, speaking as a private Member, he believed that the *clôture*, either by a bare or a two-thirds' majority, might have stopped many of the initiatory movements of private Members that had subsequently produced great results. He had always objected, and should continue to object, to the *clôture* by a bare majority, or by any majority if it were without check, and if a private Member, who by patience and persistence had obtained the occasion he desired to bring before the House and the country the convictions perhaps of a lifetime, or, it might be, to express the mandate of his constituents, was not allowed the reasonable hearing to which he was entitled, and which no majority had any right to deprive him of. It became a question, therefore, of what checks could be applied to the *clôture* to prevent such an abuse. The evident sense of the House would, more often than not, be against the private Member, and therefore that would be no check at all. It would be necessary, therefore, to find a check outside of majorities and minorities. Indeed, he believed that two-thirds would be worse than a bare majority, for if a bare majority of 1 were sufficient, yet the Speaker would not consider that a bare majority only ratified his action, but he would wait until he was sure of general support; on the other hand, with an artificial majority of two-thirds, the Speaker would have no scruple whatever in acting, but would feel impelled to close the debate as soon as a majority of the Members testified their desire for it. With the two-thirds' majority there would, therefore, be no check, and the rights of private Members would be absolutely disregarded. But there would come in the responsibility of the Speaker or Chairman if power was given him to decide whether fair opportunity had been given for debate. The Government had accepted the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), and now it would practically lie with the Speaker or the Chairman, as the case might be, to decide whether there had been a fair opportunity of debate. With a slight verbal alteration of the Resolution as thus amended, the Speaker or the Chairman could not mistake their duty never to allow the *clôture* unless they were of opinion that the subject had been fully and sufficiently discussed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who had moved the Amendment had regarded the Speaker as the initiator of the *clôture;* but that was not the case. The House of Commons always had been able to manifest their opinion that the time had arrived for a debate to terminate, and it was only when similar indications were manifested in the future that the responsibility of the Speaker in the matter would arise. It was not true, therefore, that the responsibility of initiating the closure of a debate would belong to the Speaker; the true statement being that it belonged to the House, and that a veto on the opinion of the House would be lodged in the hands of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees. Indeed, it was inconceivable that any Speaker or Chairman of Committees would take the responsibility of declaring that a debate had been adequately discussed when the whole of the Opposition was of a contrary opinion and demanded the right of further expression of their views. But, as the Prime Minister had said, the power in debate should not be left in the hands of the Opposition. The power of putting an end to debate should be in the hands of the majority. The first duty of the Opposition was to secure full and fair discussion, but it was not any part of their duty to conduct Public Business. To give them absolute power would be to give them a power to which they had no right, and to make them responsible for that which was not their own. He believed that the placing of power in the hands of the Speaker and the majority would secure full and fair debate; and that the acceptance of the two-thirds' proposal would defeat their purpose of compression of the debates. With regard to the Speaker and Chairman of Committees, so far from fearing the result of these Rules, so far from fearing that they would be made the servants of the majority and not of the House, he believed the Rules would justly define and greatly strengthen their position as impartial Presidents of the debates and as exponents of the views of the collective House, and as the best protectors of the interests of minorities, however small.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, the question raised by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was one of the most delicate and difficult the House had ever had to consider. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had admitted that up to a recent period he had been opposed to the Government proposal, and he had pointed out that the so-called safeguard proposed by the Government was really no safeguard at all. The right hon. Gentleman, who spoke as the champion of private Members, had said that the object of the Rule was to compress debate; but how could debate be compressed, except where private Members were concerned? He said he spoke as a private Member. No doubt, he did in some sense; but he was a prominent Member of the House, with an official prefix to his name, and was not, therefore, in the position of an ordinary private Member. The private Member who would be pressed out of the debate would not be a Gentleman like him who had occupied an official position in this House; but those private Members who had not yet made their mark on the Records of the House, but who were anxious to come forward and communicate the result of their cogitations for the benefit of hon. Members generally. The right hon. Gentleman had further said that he wished that the rights of private Members should be respected, and that he saw nothing in the proposal of the Government but what would protect them. If that was so, the Resolution would be a dead letter, because if every private Member who wished to speak had contributed his quota to their deliberations, what was the use of *clôture?* There would be nobody left who wanted to protract the debate. The fact was, that if the words were a real protection to private Members they were fatal to the *clôture*, and if the *clôture* was to be applied, then he maintained they would be fatal to private Members. The right hon. Gentleman said that the evident sense of the House would be brought to the notice of the Speaker by the established mode of making the wish of the House known—namely, by organized clamour, which had hitherto succeeded in stopping discussion at the proper time. But if the wish of the House could be made known by organized clamour, why was it necessary to make any change in the Rules of the House? He now turned to the speech of the head of the Government. The Prime Minister last night devoted a considerable portion of time to explain the reason why in August last he departed from the proposal he had made in May. It appeared to him that that explanation went a very little way indeed towards explaining the extreme vehemence with which the right hon. Gentleman denounced up hill and down dale the very proposal to which he had assented in May. If it were true, as was contended last night with such exuberant eloquence by the right hon. Gentleman, that the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin would sacrifice the rights of those small minorities to which the right hon. Gentleman ascribed so much of the present freedom and prosperity of the country—if this Amendment would sacrifice, not only the rights of these small minorities, but the incontestable rights of the majority, and would be a fatal impediment to the progress of Business—how came it that in May the right hon. Gentleman himself proposed to accept it? What had happened in the interval to produce these wonderful changes in the views of the right hon. Gentleman? The only explanation he gave was that in May he was prepared to accept the Amendment in the hope that it might facilitate the passing of one, or possibly two, particular measures. [Mr. GLADSTONE: I said I would adopt it experimentally.] But if adopted at all it would become a Standing Order of the House. Everything was experimental. Did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that if this Rule were made a Standing Order it could be anything more than experimental? The Rule, though experimental, would have become a Standing Order. In May last, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to risk all the odium, all the dangers, all the inconsistencies, and all the inconveniences which he enlarged upon at such length last night, in order to pass one or, at most, two measures. If they had charged the right hon. Gentleman with having been willing to sacrifice the potential rights of small minorities and the absolute rights of majorities and of Governments for the chance of facilitating the passage of one or two Government measures in a special Session of Parliament, with what indignation would that charge have been repelled; and yet it was the right hon. Gentleman himself who brought that charge against himself, and who had convicted himself of inconceivable levity. That being the only justification suggested by the right hon. Gentleman for his extraordinary change of front, what were the allegations which his supporters had put forward in favour of *clôture* by bare majority and against the proposal of his right hon. Friend? They were of the most vague and general character. The hon. Member for North Northamptonshire (Mr. R. Spencer)—to whose graceful commencement of his career in that House he had listened with great pleasure—said that a disease which was eating out the life of the House required that tremendous operation, and the right hon. Gentleman cheered that statement. Was it true, in any real sense of the word, that since the month of May that great evil had developed itself? Because he must contend that by the action of the right hon. Gentleman himself they must look to the transactions that had occurred since May to justify the change in the position of the Government. Nothing that he knew of had occurred to justify it between May and August. They were, indeed, told generally that the last Session was a barren one. He demurred to that statement, it was not correct in fact; but, even if it were correct, he said that fault was not the fault of the long-suffering House of Commons, but directly that of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had the management of the Business of the House as its Leader. During the last Session they had the episode of Mr. Bradlaugh's attempting to take his seat. They were now referred to the evident sense of the House as a guide to the Speaker's conduct in applying the *clôture*. Was the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the House, ignorant of what was its evident sense as to the claim of Mr. Bradlaugh. The right hon. Gentleman completely lost touch of the House on that matter, and most valuable time was lost by his bungling and inefficient treatment of it. Again, in the middle of their discussions on those very Rules of Procedure the right hon. Gentleman thought fit to interpolate a totally unnecessary and unjustifiable attack on the House of Lords, and that involved the waste of a valuable fortnight in the most important period of the Session. Then the right hon. Gentleman turned round on the unfortunate House of Commons, and said—"You are afflicted with an almost incurable malady with which nothing but the knife can deal." He denied that altogether, and said that if the right hon. Gentleman would conduct the Business of the House in a different manner he would find that measures of importance would be satisfactorily discussed and disposed of. Gentlemen opposite, in arguing that question, omitted altogether those two important Irish measures, on which, no doubt, last Session a considerable time was employed. He did not enter now into their merits; but no one could deny that they were very large measures bristling with points of contention from beginning to end. Those measures were discussed at some length, but not at a length that could be justly complained of, and they became law. Were there no other measures passed? He called into Court the Liberal Member for the County of Worcester (Mr. Hastings), who was President of the Social Science Association, and who, in a recent speech, characterized two of the measures passed last Session as being of the very greatest importance, especially pointing out that one of them contained the most beneficent and wise provisions embodied in any measure affecting the land of the United Kingdom that had become law for 300 years. Did those Bills meet with anything like factious Obstruction? Both the Settled Estates Bill and the Married Women's Property Bill were discussed in the calmest manner, and received the general approbation of both sides of the House. Again, when the dawdling and bungling policy of the Government had landed them in a war, which was not a war, with Egypt, and the Government had to ask late in the Session for an additional 1½*d.* on the Income Tax, did any section of the House manifest any Obstruction, or evince a disposition to contest that unsatisfactory demand in any way not justified by precedent and fair play? Nothing of the kind. He ventured to say that no set of sheep ever remained more quiet and dumb before their shearers than the House of Commons under that proposal to increase the Income Tax. He denied, then, that in the last Session

—the only one which they could allow to influence their discussion—there was any justification for that tremendous drastic remedy. But would the right hon. Gentleman go back and say that for some years past that malady had been noticed and called for the application of that remedy? Why, up to 1880 they had the hon. Gentleman's own written statements that no such case had arisen, and they had his vindication of what some of them might have thought the unduly protracted character of their debates. Up to 1880 the right hon. Gentleman was unconscious of any justification for the *clôture.* In the first Session of the right hon. Gentleman's Government he passed every measure which he chose to introduce, including that most unnecessary, and, if uncessary, then unjustifiable, one, according to his own showing—the Supplementary Budget, by which an extra 1*d.* was, without any just cause, added to the Income Tax. In the next Session, no doubt, a limited section of the House offered considerable opposition to a measure which the Government and the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) thought essential to the preservation of life and property in Ireland. But that was the isolated opposition of an individual section of the House, and could be far more properly dealt with under the head of Obstruction, which they were told by the right hon. Gentleman had nothing whatever to do with that proposal of the *clôture.* Therefore he denied, speaking broadly, that a general case of gross incapacity and incompetency on the part of the House had been made out. He admitted that under happier auspices and better arrangements last Session, or the Session before, an additional measure or two might have been passed; but he denied that any justification had been established for that great and drastic innovation on the freedom of debate which they had heretofore enjoyed. He came now to the objections taken by the right hon. Gentleman to the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson). The right hon. and learned Gentleman complained that it was a great and signal innovation on all the constituted traditions and regulations of the House—that a proportionate and artificial majority was an innovation. Well, was it? Did the right hon. Gentleman himself abstain last year from asking the House to vote Urgency by a proportionate majority? He thought not. Then, what became of his allegation that the proposal of his right hon. and learned Friend was a thing unheard of in Parliamentary history? It was no such thing. But, if it was an innovation, in what respect was it more an innovation than the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman? How did the right hon. Gentleman get at his figures of 100 and 200? What precedent would he find to establish the fact that those arithmetical puzzles of his own were not an innovation on the House's Forms of Procedure, and that the arithmetical proposal of his right hon. and learned Friend was an innovation that must be resisted to the death? He could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman had pitched upon the number 200. On one side of that number every safeguard was to be accorded to minorities; on the other, none at all were to be given. Why was this? What precedent of the least weight could the right hon. Gentleman assign for this singular demarcation by the imaginary boundary of the figure 200, and what argument could possibly be advanced in its support? He contended that the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend, so far from being inconsistent with the Resolution of the Government, was, in fact, an almost necessary complement to it. It accepted the scheme of the Resolution, giving protection against the *clôture* according to numbers, and might, therefore, be regarded as being really and truly a touchstone of the sincerity of the declarations of the Government and their supporters on the Ministerial side of the House. What, according to the right hon. Gentleman, was the object of the Resolution? He did not say last night, whatever might have been said on a previous occasion by the Secretary of State for India, that the intention of the Government was to gag and muzzle Her Majesty's Opposition; on the contrary, the right hon. Gentleman had said his object was that the evident sense of the House should be gathered, not from one side, but from both sides; and the right hon. Gentleman, to give force to his statement, went on to say that he assumed what might happen would be this—when a debate had been formally terminated by the speech of the Prime Minister on the one side, and that of the Leader of the Opposition on the other, and when it had been arranged on both sides that the debate should close, some fussy private Member would rise between 1 and 2 in the morning, and, against the evident sense of the House, insist upon being heard. The object the Government had in view—said the right hon. Gentleman—was to meet that state of things by the absolute *clôture*, because Members of the Government on the one side, and the Leaders of the Opposition on the other, would be so much indisposed to show themselves opposed to the pretentions of the individual Member who was breaking through the understanding come to between the two sides of the House that they would not wish to appear in the Division Lobby in favour of the *clôture*. That was a most extraordinary argument. Was it not notorious that against Gentlemen who rose to prolong debates at unearthly hours the House knew perfectly well how to protect itself? If the right hon. Gentleman really thought that that was not so, let the *clôture* be applied, as he was about to propose, under the protection of the ballot, so that nervous and timorous Leaders on both sides might end a debate when they thought fit, and so protect themselves and the House against the pretensions of the intrusive private Member. That, however, with all respect for the Prime Minister, could not be the only object of the Government in proposing this absolute *clôture*, and the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, coupled with what had formerly been said by the Secretary of State for India, sufficed to convince him that other and further designs were to be accomplished by the Government proposal. And, foreseeing those designs, and knowing what they were, the Opposition was naturally resolved to resist, and, if possible, to defeat them. If the *clôture* were established in the form proposed by the Government, and if, as was undoubtedly intended, it were used on great Party questions, several results, which had been well pourtrayed by various speakers, would inevitably follow. In the first place, the position and influence of the House of Lords would be much enhanced; and that would not be an unmixed evil, though, as it could only follow a diminution of the respect in which the House of Commons had hitherto been held, he should deeply deplore it. When Astræa was banished from this sublunary sphere, she took refuge in the higher regions; and he could not doubt that when freedom of debate had fled from the House of Commons, it would seek a safe asylum in the other Chamber. The other inconvenience which he foresaw was unquestionably an unmixed evil, and was nothing less than the instability of all the legislative efforts of the House. With the conviction once established that great changes had been accomplished without the full and free discussion to which they had hitherto been subjected, there would be endless attempts to change recent legislation, and a state of constant and violent fluctuation would be produced which it had hitherto been the pride and safeguard of the country to avoid. Such would be the all but certain results of *clôture* by a bare majority. The pathetic and eloquent speech of the Prime Minister on Tuesday night contained a passage of a prophetic character, to the effect that this was one of his last official attempts to guide the destinies of this country. For his own part, he should deeply regret that the right hon. Gentleman, by his action towards the close of his illustrious and brilliant career, should have done anything to shake the confidence of the House and the country in the impartiality of those who presided over the debates, and should have rendered it impossible in the future for the Opposition and the Government to share the joint responsibility which they had hitherto borne for the fullness, the fairness, and the dignity of the debates and of the proceedings of the House of Commons.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he thought that the criticisms and reproaches used against the Government did not beseem the lips of hon. Members opposite. He was sorry that the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) had helped the House out of none of its difficulties. Yesterday, at 5 o'clock, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) had come down to the House, like Herod and Drusilla, with much pomp and ceremony, to initiate the discussion, and to announce, as they practically had done, that, if they did not die on the floor of the House in defence of its liberties, the occasion was one of the gravest in the history of the country, and that no one who loved the Constitution would refuse to follow their lead, but that they should separate themselves from their friends and support the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. About an hour later he read in the November number of *The Fortnightly Review* certain reflections on the position of the Party opposite in regard to the question of the *clôture.* The articles which he read—or rather, the article, for they were virtually two compressed into one, was reputed to be the work of a retired diplomatist, a discontented lawyer, and a Scotch metaphysician, under the political editorship of a noble Lord who, he supposed, aspired to play the part of literary patron, as it was played in the last century to Wilkes by the eminent owner of the historical house of Stowe. In those articles, he found that he was expressly warned against the blandishments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, who was denounced in them as a lawyer and an Irishman of Irishmen; and the writer proceeded to say—

> "Mr. Gibson, with all his ability, labours under one great disadvantage. He is Member for the University of Dublin, and, consequently, is necessarily in no greater communication or sympathy with English, or even with Irish popular constituencies, than if he were a Member of the House of Keys or the States of Jersey."

He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was in hopes the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) would have taken the trouble to have told them something which would have helped them out of the difficulty they were now experiencing, by explaining under which King the Opposition were to range themselves —who were the safe guides—which were the true views, those put forward from the Front Opposition Bench, or those put forward officiously by others; but the noble Lord did not attempt to remove the ambiguity.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I have not seen the article to which the noble Lord alludes.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he could assure the noble Lord and all scholars, that they would find it very instructive and entertaining reading indeed, and the noble Lord's Colleagues would also find it instructive. The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), if it did not show that he was as well acquainted with that House, as with the House of Keys, or the States of Jersey, it was nevertheless interspersed with points which seemed to overstrain the argument, and which were contradictory one of the other. With regard to the safeguards in the Resolution of the Government, they had been introduced out of deference to the ruling of the Speaker. Admitting that there might be circumstances in which it would be difficult to determine what was the "evident sense of the House," and further, admitting the possibility that the decision of the Chair might be overruled, it was infinitely more probable that, if the House were to decide by a majority of two-thirds, there might be circumstances in which the decision of the Chair would be overruled. If the risk was a possible one in one case, it was a probable one in the other. The best part of the Resolution was the safeguards. Personally, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would be perfectly willing to accept the *clôture,* as it was called, by a bare majority, without those safeguards; but, as they had been put in to meet the criticisms which had been brought forward, he should vote for them. What, however, he did not understand was why hon. Members opposite, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman in particular, should be so tremendously anxious to drive a coach-and-four through those safeguards, which went in the direction of the Amendment, and had been inserted in the Resolution to meet the sort of views which hon. Gentlemen opposite were supposed to hold. He felt perfectly certain that, if the Prime Minister had chosen any other set of figures, there would have been a bundle of objections to them on the part of the Opposition, just as there was to the figures he had introduced. It might just as well be asked why a quorum was not 39 or 41 instead of 40. Looking at the question from a common-sense point of view, he should say that a House where 200 Members voted for the *clôture* was, to borrow the phrase of the Prime Minister, "a full House," and a House in a position and in the capacity to exercise the rights of the whole House, and saying that the debate should terminate. The arguments of hon. Members opposite all turned in this direction. It was absurd to say that the question had been under discussion 10 months; but that was nothing to the exaggeration under which the House was told it must look forward to the fact that, in the future, they would have a Speaker they could not trust; that the Minister would be tyrannical and despotic; and that he would be supported by a servile majority; and the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke) drew a picture of the "horrible danger" in which the Parliamentary institutions of the country would be placed if the Resolution were passed. A year hence such opinions would surprise those who had uttered them. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was convinced that if that great man who passed away last year now sat as Leader of the Opposition he would have been the last to have used the argument they had heard used, because it amounted to this—that the more popular institutions were extended the more was the House degraded, and it would have found no favour with the author of the Representation of the People Act. That contention argued an absolute want of sympathy and of trust in the future of England which he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) entirely rejected, and which he believed was hardly shared by a single person on the Liberal side. Whatever his faults or his virtues, one thing at least distinguished Lord Beaconsfield, and that was his great trust in the people and in that House which represented the people. But he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) believed that these unworthy exaggerations on the part of hon. Members opposite, raised in the turmoil of debate, and becoming defined by frequent repetition, would pass away with the adoption of the Resolution, as adopted it would be, and when the moment for calmer consideration arrived. Hon. Members would revert to the present nobler and purer principles of Lord Beaconsfield—a trust in and sympathy with the people of this country —and they would cease to talk about a dishonest Speaker and a servile House, arguments which nobody in his calmer moments could believe, unless, indeed, it happened to be the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). Taking this into consideration, they had, therefore, a right to ask hon. Members opposite to reconsider their position. Did they really believe that this Rule of closure would bring about the overthrow of Parliamentary institutions? The House was told that the Conservative Party wished to restore the dignity of the House, and to put down Obstruction as much as the Liberal Party. But if they desired the end, they must desire the means; and it was difficult to find out what they wanted, for when a means was proposed to that end the Opposition overwhelmed them with floods of criticism. There was the expressed opinion of the Leader of the Opposition as to a two-thirds' majority. Was the right hon. Gentleman still of the same opinion? And, if not, why had he changed his opinions? The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke), after dwelling on the "horrible" danger of the *clôture*, said—"Oh, your Prime Minister has in preparation a terrible bundle of revolutionary measures." He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) and all the other supporters of the Ministry were perfectly prepared to answer the challenge conveyed in that inuendo. He was glad to know that the hon. and learned Member had been taken into a confidence which had not been vouchsafed to the Members of the Liberal Party. But what were those measures, and what was the fact? The fact was, the measures most blocked and obstructed this year were all useful Business measures, upon which it was hard to raise Party spirit, and which were delayed and frustrated by repeated and prolix talk. Who could say that the Government proposals of this Session were revolutionary? — the reform of the Government of the City, County Government, Consolidation of the Law, Bankruptcy, Floods. He should have thought that such subjects would have especially appealed to the Party opposite and the great agricultural interests. Were these the measures devised in the dark and hidden counsels of the Prime Minister? It was difficult to speak seriously of such a style of argument. The noble Lord (Lord John Manners) had told them that there had been plenty of legislation passed by the House to prove that the proposals now being made were not wanted, and he instanced the Settled Estates Bill and the Married Women's Property Act. It was notorious that these measures were not discussed at all. The first was allowed to go quietly through the House by a wise conspiracy of silence at about 2.30 a.m. Hardly a word was said as to the second, and it was only just saved from an untimely fate at the end of the Session, it having been blocked by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). It was then alleged that the freedom of discussion would be prevented by organized clamour, and, with respect to that point, he did not agree with the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. Of his own knowledge, he could say that the present House was much more tolerant with regard to hearing Members than the unreformed House. Members then yielded when it was found that both sides of the House were shouting at them; but when 20 or 30 Members, desirous of being looked upon as patriots in their own country, combined to consider it a glory and not a shame to be thus treated, that form of closure became impossible, for there were no available means of reducing such Members to obedience in accordance with the wishes of the House; and the present Resolutions became necessary, and were the result of deliberations instituted to find a remedy. It was because the present Rules had hopelessly broken down that it was necessary to pass these New Rules. Legislation was at a deadlock. If, then, they desired the end, they must possess the means. He did not believe the closure would be often used; but, like the law, which often prevented the commission of crimes which would otherwise be committed, the fact of its existence would diminish the necessity for its use. He believed that the Prime Minister, in proposing the closure, was actuated only by the highest purposes and purest desires; and he believed the whole Ministerial Party was singularly united on the question. He had read excited statements from London correspondents of Provincial newspapers about the moderate Liberals, or Whigs, as they were called, differing in opinion from the rest of the Party. Speaking for himself, and for what, he believed, was the opinion of many of his personal acquaintances, he was firmly convinced that, if there were, or had been, one body of men more strongly united in the wish to see this Resolution of a bare majority carried, it was that section of the House. The moderate Liberals were, above all things, a Party of good government and of order. The disorder which existed in the House, whether it came from some old-fashioned Tories, or from a section of the Irish Members, proceeded from that kind of anarchy which, above all things, was most abhorrent to the mind of a moderate Liberal. The cause of liberty was inseparably connected with the cause of order; to destroy the one was to strike a fatal blow at the other. If the Opposition fancied, from these absurd stories and calumnies on the moderate Liberals, that there was the smallest chance of their obtaining any co-operation or assistance in turning out the Prime Minister upon this question, they were calculating without their host, and they had made one more mistake in that long and melancholy string of blunders, so clearly and forcibly set forth to the country in the November number of *The Fortnightly Review*, which was reputed, as he said before, to be the joint production of a noble Lord—a retired diplomatist, a disappointed lawyer, and a Scotch metaphysician. He had seen articles in *The Standard*, day after day, in which the writer asked—"What will the Prime Minister do?" That question was repeated in tones of despair, as if nobody could answer it. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) ventured to reply to it. The Prime Minister would carry this Resolution. He would carry it against the wishes of hon. Members opposite, but with the united support of the whole of his own Party, and with the goodwill and approval of every lover of order and liberty in this great and historic land.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought the speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had probably reminded the House and Her Majesty's Ministers of the necessity of before long filling up the vacant places in the Cabinet, and of the existence of the noble Lord. It was said that there was joy over a sinner that repenteth; but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) failed to notice any ecstacy in the ranks of the Liberal Party at the promise of the noble

Lord to support the Government on this Resolution. The noble Lord appeared unable to address the House without previously studying the monthly magazines; but, on the present occasion, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) could not help thinking that the noble Lord would have done much better if he had addressed himself to the subject before the House rather than to some article which he said he had read in *The Fortnightly Review*. It occurred to him (Lord Randolph Churchill) that possibly the noble Lord was interested in the success of that new enterprize, and took this opportunity of advertising it. As he was told that that was a very silly and acrimonious article, he thought it was very probably the work of some spiteful Whig—possibly, even of the noble Lord himself. He here parted company with the noble Lord, and would go on to observe that he thought the House ought to recognize, in a very marked manner, the generosity of the Prime Minister, who, having satisfied himself, through the instrumentality of the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), that, without doubt, he possessed the command of a substantial majority, in having informed the House that it was no question of want of confidence in the Government, that all pressure was relaxed, and that every Member might speak and vote as he pleased; and, as he was now assured that there was no fear of a Ministerial crisis through the action of any private Member, he would like to ask the House to give him its attention for a few moments while he addressed himself to the Amendment. What struck him most in the remarkable speech of the Prime Minister was the vivid picture which he drew, with prophetic eye, of the race of Speakers of that House of the future. It appeared that they had been entirely under a mistake in supposing that there was to be any deterioration in the holders of the Chair. On the contrary, they were to go on in a course of development more marvellous than any that was ever dreamed of by the late Professor Darwin. The Speakers of the future were to be so impartial as to be removed far above all human frailty, and to be endowed with instincts far superior to any that had been acquired by the entire animal creation. They were to be able to discover, on particular occasions, that certain Members were very willing, and, indeed, desperately anxious, to vote for the closing of a debate, and that certain other Members were anxious that the debate should not be closed—and to discover it with but the slightest expression of opinion from anyone. It appeared to him, if that was the case, that the House would be treated nightly to a very interesting exhibition of what was called "thought reading" from the Chair, and, so far as he could make out from the speech of the Prime Minister, without any extra charge. It appeared, indeed, that the moment this Resolution passed, the Speaker would be endowed with an amount of personal infallibility far beyond anything that had ever been claimed by His Holiness the Pope. When he heard the whole of that remarkable prophecy, he must confess that he was, for once, as nearly as ever he was in his life, thrown off his balance, and was almost persuaded not only to support the *clôture*, that was going to produce such marvellous improvements in the race of Speakers, but to denounce any individual who would continue his resistance to it. But a most providential intervention occurred, and he subsequently began to doubt as to whether the Government had their eye upon such a remarkable individual as the Prime Minister had pourtrayed, and he decided that he would do wisely in adhering to his former opinions, which were also those of a Gentleman whom he respected most highly and followed, as to this 1st Resolution, and he would accordingly vote for the Motion of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) against it, when it was put from the Chair; and he looked forward with great pleasure to following the lead of his right hon. Friend. He had, however, so much respect for the genius and ability of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Dublin University (Mr. Gibson), that he did not like to take a course opposed to anything he might suggest without endeavouring to explain the reason why. He therefore wished to state why he could not support the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend. The question before the House was not whether they were to have the *clôture*, but whether the *clôture* was to be affirmed by a two-thirds' majority, or by a majority of 1. Now, the *clôture* had been called an innovation of a foreign practice; but it appeared to him (Lord Randolph Churchill) that a proportionate majority, or what was called a two-thirds' *clôture*, was a very much greater innovation on all our principles, ideas, and customs, than even the *clôture* itself. He knew of nothing in the history of this country, or in its laws, or in its Constitution, which could be adduced as a precedent or an analogy for the course proposed in the Amendment—that the House should require two-thirds of its Members to affirm any proposition. After all, the principle of the *clôture* was not an innovation. The Motion of the Previous Question was a form of *clôture*, only it admitted of debate; while the proposal of the Prime Minister did not. In America the *clôture* was called the Previous Question, and was used without debate. But he never heard that it was suggested by anyone that the Previous Question should require a majority of two-thirds, in order that it should be carried. They did not require proportionate majorities for the election of their Representatives, nor would any proposition to that effect have the slightest chance of being accepted by the country. London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Glasgow, could return Members to that House for a period of seven years by majorities of 1, and the Member so returned was as fully and as firmly the Member for that constituency as if he had been elected unanimously; and he thought that the election of a Member for a great constituency for a period of seven years was a much more important matter, and would seem to require a much stronger title than the closing of an occasional debate in the House of Commons. They knew, moreover, as the Prime Minister told them, that many of the greatest reforms in their laws had been carried by majorities which did not number double figures; and it was undoubtedly, in theory, in the power of Parliament, by a majority of 1, to change the Constitution of the country from a Monarchy into a Republic, which, again, he should say, would be a much more important matter than the closing of an occasional debate. He owned he was a firm believer in the general infallibility of simple majorities; they had practically governed the British Empire from time immemorial, and he could not refrain from expressing his surprise that the Tory Party or the Constitutional Party, which naturally and properly recoiled with such horror from this Radical innovation of the *clôture*, should put forward with eagerness, with anxiety, and almost with desperation, this much greater Radical innovation of the two-thirds' majority. That was his general objection to this Amendment; but he would like to look at it in practice. However objectionable the *clôture* by a bare majority was, it was perfectly clear to him that it would probably be used against all Parties in that House, without distinction or favour; but he was perfectly certain that, to all intents and purposes, a two-thirds' *clôture* would be used against the Irish Party alone. Now, he could not imagine anything more deplorable, more full of evil and disaster, than the continual recurrence of the spectacle of the two great Parties in the State uniting, and uniting only, for the purpose of suppressing the Irish Members. He defied anyone to conjecture any method more certainly or more infallibly calculated to produce not only perhaps an Irish Parliament, but perhaps even Irish independence. Irish opposition to English Governments in the House of Commons, even if it were obstinate, even if obstructive, even if it were calculated at the time to bring the Legislature into contempt, might be an evil; but it was an evil which must be borne with more or less, unless they were prepared, sooner or later, to concede fully and freely to the demand for Home Rule. They might suppress this Irish opposition by new and strange devices, they might practically or actually disfranchise Ireland, they might govern the country by the bayonet; but these proceedings could only endure for a limited period, and at the end of them would be Repeal of the Union. He said this—that outside these two alternatives of allowing full, free, even exaggerated expression of Irish grievances in that Parliament, and the Repeal of the Union, he could see no choice. They were endeavouring to govern Ireland behind the former alternative; but if they adopted this insidious two-thirds' *clôture*, which, curiously enough, they should notice was recommended to them for acceptance by an Irishman belonging to what had hitherto been the dominant Party, he felt sure, as certainly as they were all sitting there, no matter what efforts anyone might make, they would have to abandon the former alternative and adopt the latter. If this *clôture* were brought into operation, there would be an understanding between the two Front Benches; and when he contemplated the two Front Benches, he rose to a height of impartiality which was perfectly sublime. There would be an understanding between those two Front Benches that this *clôture* was to be used against the Irish Party, but not against any other Party in the House. The weapon would be too easy of use, the temptation too strong, the hatred of race too recent, to prevent any Government, were it Liberal or were it Conservative, from continually having recourse to it for the purpose of advancing their own Business, or English or Scotch claims. The predictions as to the tyranny of a majority, the predictions as to the degradation of the Chair, of which they had heard so much, he looked upon as chimerical and unreal compared with that one certain consequence of the adoption by the House of that Amendment—namely, that it would be mainly used to stifle the expression of Irish national feeling in that House; and he believed the result would, to use the words of Lord Beaconsfield, be "more fatal to the unity of the Empire than famine, pestilence, or foreign conquest." He desired to say one word more as to the probable working effects of this Amendment upon the future fortunes of the Tory Party whether in Office or out of Office. He imagined that many of those who supported this Amendment were animated by a secret conviction that the palmy days of Tory Governments were over, and that the Tory Party had nothing to do but look forward to a long period of endless Opposition, perhaps occasionally chequered by partial glimpses of Office with a minority. For himself, he believed that to be not only incorrect, but abjectly incorrect. That it was, however, held by many he had no doubt, and those who held it were endeavouring by this Amendment to construct, as it were, a little dyke under which they imagined they would be able to shelter themselves for a long time to come. A more hopeless delusion never before led astray a political Party, and he would endeavour, in the words of the Prime Minister, to "smash, destroy, and pulverize it." How many times did anyone in that House think the Prime Minister would — and he (Lord Randolph Churchill) looked upon the Prime Minister as an extremely moderate statesman compared with the statesmen the Liberal Party was likely to produce very soon—how many times would the Prime Minister permit the Tory Party to refuse him the two-thirds' majority which would enable him to get his Budget Resolutions? On a generous calculation, he might stand it twice or possibly three times; but, as sure as the right hon. Gentleman sat where he did, after the third time he would come down and say that the state of Public Business was deplorable, that the Session was one of discomfort and disaster, and within three weeks of that declaration the precious little dyke which was to shelter the Tory Party for a long time to come, this little exotic, which was to be so carefully introduced, nurtured, and protected, so that the Tory Party might repose under its shade, would be abolished, cut down, and swept away into the great dust-bin of all modern Constitutional checks and securities. The best protection, the best Constitutional check against a Liberal Minister, which the Torty Party could look to was to be found in the House of Lords; yet how often would the House of Lords, with all its centuries of prescription, and all its vast territorial influence, venture to stand in the way of a Liberal majority? And yet with that historic caution, not to say timidity, on the part of the House of Lords and in their minds and before their eyes, did anyone really and seriously imagine that that wretched device, that miserable safeguard of a two-thirds' majority, could for one moment, or even for the suspicion of a moment, arrest the tide of popular reform, a safeguard compared with which Don Quixote's helmet was a miracle of protection, or Mrs. Partington's mop a monster of energy and strength? So much for the effect of a two-thirds' majority on the Tory Party in Opposition. Now let them look at its effect on the Tory Party in power. There could be no doubt that the Tory Party in power was confronted by a greater intensity of political animosity than was the Liberal Party under similar circumstances; and the Liberals in Opposition had recourse to methods of damaging and weakening a Tory Government which the Tories in Opposition had not either the courage or, indeed, the inclination to use. The result was that, when the Liberal Party were in power, there was always a larger influential portion of the Tory Party willing, under ordinary circumstances, to concede to a Liberal Executive a certain amount of support, which would be of the greatest assistance to such a Government for getting through its ordinary Business. But when the Tories were in power there was no corresponding portion of the Liberal Party to whom they could look. How many times, he should like to ask the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), when he was speaking in the country on the lamentable failures of the Session during the last Parliament, would it have been possible for him to obtain the necessary two-thirds, in order to enable him to get on with the Business of the country? He (Lord Randolph Churchill) was inclined to think, perhaps, twice; and yet he ventured to say that, in the present Parliament, there was scarcely a Vote of Supply, scarcely an Amendment in Committee, scarcely an imaginable Bill, as to which a considerable section of the Tory Party would not be ready, after a reasonable time, to give the Government the necessary two-thirds' majority for closing debate. He passed no opinion upon that; he simply stated it as a fact; and the result of all these arguments of his was, that when the Liberals were in power, they would constantly obtain the two-thirds, and that when the Tories were in power, they would never, or, to use the words of a popular song, "hardly ever." Well, that did not seem to him a good reason why the Tory Party should so eagerly support that Amendment. Let them look a little further ahead. No one would deny that there were great and burning questions rapidly coming up for settlement—questions relating to the franchise and the representation of the people, questions relating to revenue and trade, questions relating to agriculture and land, and questions relating to the connection between Great Britain and Ireland. Were his right hon. Friends prepared, were they determined to abdicate and renounce all title to share in the origination of legislation on those great questions? Was the great Tory democracy which Lord Beaconsfield partly constructed, that was formed in 1874—was the attitude of that Tory democracy to be one of mere dogged opposition? Was it true, as their opponents said of them, that a Coercion Bill for Ireland and foreign war was the be-all and the end-all of a Tory minority? He would say, "Certainly not." And yet it was on the ability, and not only on the ability, but on the rapidity with which, in the face of an unscrupulous Opposition, they might be able to legislate on these questions that their title to power and tenure of Office would mainly depend. Nevertheless, here they were, under the influence of a Hibernian legal mind, elaborately and laboriously endeavouring to forge for themselves an instrument which, if they did come into power, would paralyze them so effectually and so terrifically that their power would be as tottering as a house of cards, and their tenure of Office as evanescent as a summer day. Of this he was perfectly certain—that if the Prime Minister was to concede to them the two-thirds' majority, and if, by any chance, the Tory Party were to come into power to-morrow, and were to be confronted by a strong and enterprizing Radical Party, and a strong and reckless Irish Party, and receiving no support from the Whig faction, they would find themselves utterly unable to make any progress with Business, or to cut any respectable figure before the country. They would bitterly curse the day —nay more, they would bitterly curse the Leaders, when, and by whom, they had been betrayed into such a hopeless and ruinous fix. Let them oppose this *clôture* with their whole power—let them defeat it if they could; let them resort, if they had the courage, to all those powers and privileges which a Parliamentary minority still possessed, in order, if possible, to compel the Prime Minister to abandon his scheme, or to appeal to the country, to which he and they were responsible, to decide between them. But, whatever they did, let them not, for Heaven's sake, be seduced by interested counsels into following foreign fancies, and let them not be persuaded by any desire to think only of the present, and to disembarrass themselves of all thought of what was to come, to damage or abandon that great trust which the past, the present, and the future of a great Party alike commanded them vigilantly to secure. For all these reasons, and with the instinct and the full conviction that the two-thirds' *clôture*, or any like proportionate majority, would be the most poisonous and deadly weapon against the life and efficiency of a future Tory Government which its most ingenious enemies could, by any possibility, devise, he greatly regretted that, under the circumstances, he should not be able to record his vote in favour of the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he had kept his eyes upon the Front Opposition Bench during the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in order to see whether any right hon. Gentleman was likely to rise and reply to his arguments. But there only remained half-an-hour before the time for the adjournment of the debate, and he could well understand they thought this would be too short a time in which to attempt to disprove the convincing arguments which had just been addressed to the House. The speech of the noble Lord appeared to him (Mr. Goschen) to strike at the root of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson). The point of the noble Lord was that, under the two-thirds' proposal, no *clôture* could take place without negotiations between the two sides of the House. He (Mr. Goschen) shared the objections to such negotiations, while he felt sure that the Amendment would certainly make them indispensable. He hoped to be able to show that it would be in the power of even a very small minority to resist the evident sense of the House, and to prevent effect being given to the wishes of the majority, even when that majority would naturally comprise a portion of the regular Opposition. That was the danger to which they must not be blind. But he might first express his satisfaction that the noble Lord did not indulge in that persistent libel on the Parliamentary position of the country which had been indulged in by so many Conservatives, and which it was almost painful to listen to. The majority were to be imbued by virulent Party spirit; there was to be a Speaker tyrannical in conduct, and wanting in that impartiality which had always characterized his Office. But he would refuse to assume either that the majority would be always desirous of stifling the minority, while the minority would always be willing to lend its assistance to the progress of Public Business. If you assumed Party spirit on one side, you must also assume it on the other. The noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had commented on the exaggerated fears expressed by hon. Members with great force. They had heard fears expressed that discussion was to be stifled, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University had said that there was to be an outlawry of the Opposition. Had they considered that, if discussion were stifled on their side, it would be equally impossible for the majority to take part in the discussion? and whether it was probable that the Liberal Party would consent to impose silence on themselves? It would require a large amount of credulity to suppose that the majority would allow themselves to be condemned to silence, or that the Liberal Party would consent to that House being made a mere machine for registering votes, and passing Acts of Parliament. He was satisfied that that would not be allowed by the country. The right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University had said that that House was the great inquest of the nation; that it not only voted money, but discussed and inquired into grievances. Everyone would admit that description of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he (Mr. Goschen) was convinced that the adoption of the Resolutions of the Government would promote the proper debating of the most important subjects, and that the result would be the improvement of their debates, and not the stifling of discussion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had pointed out that foreign nations would say that now the House of Commons was going to give up its freedom of debate. But what were foreign nations, and, what was much more to the point, what was the English nation, saying of the position in which the Parliament of this country had found itself? What was the use of maintaining that old privilege if it was so abused that they could not do the work which they were sent by their constituents to do in this House? It was in order to restore the efficiency of the House of Commons, to do their duty to their constituents, to enable the various classes of Members to take an equal part in discussion, and to secure a more equally distributed debate, both as regarded subjects and as regarded classes of Members who took part in these discussions, that they wished to support, and did heartily support, the Resolutions of Her Majesty's Government. He, for one, would not support the Government on a question of that kind if he thought they were going to suppress that which had been the pride of Parliament for ages. But the point was this—that hon. Members opposite, while they had these great fears for the future, would not realize, and they appeared to him not to have realized, the real and actual evils of the past. The noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) spoke as if he had nothing to complain of—as if Parliament had been in a satisfactory position the last few years. If the country thought so, it was quite natural they should remain satisfied; but he (Mr. Goschen) believed the country was convinced that that was not so, but that Resolutions were necessary for dealing with the existing evil. The alarms of hon. Members opposite, he thought, touched both the present and the future. They were afraid for the immediate present that certain dark designs were to be carried out, and they were also afraid for the future. To put those fears into words, their case was this—they seemed to feel that there had been an increased volume of Democratic movement. They seemed to fear that the Parliament of the future—the immediate future, one would almost think—would be different from the present House of Commons; that it would abandon the traditions of the past, and that—why he was at a loss to conceive, but for some reason or other—there was going to be a kind of fierce Party spirit, which was going to suppress the minority on every possible occasion. Well, that might be their belief; but he would ask, in the words of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, did they think a fierce Parliament of that kind was going to be prevented from carrying out its designs; did they think that a Parliament, inspired with a spirit of that kind, would be controlled by a Resolution passed that day as a Standing Order of the House? Was it that this two-thirds' Amendment was going to check the Democracy of the future? Did they believe that that safeguard would not be swept away by the advancing tide? It would be swept away at once, and if any reliance had been placed on its efficiency, its efficiency would be nought. But if that spirit was likely to develop itself, there was one remedy, and one only, upon which he would rely, and that was, before that time so to raise once more the character and dignity of the House, that the House itself would be the dyke and bulwark against the dangers hon. Members opposite feared. If those hon. Gentlemen ever read the newspapers, they would find that during the last few years the country had been dissatisfied with the want of business-like capacity in Parliament. If that feeling existed outside the House, what was the result? It was that organizations had sprung up to put pressure upon Parliament and to hasten their proceedings. They had heard, also, that the Press claimed, if not to have superseded the influence of Parliament, at any rate to have equalled it. That was because the debates of Parliament had not been conducted within the last three or four years with such efficiency—owing to the tyranny of the few—as to meet the approbation of the country at large. The House had suffered from the tyranny of the few, and it was the unbounded licence in which the few had indulged which had imposed the *clôture* upon many Members of the moderate section, and had prevented them from giving expression to their feelings and opinions. With reference to the two-thirds' majority, he would point out to the House how the *clôture* would work if it could not be voted without a majority of two-thirds. There were many occasions on which it would not be possible to obtain that large majority, even if a large proportion of hon. Members in Opposition were prepared to grant it. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had argued that responsibility would fall upon the Leaders of the Opposition. What would happen? After a three nights' debate those Opposition Leaders would be approached and asked whether they would support the Government in closing the debate. The Leader of the Opposition would have to ask himself what would be his position if he supported the Government. If he did so, he might find that a portion of his followers would reproach him for bringing the debate to a premature close. The Leader of the Opposition consequently, before replying, would have to consult with the more ardent and impetuous spirits of his own Party. He must make more of their views, or else he might divide his Party in giving the Government his support. Supposing the Leader of the Opposition had on this occasion said that he would consent to the *clôture* with two-thirds' majority, would he not have exposed himself to the assaults of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock? A numerical majority, whether two-thirds or any other number, except the very smallest, meant the Opposition vote as a whole. They might as well have a four-fifths or any other majority, except the very small minority alluded to by the noble Lord; because it meant, would the Opposition as a body vote in order to support the Business of the opposite Party? Therefore, they must have negotiations between the two Parties, for it stood to reason that, unless some price were given, the Leader of the Opposition would say he could not insure the two-thirds. There would be no principle more demoralizing and weakening to Her Majesty's Opposition than a proposal of this kind, and he did not think it was in the interest of Parliament that Her Majesty's Opposition should be placed in such a position. In his opinion, no more potent proposal to demoralize the Opposition could be made than that to adopt the two-thirds' majority. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, alluding to the position of a Conservative Government when the Liberals were in Opposition, said that the support of any section of the Liberal Party could never be relied upon. But there was no occasion on which the Conservative Leaders would be opposed by any considerable section of their own supporters when a Liberal Government was in Office. Although it might be called two-thirds, it would mean that the whole Opposition must be with them with the exception of some particular minority against which both sides might be prepared to strike. Hon. Members must, therefore, agree with the Prime Minister that a two-thirds' *clôture* would be no use whatever. A question had been put with regard to Obstruction. It was said—"Do you intend to strike at Obstruction?" But Obstruction was contagious, and, as the House knew, it was not invented by the Irish Party. It pre-existed, and they knew the quarter from whence it originally came. It would not be safe, nor sufficient, nor would it be right, to strike simply at one minority, regardless of the fact that the general Business of the House was obstructed as they had seen it over and over again. He had no alarms for the future, such as some hon. Members had expressed. If he had, he should not think they could be conjured away by a miserable Amendment which would yield to the first pressure brought against it; but he believed the best way to stem the danger which hon. Members opposite seemed to anticipate with regard to the future was to raise the character of the House, and to restore efficiency to their debates; and he did not know that they could do so by any better means than by supporting Her Majesty's Government as regarded the way in which they were prepared to deal with the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 2*nd November*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued — *For* the Borough of Ennis, *v.* James Lysaght Finigan, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—PERMANENT STAFF OF MILITIA—MARINE PENSIONERS.

Mr. EUGENE COLLINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that an inequality exists between the position of Army pensioners and Marine pensioners when employed as sergeants on the permanent staff of the Auxiliary Forces; whether Army pensioners can increase their pensions at the rate of one halfpenny per day, for every year of service as sergeants on the permanent staff of Militia Regiments, up to a maximum of eightpence per day in excess of their pensions from service in the Regular Army, whereas Marine pensioners in a similar position derive no such benefit from a similar service; and, whether, in consideration of the recent gallant services of the Marine Forces in Egypt, he will inquire into the subject with a view to placing Marine pensioners on an equality with their comrades in the other branch of Her Majesty's Service?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have to thank my hon. Friend for calling my attention to the inequality in respect of pension which exists, in the manner stated in his Question, between the Army pensioners and the Marine pensioners on the permanent Staff of the Auxiliary Forces. Some time ago the matter was under the consideration of the Departments concerned, and difficulties were found to exist in the way of any alteration of the present arrangement; but we will inquire into the subject again and see, in consultation with the War Office and Treasury, whether anything ought to be done.

VACCINATION—TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE THROUGH INOCULATION OF SOLDIERS IN THE FRENCH ARMY.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has received further and complete information, through the Foreign Office, from the French Government, on the subject of the infection of fifty-eight soldiers of the 4th Zouave Regiment, to whom it is alleged that syphilis was communicated by vaccination with matter from Arab children; and, whether he has any reason to doubt the correctness of the fact, as reported in "Le Petit Colon" and the "Journal d'Hygiène" of Paris, June 30th, and August 25th 1881, and in the "Daily News" of that or succeeding month?

MR. DODSON: I regret that I have not succeeded in obtaining any fresh information on the subject to which the Question of my hon. Friend relates, and it does not appear that the French Government have any in their possession. With regard to the alleged fact that the disease referred to was communicated by vaccination with vaccine matter, I am advised that the statement in *The Journal d'Hygiène* that two children served as vaccinifers for 280 men, and that 58 of these men—and it does not appear how many more—were operated upon with lymph from one single child is so opposed to all experience of vaccination that it cannot possibly be accepted. My hon. Friend must, therefore, permit me to say that, so far from admitting the fact that the disease was communicated by vaccine matter, I cannot but entertain the gravest doubts on the subject; and the more especially as it is expressly mentioned that the children from whom the lymph was said to be taken were in excellent health.

EGYPT—COMMAND OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY—APPOINTMENT OF BAKER PASHA.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Baker Pacha has been appointed Generalissimo of the Egyptian Army; and, if so, whether his appointment was made with the approval and consent of His Majesty the Sultan?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Baker Pasha does not appear to have been yet appointed. Her Majesty's Government have no concern with any question which may have arisen between the Turkish Government and Baker Pasha with regard to the latter's employment in Egypt. The Egyptian Government will now consult us on all military steps, and no determination upon any plan has yet been come to.

MR. O'KELLY: Does the hon. Member mean to say that the Government of Her Majesty have no information about the fact that Baker Pasha deserted from the Turkish Army?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I can only repeat what I have already said, that we have no concern with any question between Baker Pasha and the Turkish Government.

LAW AND POLICE—THE USE OF REVOLVERS.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is a fact that a constable of the Metropolitan Police, on the night of Saturday the 28th instant, was seriously wounded at Hampstead by a shot from a revolver fired upon him by an armed burglar; and, whether, in view of the frequent crimes of violence perpetrated by means of these weapons, together with the frequent accidents arising from their careless and reckless use, he will consider the introduction next year of some measure of licence and registration in respect of the purchase of these arms to limit, if possible, that indiscriminate distribution of them which prevails at present?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not surprised that after the very serious affray at Hampstead, in which a policeman was wounded, and in which he behaved so gallantly, the subject to which my hon. Friend alludes should have attracted much public attention. I can assure my hon. Friend that I am considering very carefully, with the police authorities, what can be done in the matter. I am afraid that the plan proposed by my hon. Friend is hardly strong enough to remedy the evils of which he complains, because already a penalty can be imposed by law upon people who possess arms without a licence; but, as a matter of fact, the penalty is evaded, and I fear that registration would be evaded likewise. I may as well now answer a subsequent Question which has a place upon the Notice Paper. I am asked whether I will introduce a Bill this Session dealing with this subject. To that I have to answer that it would be impossible to do so this Session; and, besides, I do not think that this is a matter that ought to be taken in hand hastily or under the influence of panic. Then there is a question about arming the police. Well, that is a matter which I have also very carefully considered. I have taken the opinion of the Commissioners of Police and of the Superintendents of Police, and I am bound to say that they are unanimously against the proposal. Though this is a very grave matter, which must be seriously dealt with, in order to prevent any undue alarm or belief that the crimes have increased greatly in number or rapidity, I think it may be well to give the numbers for the last few years. In 1879, there were four offences of this character; in 1880, there were three; in 1881, four; and this year up to the present date there have been three. Therefore, grave as these offences are, their number has not seriously increased during the last four years.

Mr. W. H. JAMES: Do these figures refer to the Metropolitan Police District or to the country?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: To the Metropolitan Police District.

Sir HENRY TYLER: Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman considering the question of administering the punishment of flogging to garotters and burglars armed with revolvers?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; that is a matter under consideration.

IRELAND—SANITARY CONDITION OF KILLESHANDRA.

Mr. BERESFORD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the unsatisfactory condition of the sanitary arrangements of the town of Killeshandra, county Cavan; if he is aware that the local inspector has on several occasions reported the state of the sewerage to the Board of the Cavan Union, pointing out the unhealthy condition of the town; and, notwithstanding these reports, no effort has been made to remedy the evil; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will have a full investigation made by the Government inspector of the district?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The attention of the Local Government Board in Ireland has on several occasions been called to the unsatisfactory condition of the sanitary arrangements in the town of Killeshandra, and they have seen very unfavourable Reports on the subject from the Medical Officer of Health. The Local Government Board have frequently brought the matter under the notice of the sanitary authority, who have now at length referred it to a Committee for Report. The Local Government Board have not yet seen the Report of that Committee; but if, when it reaches them, they find that the sanitary authority are not prepared to adopt prompt and efficient measures to remedy the evil complained of, it will then be the duty of the Board to cause an investigation to be made by one of their Inspectors, and to take such other steps as may to them appear necessary.

EGYPT—COMMAND OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY—APPOINTMENT OF BAKER PASHA.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any communications passed between Sir Garnet Wolseley and Baker Pacha in reference to the appointment of the latter to the command of the Egyptian Army; and, if any communications passed, whether Her Majesty's Government was informed of their nature?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Member's Question I have to say that, having no record of any such communication in the War Office, I asked Sir Garnet Wolseley whether, before Baker Pasha was applied to by the Khedive, he had been in communication with him, and he informed me he had no such communication.

ARMY—RESERVE MEN.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in consideration of the prompt answer given by the Reserve Men to the recent summons to active service, he will consider the advisability of allowing those men who may now elect to complete twelve years' service some hope of being permitted to complete twenty-one years, if specially recommended?

MR. CHILDERS: I am afraid that I can hold out no greater expectations on the subject of my hon. and gallant Friend's Question than that the men have no claim to re-engagement unless they have become non-commissioned officers. In fact, the option we have given them is a boon, as we have no wish, on military grounds, that they should do otherwise than remain in the Reserve.

NAVAL ARTILLERY—THE NEW BREECH-LOADING GUNS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War, What progress has been made in the manufacture of the new breech-loading guns for the Navy for which provision was made in the Army Estimates for the year; whether the 43-ton gun has been finally adopted, after proof; and, what other large guns have been tested and adopted for the Service, and under what circumstance a 6-inch gun recently failed on trial?

MR. CHILDERS: With respect to the first Question, nothing has occurred since in Committee of Supply on the 7th of August I answered a similar Question, except that fair progress has been, and is being, made. As to the 43-ton gun, a pattern has been adopted for those under manufacture. Further trials are shortly to be made, which may lead to some change of pattern for future years. As to the third Question, an 18-ton breech-loading gun has been tested and adopted. As to the fourth, a 6-inch breech-loading gun which has been tested has failed at the 269th round; and the causes are being carefully inquired into with the Ordnance Committee.

MEDICAL ACTS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is his intention to introduce a Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Medical Acts; and, if so, when?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Report of the Royal Commission is at present under consideration; but we have not arrived at that stage of our deliberations which enables me to inform the House of the nature of any legislation we may contemplate or the order in which it will be taken.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—TEACHERS IN IRISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

MR. ERRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the urgent necessity of adopting some means for providing a largely increased supply of trained teachers for Elementary Schools in Ireland, nearly seventy per cent. of the actual teachers being entirely without training?

MR. TREVELYAN: I can only assure my hon. Friend that the subject has engaged my attention.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—THE EMIGRATION CLAUSES.

MR. RANKIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any applications have been received from the unions scheduled under the Emigration Clause of the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act of this Session for grants of money for the assistance of emigration; whether other unions, besides the five scheduled, have applied for such assistance; and if he will name them; and, if he will state the unions, if any, which desire to take advantage of the borrowing powers conferred on boards of guardians by the Act in question for emigration purposes?

MR. TREVELYAN: Out of the five Unions scheduled under the Emigration Clauses of the Arrears of Rent Act, two —namely, Newport and Swinford—have applied for grants. Twenty-two other Unions have applied to be scheduled to enable them to obtain such assistance. They are as follows:—Ballyvaughan, Boyle, Claremorris, Dromore West, Kenmare, Letterkenny, Strokestown, Westport, Ballinasloe, Ballyshannon, Cahirciveen, Carrick-on-Shannon, Castlerea, Galway, Glennamaddy, Loughrea, Milford, Mohill, Roscommon, Sligo, Tobercurry, and Tralee. The hon. Member does not ask me the result of the applications in these cases; but I may state that in one case (Kenmare) the whole Union has been scheduled; in seven cases a number of electoral divisions have been scheduled, and the remaining 14 cases are still under consideration. With regard to the final paragraph of the Question, no definite application for loans has yet been received from any Unions, though some Boards of Guardians have sought information on the subject. As, however, the Rules under the 21st section of the Act have only been issued within the past few days, the Boards of Guardians have not yet had time to give the matter the necessary consideration.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH SPAIN.

Mr. MONK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any further communication has been made to the Spanish Government, by Her Majesty's Government, in consequence of the Despatch of His Excellency the Marquis de la Vega de Armijo, dated August 12th 1882, in which the Spanish Government express a strong hope that the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty between Great Britain and Spain,

> "Which are to bring about the ever-increasing development of the commercial transactions of both Countries, will soon be re-opened;"

and, if so, whether he will state its purport to the House, and lay a Copy upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; no further communication has been made to the Spanish Government.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—OVERHEAD TELEGRAPH WIRES.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Postmaster General, in reference to the serious occurrence of last week, near the Cannon Street Station, Whether steps are being taken to reduce the numbers of tightly strained wires, for telegraph or other purposes, over the heads of the metropolitan population and persons using the streets? The hon. Member added that he did not wish to fix the responsibility for the occurrence upon the right hon. Gentleman or the Post Office; he merely chose it as an illustration.

Mr. FAWCETT: The hon. Member will perhaps recollect that he asked a Question of a somewhat similar kind in June of last year, and I informed him of the steps which were being taken by the Post Office to place its wires in London under ground. As regards the occurrence in Cannon Street, the wire to which the hon. Member refers does not belong to the Post Office.

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES ACT, 1882—THE ANNUITY AND INSURANCE TABLES.

Mr. RANKIN asked the Postmaster General, When the new Annuity and Insurance Tables, necessary under the Government Annuities Act of 1882, will be published?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that by the provisions of the Act the Tables have, in the first instance, to be prepared by the National Debt Commissioners, and I understand that the Commissioners have been for some time engaged in their preparation. The Tables have subsequently to be sanctioned by the Treasury, and then laid on the Table for 30 days. Whenever these necessary formalities are completed, the Post Office will at once be ready to bring the new scheme of annuities and insurance into operation.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—THE INDIAN CONTINGENT—INCIDENCE OF COST.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government still adhere to the statement made by him that Her Majesty's Government had determined to call upon the Government of India to pay the total expenses of Her own share of the operations in Egypt; whether he is now in a position to state if Papers, commencing from the first intimation that Indian troops might be required, will be included among those already promised; and, if so, how soon they may be expected; and, if he can now state approximately the total cost incurred by the Government of India for the Contingent sent by that Government?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have already stated to the House what was the approximate Estimate of the Government of India as to the cost incurred by the Expedition to Egypt. Until we know how much of that cost will possibly be recouped by the return of stores and animals, it will be impossible to give any other Estimate than that which has been already furnished to the House. I think I stated last week that I had heard from the Government of India that they expected, in a very few days, to be able to send further information upon that point. Although I have reminded them of this promise on their part, I have not yet received any further information; and it is obvious that, as the Expedition is just on the point of returning, it would not be desirable to press for further information until the Indian Government are in a position to give it in an accurate form. Until that information is received, it will be impossible for us to come to any conclusion as to the final Vote which will be required. I am, therefore, unable to add anything to the answer I gave to the hon. Member's Question last week.

MR. ONSLOW said, some Papers connected with the Expedition had already been presented. Would the noble Marquess say when the remainder would be in the hands of hon. Members?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Papers will be given as fully as possible. Certain portions consist of telegraphic correspondence, and as some of the telegrams are secret ones, these cannot be given. However, the Papers that will be presented will give the House as full an idea as possible of what has taken place.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISTRESS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

MR. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the report that—

> "300 persons in Tory Island are without food, and the means of getting any,"

and also

> "that other portions of the western population are in a state of impending starvation;"

and, if so, what steps have been taken to meet this distress?

MR. TREVELYAN: As I have already stated, I have directed the Local Government Board to send one of their Inspectors to the Union and make inquiry on the spot, and a gun-boat has been placed at the disposal of the Irish Government for the conveyance of food and other necessaries to the Island, should it be found requisite to do so. The Local Government Board have also called on their Inspectors for special Reports from Glenties Union, in Donegal, and Ennistymon Union, in Clare, where it has been alleged exceptional distress exists or may be anticipated. The Report from Glenties Union has already arrived in Dublin; and I am told by telegraph that it shows the serious results from the storm, and the apprehended distress, to have been exaggerated.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—DOMICILIARY VISITS BY THE POLICE—MILLSTREET.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that the Millstreet Police are in the habit of making nightly visits to the houses of the inhabitants of the district, compelling them to leave their beds and prove that they are within doors; under what statute this is done; whether the police bring search warrants with them; if not, whether the householders are obliged to open to them, and what the consequence of refusal would be; and, whether it is the fact that a policeman named Tillman recently ordered Thomas M'Carthy, when peacefully walking with a friend in Millstreet to go home, about the hour of 6 p.m.; whether the constable was acting under orders; and, if so, what was the object of the command?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Millstreet police, acting in the exercise of their ordinary police duties, find it necessary occasionally to visit at night the houses of persons whom they have reason to suspect of being out at night for no good purpose. These persons are not obliged to admit the police or leave their beds, and, as no search is made, no search warrant is necessary. With regard to the case of Thomas M'Carthy, it is the fact that Sub-constable Tiernan did tell him he had better go home. This occurred between 7 and 8 in the evening, and the object of the constable was to prevent a crowd from congregating opposite the military barracks to throw stones at the soldiers, one of whom was struck with a stone on the 15th ultimo and seriously injured.

Mr. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, seeing that the police had no authority for rousing people out of their beds, he would give instruction that this practice be discontinued? If not, he would publicly advise the people to resist the police.

Mr. PARNELL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had received information that many persons were visited twice in the 24 hours by the police—once in the morning and once after dark, and that the police insisted upon entering the houses of such persons and ascertaining whether they were in the house or not; and in case of their being absent they insisted on the members of the family answering where the master of the house was; and if persons would be justified in refusing admission to the police under the circumstances?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have no such information; but I shall refer the Question of the hon. Member to the authorities in Dublin.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

ORDER—ALTERATION OF QUESTIONS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the manner in which Sub-Commissioners address applicants under the Land Act from the Bench, especially when attempting to prove their improvements; whether he has seen the report a few days ago from Kilrea, County Derry Sub-Commission, where a tenant on the estate of the Rev. Godfrey D. Greene, giving evidence as to his improvements, was interrupted by the Chairman; whether Mr. Roper has been appointed Sub-Commissioner for a year certain; and, if it is intended to continue his services? The hon. Member stated that the manuscript Question which he had handed in at the Table had been so altered by the authorities of the House as to be now quite unintelligible.

Mr. TREVELYAN: There is but one definite charge made in the Question of the hon. Member, and that is against Mr. Roper, the Legal Assistant Commissioner on the Londonderry Circuit. The only information I have as yet received on the matter is contained in a telegram from Mr. Roper from Limavady, which is as follows:—

> "I never interrupt any tenant in giving evidence; did not interrupt Mr. Green's tenant; he was heard fully; made no complaint."

With regard to Mr. Roper's tenure of office, his appointment dates from the 14th of September last and expires on the 13th of April. I cannot answer any inquiry as to whether the services of any Sub-Commissioner will be continued after his appointment expires.

Mr. HEALY gave Notice that on Monday he would ask the Chief Secretary whether Mr. Commissioner Roper used those words—

> "Mr. Commissioner Roper: You are only telling us you did these things?
> "Witness: Yes.
> "Mr. Commissioner Roper; That does not cost much."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now reading a passage which, under my authority, was struck out from the Question.

Mr. HEALY: I am giving Notice that on Monday I will ask this Question. May I ask you, Sir, whether you will not permit me to put that Question?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Question is in the terms which have already been deleted by me, I could not, of course, allow it to be put.

Mr. HEALY begged to say that he would conclude his remarks with a Motion. A week ago he had put a Notice upon the Paper containing a short extract from a newspaper, which he understood was subsequently struck out under the Speaker's authority. He was informed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that he was unable to answer his Question in consequence of the striking out of this particular portion of it. He informed him that upon Monday next he would read an extract from that newspaper, and he would now read it—

> "Mr. Commissioner Roper: You are only telling us you did these things? Witness: Yes.
> "Mr. Commissioner Roper: That does not cost much.
> "The witness was then proceeding to say that he had made some minor improvements, and to

state what the cost of these improvements was, when

"Mr. Commissioner Roper: Do you charge for boots and shoes going over the farm? Witness: No.

"Mr. Commissioner Roper: Why don't you? What about the spades and shovels?"

His (Mr. Healy's) object was to show the people of Ireland the sort of consideration the Irish tenants were getting from the English Courts Parliament had set up to assess rents between landlord and tenant. This was in the North of Ireland, a part said to have been hitherto exceedingly loyal, and where the people set great store upon their Ulster Custom and upon the question of improvements, so much so that the Government, before the Session was over, would have to give some day for the discussion of improvements. He desired to bring before the House the fact that when a tenant was giving evidence with regard to his improvements he was stopped in a sneering and jeering manner by one of the Gladstonian Courts, and asked why he did not give the cost of the boots and shoes he had worn over the farm, and why he did not charge for spades and shovels. If, in his discretion, the Speaker excluded every Question that was asked, there could be no relief whatever against his authority; but he failed to see on what ground that authority was established. If they took an extract from a newspaper which was supposed to be against the grain of the ruling authority in the House, that extract was not allowed to appear upon the Paper; but if they put forward certain other extracts, or if the Conservative Party—for instance, if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham)— put Questions upon the Paper notoriously containing matter of debate, many of them involving serious questions of argument, they were told by the highest authority in the House that the hon. Member put them down upon his own authority. The hon. Member could exercise his own authority; but the Home Rulers below the Gangway could exercise no authority whatever. The grievance about putting Questions in the House had, in his opinion, grown into a scandal. They had three gentlemen at the Table, who had the control of such matters, and who knew full well that the Speaker would back them up in whatever they did. ["Oh! oh!"] That, at least, had been his experience, and he did not desire to extend his observations further.

MR. SPEAKER: The course taken by the hon. Member is, in my opinion, most irregular. He was informed by me that the form in which he proposed to put his Question was out of Order; and, in order to put himself in Order, he rises to move the adjournment of the House. In the course of his observations he does not address himself to the Question under consideration; but he attacks the authorities of the House. If the hon. Member intends to attack the authorities of the House, he should do so by a direct Motion.

MR. HEALY said, that he had hitherto understood that the Speaker had always found it difficult to rule what observations were out of Order on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House; but as he had now ruled that he could not attack the authorities of the House, he should not proceed further with his remarks in that direction. He was referring to the way in which Irish tenants had been treated in these Sub-Commission Courts; and he trusted that they would have some assurance from the Government that if remarks like those he had quoted were used by landlord partizans, they, at least, would not countenance them. It was impossible for them to let the Government know what was the language used by those persons, because it was struck out the moment they put it on the Paper; and, therefore, they were completely shut out from bringing it to the notice of the Government, except by taking a course like the present. He had to tell the Government that there was in the North of Ireland a growing feeling of disgust at the character of the appointments that were being made. They were appointing under the Land Act a number of gentlemen drawn wholly from the landlord class. He would not enter into the question of religion; but when, out of 17 valuators, there was but one Catholic, it was evident that they were drawn from the territorial or ascendency class. That being so, how could they expect the people to have confidence in the administration of the Land Act? It was only the other day that a most respected clergyman of the Catholic Church, a gentleman well known to the Prime Minister, who, in the teeth of the "no rent" manifesto, had advised the tenants of Ireland to go into the Land

Courts, wrote a public letter to *The Freeman's Journal*, stating that he regretted ever giving such a recommendation. He said that the Land Act was a sham and a failure, and he told the tenants that he repented of his meddlesome interference, and regretted that he had not allowed them to be swayed by the advice given by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). When clergymen of that kind, who had hitherto supported the Land Act, now repudiated it, how could they expect its administration to command the confidence of the Irish people? In the county of Down when the Act was passed they actually lit a bonfire to celebrate the event. If they lit a bonfire now, it would be to burn the Act. As he said before, the Irish Members were stopped from bringing the grievances of the tenants before the House in a regular manner, and that was his excuse for moving the adjournment of the House, which he now did.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Mr. TREVELYAN regretted exceedingly that the hon. Member had brought on this discussion, because it touched a question concerning the interests both of landlords and tenants which was most delicate and important, and which required to be handled with very great care and deliberation. It was a question on which he certainly was unwilling to say one word unless he was able to say many, and to be in a position perfectly to understand a matter which was now in a condition that required to be approached with very great care. The hon. Member was, no doubt, perfectly correct when he said that there was a great deal of anxiety and apprehension in the North of Ireland with respect to the recent appointments of valuators; but he would be more correct if he said that there had been a still stronger apprehension and anxiety, but that that apprehension and anxiety was at the present moment diminishing. In what he intended to say he wished it to be understood that nothing he stated should be taken to imply any intention on the part of the Government. He did not intend to enter into the question of the appointment of the valuators, or the views of the Government in relation thereto; but he would say this much, at all events—a great deal had been written and a great deal had been said on platforms of the nature of that repeated by the hon. Member to-night—criticisms of a very severe character upon the individual opinions and individual antecedents of these gentlemen. The Government were not responsible for these appointments. The Government, through the Treasury, acquiesced in the appointment of these valuers; but the responsibility for the appointments rested absolutely with the Land Commission. The Government were not bound to defend them. It was, however, needless to say that anyone who shared to some extent the responsibility for the state of Ireland at the present moment would be bound very carefully to examine into these appointments; and he was bound to say that the more they examined into the appointments of these gentlemen the more they were convinced that the real cause of the apprehension with which the tenants regarded them was that they were called valuators, and that these gentlemen belonged to the same class from whom the Government drew the Sub-Commissioners. He believed also that both the Sub-Commissioners and valuators were, as a class, men in whom landlords and tenants ought to repose confidence. The motives of the Government for making the change were three—First, they wished to diminish the number of appeals by giving confidence; secondly, they wished to quicken the progress of business in the Land Courts; and, thirdly, they wished that the complaints made about the rapidity with which farms were examined should be obviated. With regard to two of these points—the diminution in the number of appeals and the rapidity of the progress of the Land Courts—it was too early yet to form an opinion; but one important object had, he thought, been obtained, and that was that the farms were now examined much more carefully than before. That was a very great gain; and he was glad to think that, while the examination had been made much more carefully than before, it was made by a class of men who as nearly as possible were of the same class as those gentlemen who were appointed with so much care—and he might say successful care—by his Predecessor, the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr.

W. E. Forster). He had tried in what he had now said to avoid raising any controversial question; but he thought it was impossible to let the observations of the hon. Member with regard to these gentlemen pass without a word of reply from their only spokesman in that House.

MR. LEWIS remarked, that it might be convenient to the House if the right hon. Gentleman now answered a Question which he had on the Paper—namely, Whether, having regard to the statement he made to the Liberal and tenant deputation who waited on him on the 3rd of October, it was the intention of the Government to interfere with the exercise of the discretion of the Irish Land Commissioners as to the continuance of the Court valuers after the expiry of their three months' appointment, which would terminate at the end of November? It was most unfortunate that in the short speech he addressed to the House the right hon. Gentleman contradicted himself; for this he said—and said loudly—that the Government had nothing to do with these appointments, which were made by the Land Courts. In a few sentences afterwards he spoke of them as being made with certain objects by the Government.

MR. TREVELYAN: I said that the Government, as a matter of policy, sanctioned the appointment of these valuators; but that the personal appointments rested entirely with the Land Commissioners.

MR. LEWIS accepted the right hon. Gentleman's explanation; but that did not do away with the effect of the point he was raising—namely, what was the position of the Government with regard to the appointment of Court valuers? He quite understood that the consent of the Treasury was necessary in order to fix the remuneration of the Court valuers; but the Government had taken a totally different tone out of the House to that which they had taken in it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who, when a deputation waited on him on the 3rd of October last, referred especially to these valuers being on their probation, and intimated that on the result of that probation it depended whether the Government would renew their appointments. Now, he wished to know if the Government did not intend to interfere with the judicial exercise of the discretion of the Land Commissioners, why did they give it to be understood that the renewal of these appointments would depend upon the conduct of the valuers, upon the reductions they made, and whether those reductions were satisfactory to the general body of tenants? The result seemed to be that, although the Government were not primarily responsible for these appointments, and although, he supposed, they would deny that they exercised any influence upon the functions of the Land Commissioners, they intended to interfere by withholding the salaries of the valuers at the end of three months. He asked, on behalf of the landowning class in Ireland, what was the position of the Government? Were the valuers to be left with this threat hanging over their heads, that in three months, if their conduct had been unsatisfactory to the tenants, they were to be dismissed—that they were to be judged, not by the fairness of their evidence as between landlord and tenant, but by the amount of satisfaction which they must give to a number of greedy tenants, who wanted reductions of 30 per cent instead of 20? He trusted the House would not allow this extra Session of Parliament to go by without understanding what was the programme of the Government with reference to the administration of this Land Act in Ireland, and what was the stand which they took in regard to these valuers. They said they had not appointed them; but did they or did they not intend to interfere with the discretion of the Land Commissioners? At the end of the three months, was it to be said that a man was to be dismissed, or a whole body of those men were to be dismissed, because the tenants in the North of Ireland or in the South of Ireland were dissatisfied with the result? He did not hesitate to say that the greed of the tenant-farming class in Ireland had been excited by the conduct of the Government in this matter. It had been excited by the speech by the right hon. Gentleman, who, in two columns of *The Times* newspaper, had told a Party deputation who had come to him—because they had bragged that they were supporters of the Government—that at the end of the three months the Government would consider whether these valuers were to be retained or not. And, then, what had the Solicitor General for Ireland done? Why, he had a meeting of his constituents in Coleraine. They passed a resolution demanding the immediate dismissal of these valuers, and then the Solicitor General wrote to them in acknowledgment of this resolution, and said—"I will press upon the Government most earnestly what you ask to be carried out." The right hon. Gentleman had told the deputation that the Government did mean to interfere, that the Government would watch narrowly the result of these appointments, the evidence that the Court valuers gave, the result of their evidence, and the awards that were made, and on the result of that they would take their action; and the Solicitor General had told his constituents, though the Government had been parties to the fixing of the salaries of these valuers, that he would press upon the Government their dismissal. Although he approached the subject from a different point of view from those sitting below the Gangway, yet he was also of opinion that it was necessary for both sides of the House to understand what was to be the position of the land-occupying class with reference to these Court valuers. Were the valuers to be left to exercise their functions fairly and legitimately without the threat hanging over their heads that, unless they satisfied one class only of the community in Ireland, and that the tenant class, they were to be dismissed? Parliament might attempt to settle the Land Question by all these amending Acts; but nothing would settle the question if the Government excited the greed of the tenants in the way they were now doing. Even Ulster had said that the Land Acts were nonsense. Why were they nonsense? Because the Government had been continually giving way, continually conceding; because they had never set their foot down and said—"Now this step shall be final." They had met during this extra Session for the purpose of discussing the Rules of Procedure; but it was impossible to overlook the fact that the Irish Land Question was now no nearer settlement than it was two years ago. There was not the smallest approach to a settlement of it. The Arrears Bill had been received with contempt. ["No, no!"] The proof was clear. How many people had taken advantage of it? The whole system of land legislation in Ireland, including this very question of the Court valuers, showed that the Government had not even touched the fringe of the Land Question, and because they had not put their foot down and showed anything like a programme which they intended to carry out. Did they not, as a Party professing to be Liberal supporters of the Government, appeal to the Government that they should insist on the dismissal of these Court valuers at the end of three months, simply because their evidence and advice and the consequent awards were not satisfactory to the peasant class? But was ever any arbitrator's opinion satisfactory to both sides interested? Was it to be supposed that because the tenants as a class got a reduction of 3 or 5 per cent less than under the old system that, therefore, the new system was a bad one? It was impossible that the Government could ever settle the Irish Land Question unless they abandoned all shillyshallying, and gave both the occupying and the land-owning classes to understand clearly what their programme really was on these matters, and also that that programme had in it something like finality.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, the recent change in the administration of the Land Act in the appointment of valuers had destroyed the confidence of the tenant farmers of Ulster. He ventured to say that when the Returns of the Land Commission were laid on the Table of the House it would be found that, instead of the valuers having facilitated the administration of the Act, they had seriously impeded it; and, from personal knowledge of the county he represented (Tyrone), he could state that the decisions now given under the new system had diminished the settlement of fair rents by from 25 to 33 per cent. He remembered listening last year to the speeches made by noble Lords in "another place"—one noble Lord (Lord Kilmorey) said that the object of that House should be to revolutionize the working of the Land Act in Ireland. The Government had succeeded by their recent action in doing that most effectually. There was no place in Ireland where the Land Act was received more warmly or more thankfully than in Ulster; and he, for one, could only regret, for the sake of the prosperity of Ulster, that the Government had taken this fatal step—a step opposed to the decision of the House and to the expressed views of the Prime Minister himself. He could not understand how the Government gave their consent to such a grave change, especially when it was remembered that the House had disapproved of the appointment of valuers. The question would be a serious one in the Province of Ulster; and from numerous communications which he had received, it would not surprise him if, before January next, a large number of the tenants of Ulster had withdrawn from the Land Court.

MR. PARNELL: The hon. Member for Tyrone has just given it as his opinion that the appointment of Court valuers has destroyed the confidence of the people of Ulster in the Land Act of last Session. I am somewhat surprised that the hon. Member did not go further and say, as he said some time ago at Coleraine, in the North of Ireland, that the confidence of the people of Ulster had been destroyed in this Act, not only on account of its administration, but on account of its interpretation by the Supreme Court in Dublin in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." It must have been evident to everybody that if the question of fixing a fair rent was left to a Court, or to a valuer, the landlord class in Ireland would obtain the greatest amount of representation amongst the men chosen to fix the fair rent. The education and the wealth of Ireland have been in the hands of that class, and hence it must happen that when the Government have to choose their valuers, or their Judges, or their Chairman of a Commission to fix a fair rent, the greatest number must be chosen from the landlord class; and from their sympathy with the landlord class therefore, landlords, other things being equal, must necessarily get the best of the administration of the Act, and I never expected anything else than that the tenants would be disappointed by the administration of the Act. I did, however, expect that at least the grain of advantage that was secured to the tenants by the clause in the Act which is known as "Healy's Clause" would not have been whittled away by the chicanery of the Conservative Judges of the Supreme Court. It is impossible to go into this question now; but it must be evident to the whole House that the question which has been raised by the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Wexford, and the other questions imported into the debate by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) and the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Dickson), should not be let alone, and that it will be of the utmost importance for the House to have a full opportunity of discussing the administration of the Land Act before the Session of Parliament is prorogued. I feel sure the Government will see the disadvantage of discussing a question of this kind on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House; and that they will also see that, failing a fitting opportunity for its discussion, the question will be continually bubbling and bursting up on awkward and inconvenient occasions, and that debates will arise of an imperfect and unsatisfactory character, leaving the House just as much uninformed as to the true state of things as it was at the beginning; and I therefore hope that before long we may receive the assurance from the Prime Minister that before the Prorogation the House will be afforded an opportunity of discussing this most important question.

MR. GIVAN said, that, as the only Member of Parliament who accompanied the deputation to the Chief Secretary, he wished to say that its object was in no degree to depreciate the benefits of the Land Act, because the people of Ulster had always been thankful for the Act as a measure which had given them stability and removed them above the caprices of the landlords; but it was to point out to the Chief Secretary and to the Government that the appointment of Court valuers was actually retarding the administration of the Act. The professed object of the appointment of the valuers was to keep the legal Commissioners always at work, and to expedite the business of the Commission. It was found, however, that not only were the functions of the valuers badly performed, and of a very unsatisfactory nature, but that in many cases the valuers had no knowledge of the district to which they were appointed. For instance, several men who were sent to Ulster were utterly unacquainted with the Ulster Custom. Their object in going to the Chief Secretary, therefore, was to point out that the *personnel* of these valuers was objectionable to the Ulster men, because they were unacquainted with the Ulster Custom, and that a system which sent men as valuers to fix a fair rent without hearing the evidence of the tenant as to the improvements made by him could not work satisfactorily. The deputation did not understand the Chief Secretary to say that the valuers were on probation, nor did they understand him to say that the valuers were to be dismissed if at the end of three months the rents were not sufficiently reduced. The Chief Secretary admitted that the object of their appointment was to expedite the business, and said that if it was found at the end of three months that the allegations of the deputation were true—namely, that the existence of the valuers retarded the administration of the Act, he would consider whether it would not be useful and advantageous to change the system. It had been said that the deputation was a Party one; but he denied that they went to the Chief Secretary as a Party deputation. It was a deputation of the tenant farmers of Ulster, of most respectable and influential representative men; and the assurance they received was that if the valuators did not give satisfaction to both landlord and tenant the Government would reconsider their appointment.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he was glad that the hon. Member for Wexford had brought the matter under the notice of the House, for he had had frequent complaints made to him of the conduct of members of the Sub-Commission who had been appointed to administer the Land Act in the county of Mayo. The complaint of the hon. Member for Wexford was perfectly parallel to the complaints he had received from his constituents during a recent visit. No question was more important than whether the administration of the Land Act was calculated to defeat the purpose of Parliament. Why had the Act of 1870 failed to bring relief to the tenant farmers of Ireland? Not that that Act did not embrace a large acknowledgment of their rights; but the manner in which it was administered prevented the tenant farmers from getting the benefit that Parliament intended they should receive. He was decidedly of opinion that the administration of the Land Act deserved the serious attention of the Government. They had in Mayo three gentlemen as a Sub-Commission, and this Sub-Commission had not been able to devise any method of transacting business at all so satisfactory and expeditious as the Court constituted by one person—namely, the County Court Judge. He had already put a Question to the Chief Secretary as to whether some arrangement could not be made for the substitution of the County Court for this Sub-Commission? But in reply the right hon. Gentleman had said that this could not be done under the Land Act. In view of that circumstance he was induced to ask if the Government would not give facilities for the introduction of a short measure to amend the Act in that particular? The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), who represented an Irish constituency, had told the House that the policy of the Government was stimulated by the greed of the tenant farmers. Now, the Land Act was not adopted out of respect for any such low feeling. If he understood their object aright, it was this—that Parliament was anxious to secure to the tenant farmers property which the landlord had appropriated as his own; and, considering the great effort which Parliament had made to carry that Act, it was time to ask whether their intentions were to be defeated by the manner in which the Act was being administered? The Chief Secretary entirely failed to notice the principal ground of the hon. Member for Wexford's (Mr. Healy's) complaint—namely, the language attributed to one of these Sub-Commissioners; and he asked him to say what right a Sub-Commissioner had to ask a poor tenant farmer who was struggling against oppression questions like those read to them by the hon. Member for Wexford? He was inclined to believe the charge brought against that Sub-Commissioner by the hon. Member, for he had had unimpeachable evidence of similar charges brought against Land Commissioners elsewhere; and he had also heard complaints on the part of the tenant farmers of Mayo against the manner in which the Sub-Commissioners administered the Act there. He trusted that the Chief Secretary would say these were not frivolous or groundless complaints, but that they were serious complaints, and that the value of the Act was threatened by the way in which it was being administered by partizan Judges; and he hoped and trusted that the result of drawing his attention to the matter in this informal way would be that they would obtain a more substantial kind of justice in the future administration of the Act.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, the discussion must necessarily be incomplete and irregular, and he trusted the Government would bring it to an end by saying that they would give a day for the discussion of the subject. He did not desire to go into the merits of the matter now; but he felt bound to say that there did exist in a large part of Ireland, not confined to Ulster, a feeling of very great distrust because of the new scheme for the appointment of Court valuers; and a part of the objection which existed was based on the fact that these Court valuers gave their Reports to the Judges or Sub-Commissioners, who were to determine the question of fair rent, and that the parties, landlords and tenants, had no means of examining, criticizing, and cross-examining them as to how they arrived at their conclusions. He hoped the Government would give an early day for the discussion of this matter.

MR. DAWSON said, before the Government replied to that appeal, he wished to draw attention to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had made a statement which was very discouraging to them in looking to him as the fountain of Irish information in that House. He had remained silent upon the question with reference to the Sub-Commissioner complained of, and the flippant manner in which he was said to have acted towards a poor tenant in Ireland; and he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman's silence in reference to that gentleman was to be interpreted as giving consent to his conduct. He was very sorry for that silence, and he would tell him and the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government that the approval of the conduct of any man in his position who outraged the public feeling in Ireland was one of the most fruitful sources of all the disturbances and discontent of which they had had to complain. The surest way to distinction and promotion, and to mount the ladder of political and Governmental favour in Ireland, seemed to be to make themselves exceptionally insulting to the vast majority of the people of the country. He had met the other day a person who exemplified this, and this person told him that he had been decorated; but he owed this to the fact that he had signalized himself by the impetuosity of his violence against the cause of the people.

MR. MULHOLLAND said, he had not the slightest idea of taking up the time of the House in entering upon a discussion of the subject. He only wished to protest against the assertions of hon. Members opposite; and if he did not answer them now, it was not because they could not be answered, but because he did not want to engage in an irregular discussion. It must be apparent, as to the principle of having valuers, that no one who desired justice could oppose it. There might be objections taken to the appointments made, or to the justice of the decisions; but he had not heard of any. None had been specified. As to the principle of having valuers, if the object was to get fair and just decisions, he could not conceive that anyone should object to it. As he pointed out last year, from the nature of the case it was almost impossible to get evidence of the proper kind before the Judicial Court. The evidence of the tenants was said by the Sub-Commissioners to be so absurd that it could not be treated seriously, whilst that of the landlord was said to be partial. It had, in fact, always been a question of valuation; and the only point was whether, if land was to be valued, it should not be done by trained, skilled, and competent valuers—by men who should be above the suspicion of partizanship; and he took it that these appointments had been so made. He was delighted to learn from the remarks of the Chief Secretary, in his recent speech in Dublin, that these appointments had been sanctioned by the Government after mature deliberation; and he had perfect confidence that the Government would not yield to any clamour to make an alteration in this system, which, he conceived, was as much to the advantage of the tenant as the landlord, as tending to limit litigation and assist the administration of the Land Act, and as tending to injure only the class of the community who made money by making costs.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he wished to notice the suggestion of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), with the express object of putting an end to a conversational debate which could hardly lead to any positive or satisfactory result. He could not, he was afraid, comply with the suggestion, if it was to the effect that he should there and then state that an opportunity would be found for the discussion of this subject, and for this reason—that it was quite obvious that if such an assurance was given a great number of similar questions and demands would arise; and as to the course which he would take, he must have recourse to the general sense of the House with regard to the questions that might be or might not be discussed. What he proposed was, when they came to a conclusion upon the Resolutions of Procedure, upon which they were now engaged, they could then consider what were the matters which should have foremost place in the mind of Parliament, and, considering them together, then decide what opportunities should be given for the discussion of them.

Mr. HEALY asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the reply of the Prime Minister was characterized by what Mr. Matthew Arnold would call "a want of lucidity," as it was still doubtful whether the Irish tenants would have a chance of bringing their grievance to the notice of Parliament. All he could say was that there was a universal outcry against the administration of the Land Act, and he could not exculpate the Government at the expense of the administrators of that measure. The Prime Minister had stated that the result of the Act would not be the very general reduction of rents, and had apparently taken pains to secure the fulfilment of his own prophecy. The administrators of the Act were chosen by the Government, and rents were not being reduced—a fact for which he was unable to blame anyone but the Government.

Mr. CALLAN remarked that, whether justly or unjustly, great dissatisfaction existed in Ireland, and great distrust, because of the appointment of Court valuers. The hon. Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) had asked if the valuers were chosen by the Land Commissioners on their own responsibility, and whether the Government had interfered in the matter, and the Chief Secretary had replied that they were chosen by the Land Commission, and that the Government did not interfere. Now, that answer had led the House and the country to believe that the Land Commission in Dublin was responsible for the policy and *personnel* of these valuers. Now, he wished to give the Chief Secretary an opportunity of removing the misapprehension caused by his answer. Was it the fact that the Land Commission Court was responsible for the appointments? He was informed on the best authority that the policy of the appointment of the Court valuers was adopted at the instigation and suggestion of the Irish Executive. That was a statement which could be met with a decided "Yes" or "No." Was it not a fact, although the Land Act did not require the approval and sanction of the Lord Lieutenant, that before these appointments were submitted to the Treasury the names and all particulars regarding them were submitted by the Land Court Judges to the Irish Executive?

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed that in one of the courts for investigation of claims for compensation for injuries (under the Crimes Prevention Act) the Commissioner refused to hear solicitors on behalf of the parties, on the ground that section 19 of the Crimes Prevention Act prescribed that the parties should be heard "either personally, or by counsel," and that this provision shut out solicitors from a hearing; and, whether, considering the poverty of the ratepayers in many parts of Ireland, and the cost of engaging counsel from Dublin, the Government will take such steps as may be necessary, either by introducing a short amending Bill, or otherwise, to facilitate the protection of the interests of the ratepayers in cases of claims for compensation by entitling solicitors to appear?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have observed the ruling referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, reported to have been made by one of the barristers appointed by His Excellency to investigate and report on applications for compensation under the Prevention of Crime Act. The Question, being a legal one, ought rather to have been addressed to the Attorney General for Ireland; but I am advised that, while the 19th section of that Act, in the 1st sub-section, gives an absolute right of audience to the parties personally or by counsel, the 2nd sub-section gives the investigating barrister for the purpose of the investigation the same power as Justices sitting in Petty Sessions, and, therefore, there is nothing to prevent his hearing a solicitor if he thinks fit; and I have observed that solicitors have, in fact, been heard by other investigating barristers appointed by His Excellency under this section. In this view, therefore, no further Statute appears to me necessary.

CENTRAL ASIA—ADVANCE OF RUSSIA.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a telegram from Teheran, dated October 20th, which states that advices from Meshed, the capital of Khorassan, report that the Russians, having no further difficulty with the Merv Turcomans, are preparing to subjugate the Sarik Turcomans, and that a detachment of Russian Cavalry, with two guns, has passed Old Sarakhs, on the Murghab River (one hundred miles south of Merv), close to the Afghan frontier, and near Herat; and that four battalions of Infantry, with four guns, and two thousand Cavalry, are about to follow; and, if these statements be true, what steps Her Majesty's Government are taking to check an advance which is contrary to Russian pledges to this Country and menacing to Afghanistan?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, we hear from Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran, under date the 30th of October, that two Russian engineers had attempted to enter Herat territory, but had been refused permission by the Afghan authorities.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Are we to understand that the only information which has reached the Government has been with regard to the approach of these two Engineers, and that the Government have no information as to the advance of troops 100 miles south of Merv?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir; that is so.

EGYPT — MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, in reference to the expedition of the late Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, R.E., and Lieutenant Charrington, R.N., Whether he will produce to the House the orders conveyed to Captain Gill to cut the telegraph wires between Kantara and El Arish, and any communications from Captain Gill, in which his intentions, so referred to, were expressed; if he will inform the House of the route by which Captain Gill was expected to go and to return; how many miles he would have to travel through the Sinaitic Peninsula; and, whether any, and, if so, what means of protection or assistance were afforded to or were at the disposal of that distinguished and lamented officer in the performance of this hazardous duty?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the hon. and gallant Member asks me to produce the orders conveyed to Captain Gill. The only orders were in the form of a verbal request from Admiral Hoskins to Captain Gill at Port Said to proceed to Ismailia and confer with Mr. Pickard, the Egyptian Telegraph Engineer, then on board the *Orion*, as to the best means of carrying out the orders of the Government to cut the telegraphic communication between Egypt and Constantinople. In a letter dated Suez, August 6, Captain Gill reported to Admiral Hoskins the decision at which he had arrived. I think it will be most satisfactory to the House if I read the lamented officer's own words. He wrote as follows:—

> "I have decided to do the business myself, as it seems the best and surest way, and I have arrived at this conclusion after a long consultation with Professor Palmer. I am very glad that I have come down here, for I have more confidence than I had before seeing him that Palmer has not overrrated his power; indeed, from our conversation this morning, I am convinced that he thoroughly understands the business on which he is engaged. With reference to my special business, at the first blush there are, or seem to be, three ways of doing it—first, to land in the neighbourhood of El Arish; secondly, to land near Kantara; thirdly, to ride up from here into the Desert. With regard to

the first, there is a Turkish force garrisoned at El Arish, and no one can say that for many miles outside it there would not be people prowling about; a steam launch running in at night might just land her crew under the nose of someone; then there would be a march over sandhills for five to ten miles, and back again. The risk would be very great, and when the work was done it might be repaired. To do it from Kantara would, in the first place, I presume, be a breach of the neutrality of the Canal; in the second place, no one can suggest anyone who could help one to do the work, as, of course, it is utterly out of the question to land a party of our own people on the bank of the Canal; and, finally, when done, it would be repaired in a few hours. There remains the road from Suez, and, from what Mr. Palmer says, I can start to-morrow (Monday) and do it with my own hands on Thursday or Friday, after which I would rejoin you with the utmost despatch. The additional advantage of this road is that we believe that we can get people who will prevent our work being undone. With regard to El Arish and Kantara, both Mr. Pickard and Mr. Palmer express the opinion I have given above. Mr. Pickard expressed some doubts as to the success of the scheme I have adopted, which has this additional advantage—that it will enable me entirely to judge of the feelings of the people for myself."

In answer to the second and third Questions of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that we have no particulars of the precise route Captain Gill was to follow, or of the number of miles to be travelled; and, as regards the last Question, I have already given to the House all the information we have upon the subject.

In reply to Mr. Ritchie,

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that Papers on the subject would be presented as soon as possible. They were in the hands of the printers, and were rather voluminous.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—RETURN OF CETEWAYO.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that two of the most powerful chiefs in Zululand have protested to Sir H. Bulwer against the return of Cetewayo; and, whether he can state what steps, if any, are to be taken to convert them to the views of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a letter from John Dunn ("Times," Oct. 21st), in which he says that

"Cetewayo's restoration will again be the cause of a great deal of bloodshed I am afraid, as some of us will have to hold our own, but I can hardly believe that any Government will persist in such a course;"

and, whether he has taken any notice of such disquieting language?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, I would call to recollection what I said on the 16th of August in the House—namely, that some portion of the country, to be hereafter defined, will be reserved in order to meet obligations towards those of the appointed Chiefs and people who may not be willing to return under Cetewayo's rule. Sir Henry Bulwer has informed us that two or three of the appointed Chiefs are unwilling to remain under Ceteway's rule; and the proposals which are on the way home from Sir Henry Bulwer will, I hope, enable provision to be made for the residence of these Chiefs outside Cetewayo's jurisdiction. In reply to the second Question, I may recall the fact that the letter which appeared in *The Times* of the 21st of October was dated as far back as the 26th of August, when, it is clear, John Dunn did not know what I have stated, and he wrote in reference to an assumed unconditional restoration of Cetewayo.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE CUMBERLAND ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

Colonel MAKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Why Major James Samuel Derriman, of the Royal Marines, serving as Adjutant to the First Cumberland Artillery Volunteers, is not seconded in his rank in the same way that other officers of Royal Marines similarly serving as Adjutants to Volunteer Corps are seconded; and, if the pay of Major Derriman is included both in the Navy and Army Estimates?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Sir, as my Predecessor stated a few months ago, in reply to a similar Question by the hon. and gallant Member, Major Derriman, Royal Marine Artillery, has not been seconded while serving as adjutant of Volunteers, because the number of majors in the Marine Artillery is now in excess of the actual duty requirements for that rank, and an officer can be spared for such an employment without being replaced. Major Derriman is paid entirely from Army funds.

NAVY—THE ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that the seven senior Captains of the Royal Marine Artillery have twenty-three years' service; whether it is the rule that officers of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers obtain brevet promotion after twenty years' service; whether such a condition of promotion does not involve supersession of Royal Marine Officers in the Army by their juniors; and, why such a difference in regard to promotion should be maintained between the different branches of Her Majesty's Ordnance Service?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the hon. and gallant Member also puts to me in a detailed form a Question which is practically the same as that which I answered on Tuesday last regarding the state of promotion in the Corps of Royal Marines. I regret that, owing to the recent pressure of business in the two Departments, the settlement of the question has been somewhat delayed; but we are now on the point of arriving at a decision, which will, I trust, remove the disadvantage to which certain officers of the Royal Marine Artillery are at present subject.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—PRISONERS OF WAR.

MR. BOURKE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Despatch of Sir Garnet Wolseley, proposing to hand over to the Khedive all prisoners of war taken in course of the late operations in Egypt?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that Sir Garnet Wolseley's despatch was a confidential one, relating to many other matters. In it he asked—I quote his words — whether he should hand over to the Khedive the chief rebels whom he might capture, and, in reply, he was informed that this was approved in the language of Lord Granville's letter of the 28th of August to Sir Edward Malet — No. 73 of "Egypt, No. 18."

MR. BOURKE: Sir, was not that a letter written by Lord Granville in answer to one which Sir Garnet Wolseley wrote, asking whether persons who wished to be delivered over to the Khedive might be so delivered, but saying nothing whatever about prisoners of war? Did not the letter relate to three officers who wished to go to Alexandria; and, if so, would it be a justification for handing over prisoners of war?

MR. CHILDERS: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman had better give Notice of the precise Question?

MR. BOURKE: I have, Sir.

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; the Question as it stands on the Paper has been answered.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Will there be any difficulty in giving that portion of the confidential despatch which refers to the rendition of prisoners of war?

MR. CHILDERS: There is some confusion in the Questions of hon. Gentlemen opposite, which had better be cleared up before any others are put.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—LOCOMOTIVES.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any locomotives were included in the Railway rolling-stock originally sent out from this Country to Ismailia for the transport service of the Egyptian Expedition; and, on what dates the first locomotives were despatched to Ismailia from this Country and from Alexandria respectively?

MR. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; no delay took place in purchasing four engines in this country, and these were despatched on the 12th of August, a fortnight after the Vote of Credit passed. It was necessary to ship them whole in order that they might be at once put under steam in the Desert, and this caused some difficulty in the choice of a ship. The first engine secured at Alexandria was despatched on the evening of the 17th of August, and accompanied the force.

EGYPT—PUBLIC HEALTH IN CAIRO.

MR. A. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph in the "Daily News" of October 31st:—

> "The first attempt of the Council of Public Health, composed of Europeans and traders, to introduce the Contagious Diseases Act into Cairo is already a great success;"

and, whether this Act has been introduced with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Foreign Office have no information on the subject; and I may state that we are unaware of the existence of any body called the Council of Public Health.

SPAIN—EMANCIPATION ACT, CUBA.

Mr. A. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will instruct Her Majesty's Consul General in Cuba to report upon the working of the Spanish Emancipation Act, on the results it has thus far produced, and on the extent to which the number of slaves has diminished under its operation?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, my hon. Friend will find all the information for which he asks in the Report by the acting Consul General in Havannah, which has been laid before Parliament and already distributed to Members.

TUNIS—CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION.

Mr. SALT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If any claims for compensation have been made or are about to be made for losses incurred by British subjects during the disturbances in Tunis; if so, whether such claims have been brought before the British Government, and how they are to be enforced; and, what guarantee exists for the security of the life and property of British subjects in Tunis for the future, and to what tribunals they have to look for protection?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There were many claims by British subjects on account of the losses they incurred consequent upon the disturbances in Tunis. These claims were examined and assessed by an International Commission, instituted on the initiative of the French Government, and presided over by a French officer. Her Majesty's Government are now in communication with the French Government respecting the payment of the sums awarded by the Commission. Her Majesty's Government have no reason to suppose that efficient measures will not be adopted by the Tunisian Government for the security of life and property in the Regency. The old system of the administration of justice remains undisturbed as yet. As to the future, I gave a full reply last week.

POST OFFICE—THE "IRISH NATION."

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the issues of the New York "Irish Nation" of the dates August 26th, Sept. 9th, 16th, 30th, Oct. 7th, 14th, and 21st, have been stopped in the Post Office and confiscated; whether the seizure and confiscation of the "Irish Nation" has been ordered by the Government; and, if so, on what grounds; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, Copies of the suppressed numbers, in order that Members may be able to judge of the expediency and justice of the action of the Post Office Department?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the issues of the New York *Irish Nation* of the dates August 26, September 9, 16, 30, October 7 and 14, have been stopped by order of the Government. The Government was advised from week to week that these papers contained matter which Her Majesty's Postal authorities ought not to be instrumental in circulating. To lay on the Table copies of the suppressed newspapers would be the best way of circulating them, and I must decline to do it. I may say that I have seen among them direct incitement to the murder of certain public officials and certain private individuals.

POST OFFICE—THE AMERICAN MAILS.

Mr. DALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true the Post Office authorities have under consideration the project of forwarding the mails to America from Holyhead, instead of from Queenstown, as at present; and, if so, by whom is the expenditure (estimated at £150,000) necessary to provide accommodation at Holyhead to be made?

Mr. FAWCETT: There is no such intention, Sir.

STATE OF IRELAND—IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE PLACARDS.

Mr. CALLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Freeman's Journal" of Monday October 30th, on the authority of its "own correspondent" at Dundalk, that—

> "On Saturday last the address of the Irish National League was posted through the town of Dundalk, and on Sunday morning Constable

Murray, of the Anne Street Barracks, went through the streets and tore the posters down wherever they were to be found;"

and, if true, on whose authority, and under the provisions of what statute, the policeman so acted; and, whether such a course of procedure has been with the sanction or meets with the approval of the Irish Executive?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that Constable Murray, of Dundalk, did take down one of the placards referred to in the Question of the hon. Member and defaced another, and in doing so he acted on his own judgment. I have drawn the attention of the Inspector General to the Question.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to his statements to the Liberal and Tenant Right deputation that waited on him on the 3rd October, it is the intention of the Government in any way to interfere with the exercise of the discretion of the Irish Land Commissioners as to the continuance of the Court valuers after the expiring of their three months' appointment?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I must assure the hon. Member that my answer to his speech on this matter is only deferred. It was made without Notice at a time when I was unable to reply. It was a very serious matter for an Irish Secretary to be accused of partiality at a time when he has been for six months putting before himself as his first and most incumbent duty to be impartial. The staff of the Land Commission, whether Sub-Commissioners or Court valuers, cannot be appointed or have their term of office prolonged without the consent of the Government, and the Government will necessarily have to make up their mind on these points after taking the advice of the Land Commissioners. I cannot undertake to say what the action of the Government will be in December.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many of the court valuers under the Land Act have been under police protection in their own localities and elsewhere; how many tenants were dispossessed by Mr. Gray, J.P. Mr. Russell, J.P. and Captain M'Gill, court valuers; and, when police protection ceased to be given to the two former gentlemen?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have ascertained that 16 of the Court valuers never had police protection. Mr. W. H. Gray had police protection from November, 1868, to May, 1869. He had to take proceedings against one tenant last year, who owed two and a-half years' rent. This tenant gave up possession quietly last spring on receiving from Mr. Gray a year's rent in cash, and in addition being excused paying what was due. Mr. Roberts, one of the valuers, was under police protection in 1847, when he was sub-agent to Major Mahon, who was murdered in that year. I have not yet obtained the information with respect to Mr. Russell and Captain M'Gill.

ARMY—THE ARMY RESERVE.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that an Order has been promulgated allowing ten per cent. of the men of certain Regiments stationed in the United Kingdom to proceed on furlough, but rigidly excluding the men belonging to the Army Reserve, and that great discontent has thereby been caused amongst the latter?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; nothing is known of this order; but if the hon. and gallant Gentleman will be good enough to tell me privately on what he founds his Question, I will look into the matter.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can inform the House as to the present position of affairs in the "Soudan;" and, whether the Government have considered the advisability of delaying the return of the Troops from Egypt in view of the possible requirement of their services to protect Cairo?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, news from the Soudan comes very slowly, and there is great difficulty in sifting the true from the false. News from Khartoum of the 30th of October states that the Mahdi was beaten with great slaughter during the past month, and that small-pox is raging among his followers. The second portion of the hon.

and gallant Member's Question relates to a matter of policy on which I am not in a position to give a reply.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — BOMBARDMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Earl Dufferin did at 5·39 a.m. on the 11th July last, in consequence of an urgent request made to him by Said Pacha, accompanied by an assurance that satisfactory propositions for the settlement of Egypt would be laid before the British Government in the course of the day, telegraph to Sir Beauchamp Seymour, asking him, provided he had any discretion in the matter, to suspend the opening of fire on the Forts of Alexandria for a few hours; and, if so, whether Sir Beauchamp Seymour received such telegram before he opened fire?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The only information on the subject in the possession of the Foreign Office is contained in the Blue Book laid before Parliament (Egypt, No. 17).

SCIENCE AND ART—THE HAMILTON COLLECTION OF MSS.

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there is any truth in the report that the Prussian Government have bought the Hamilton Collection of MSS.; and, if not, whether there is any ground to hope that the whole, or any part, of such an invaluable collection could be secured for the Nation?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, nothing is known at the Treasury about this rumoured sale, nor, so far as I am aware, at the British Museum. No communication from the Trustees of that institution has been received on the subject of the Hamilton manuscripts; and I cannot learn that any offer of them was made to the Trustees.

EGYPT—M. NINET'S LETTERS TO "THE TIMES."

Lord ELCHO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to M. Ninet's recent letters to the "Times" newspaper regarding the imprisonment of certain persons of note and others in Egypt, and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances attending their imprisonment and their treatment while in prison.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the charges contained in M. Ninet's first letter were telegraphed to Egypt, as has already been stated by me, and were fully answered by Colonel Sir Charles Wilson, in a telegram which I read to the House. M. Ninet's second letter has been sent to Egypt for report.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communication has been received from the Spanish Government in reference to the surrender of General Maceo and his companions?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No communication has been received.

ARMY—THE ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Mr. FORT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, seeing that Sir W. Mends holds the office of Director of Transports, Mr. Thomas Crawford that of Director General of the Army Medical Department, and Mr. George Lawson that of Assistant Director of Supplies and Transports, and are thus all officially connected with the Departments which are alleged to have failed in properly carrying out their duties during the late war, it would not be more satisfactory if they appeared as witnesses before, rather than as members of, a Committee appointed to inquire into matters so intimately connected with their own departments; and, whether he is aware that there is a feeling abroad that before a Committee thus constituted, subordinate officers of the Transport and Medical Departments would be unlikely to give the requisite evidence?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that Admiral Mends is Director of Naval Transports, and that the two other officers whom he names are correctly described; but that, as the main object of the Committee is to improve the arrangements, in certain respects, of these Departments, no one would be so fitted to take part in the inquiry as Dr. Craw ford and Mr. Lawson. My hon. Friend will remember that, besides these, the Committee and its Secretary comprise six gentlemen, four of whom are military officers. As to the last Question, I cannot conceive that any such feeling could exist, inasmuch as the subordinates of these Departments, so far from being complainants, will naturally look to their chief to see that they have fair play against attacks which have been made on them. I can only repeat that, having very well weighed all the circumstances, I am of opinion that the Committee is a fair one, and that I cannot alter its constitution.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish to ask whether there has been any suggestion of any failure of these Departments from any quarter?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I should not like to say there has not been such a suggestion from any quarter. Some of the statements in the newspapers do touch remotely the Transport Service, as regards the arrangements on board transport ships. Admiral Mends is a most able administrator, and the service in connection with the present Expedition has been beyond all praise.

EGYPT—THE TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What are the charges upon which Arabi Pacha is to be tried?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the following is a summary of the counts on which Arabi Pasha is to be tried:—No. 1, Arabi Pasha and four others are accused of having abused the flag of truce by withdrawing troops, and by pillaging and burning Alexandria while it was flying; No. 2, All six prisoners are charged, under Article 55 of the Ottoman Penal Code, with having incited the Egyptians to arm against the Khedive's Government; No. 3, Arabi Pasha and three others are charged with having continued the war after peace was concluded (see Article No. 3 of the Ottoman Military Penal Code); No. 4, All six prisoners are charged with having incited the people to civil war, and with having committed acts of destruction, massacre, and pillage on Egyptian territory (see Articles 56 and 57 of the Ottoman Penal Code).

EGYPT — MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS —PUNISHMENT OF THE MURDERERS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government will take steps to inflict condign punishment on the murderers of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, and Lieutenant Charrington, who met their death in the discharge of duties undertaken by direction of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: Undoubtedly Her Majesty's Government will use their efforts in the direction of bringing the offenders to justice. I have a telegram, which arrived to-day, conveying news from Colonel Warren to this effect—that he expects to be from 14 to 20 days in the execution of his task, the inquiry having been committed to him, and that he hopes—these are his words—"to bring in some of the guilty parties concerned," returning home by such and such a route.

SUPPLY — MONEY GRANTS TO SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AND SIR BEAUCHAMP SEYMOUR.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is intended to propose the grant of a pension, annuity, or sum of money to Lieutenant General Sir Garnet Wolseley and Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour in the present Session of Parliament; and, if so, whether the Committee of Supply will be set up for the purpose; out of what funds, and under what authority, the expenses attending the occupation of Egypt by Her Majesty's forces are being defrayed; and, whether it is intended to propose any Vote for such expenses in the present Session?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I will divide this Question into its several parts. I am first asked whether it is intended to propose the grant of a pension or annuity—annuity is the best term to use—to General Sir Garnet Wolseley and Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour; and, if so, whether it is intended to make the proposal in the present Session of Parliament. That I cannot quite say till I see what course Business is likely to take; but the matter will be so arranged as to make no perceptible difference to the gallant persons concerned if the grants should be delayed, for in that case the grant would run from the date of their Peerages, instead of, as is sometimes done, from the date of the Message in which it is recommended to the consideration of Parliament. In case of proposing this grant during the present Session, there is no necessity for a Committee of Supply. It would be a charge on the Consolidated Fund, conveyed directly to the Consolidated Fund under a preliminary Committee held for that purpose in conformity with precedent, and it will have no connection either with any Appropriation Act. Then, as to the next Question, I should say that, so far as Her Majesty's Forces will still be a charge on the British Exchequer, we are still proceeding on the authority which, as we conceived, Parliament has given us, though, of course, we are responsible for the exercise of that authority. Our view has been this —that from the time when the suppression of the military revolt was completed the business of the British Force assumed a new character. They remained in the country for its security, and were discharging duties which would, in a normal state of things, fall to an Egyptian Force to discharge. We, therefore, thought that from the commencement of that period some demand should be made to Egypt for a contribution to the expenses of the British Force. It is not possible for me at present to speak very definitely upon the subject, for the whole of what may be called the conquering force, as distinguished from the force which remains for a time, has not yet been removed. That is the general principle on which we shall proceed, and we shall make an arrangement with the Egyptian Government. I cannot give a more definite answer at the present time to this portion of the Question. As regards the closing part of the Question, it will certainly be necessary for us to ask the House of Commons for some further Vote before this subject is wound up; but we have no reason to believe that the excess above the Vote of Credit which has already been passed in respect of the expenditure of the British troops will be thought by the House of Commons to be a great one when judged with reference to the objects attained. What we thought is this. Had there been a very great excess, or anything like a possibility of a difficulty, of course it would have been our duty, even during Sittings of this kind, to come to the House of Commons and ask for an immediate supply of money; but as we have no anticipation of anything of that enormous character, and as there is no difficulty with respect to money, I think it will be more convenient to the House that we should postpone the subject till we are in a condition to give the House something like a complete view of the transaction, so that it may know with what it has to deal. That is the answer to the last part of the Question.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he considers that the Government of this country has authority, while Parliament is still sitting, to maintain a portion of Her Majesty's Forces as an army for the civil administration of a foreign country without any direct authorization from Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, in reply I have to say that the Question of the right hon. Gentleman presumes a definiteness in arrangements of this kind which cannot be expected and cannot be found. We have been engaged in a war. [*Loud cheers and laughter from the Opposition.*] I thought the House of Commons was aware of that circumstance, and had been aware of it for some time. If it appears, from the expression of surprise, that some Gentlemen opposite were not aware of it, I am very glad that at last they have received information of the fact. We have been engaged in the operations of war. We are about to hand over, we hope, the maintenance of peace and security in Egypt to a domestic force. I do not quite understand what it is that the right hon. Gentleman thinks we ought to ask Parliament for at the present moment, when we have not yet been able to draw back from Egypt that portion of the Force which is now there, and which we consider ought to be withdrawn. There are things going on from day to day. If the right hon. Gentleman chooses to signify, in a definite shape, his disapproval of any portion of what we have done, I shall be very ready indeed to meet him in debate.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly inform the House when we went to war, and with whom we went to war?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I apprehend, Sir, that my hon. Friend is perfectly aware when our warlike operations commenced.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: When?

MR. GLADSTONE: If my hon. Friend is not aware of it let him look back to the date. I believe I stated it the other night. I need not repeat that series of statements as to when the embarkation of the Force was made from this country to Egypt. I may suppose that my hon. Friend is aware of the day when Alexandria was bombarded. My hon. Friend seems to play upon the words "with whom we went to war." We did not go to war with any Power, and that is the regular and normal meaning of going to war. We went to Egypt for the purpose of suppressing a military revolt, and it was suppressed by the operation of our Forces.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice, in consequence of what the right hon. Gentleman has said, that when this Motion for a grant or annuity to the General and Admiral is proposed, I shall oppose it.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I wish, Sir, to make a personal explanation. The right hon. Gentleman has said that if we look back to dates we shall find when Alexandria was bombarded. The reason why I asked when we went to war was that the day after the bombardment of Alexandria the right hon. Gentleman told me in this House that we were not at war.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did say so, and that is and was perfectly true. We had not been, in the ordinary and the established sense of the word, at war. In order to be at war you must be at war with some Power—with some settled and established Power. I do not understand why my hon. Friend plays upon the word "war." We were engaged in military operations—in the operation of war; but when I spoke I was bound to have due regard to the laws of peace and war which prevail all over the civilized world.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: As this House has voted a sum of something like £2,300,000 for a three months' campaign, can the right hon. Gentleman give us any information as to how much that sum has been exceeded? We have a right to know how much more the taxpayers will have to pay before we separate on the Prorogation.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have already stated—but probably the hon. and gallant Baronet has forgotten it—that whenever we receive any definite information which will be of any value or use to the House on this subject it shall be at once communicated.

THE LATE PROFESSOR PALMER—GRANT TO FAMILY.

MR. W. FOWLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the eminent services of the late Professor E. H. Palmer as a man of letters, and to the circumstances under which he lost his life, the Government are prepared to recommend that some provision be made for his family at the public expense?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in answer to this Question of my hon. Friend, I am afraid we must conclude, though we have no definite information, that Professor Palmer has fallen a victim to his patriotism and courage in this matter. Assuming that to be the fact, which I have no reason to doubt, I think the subject which my hon. Friend mentions is one which well deserves our consideration.

EGYPT—(MILITARY EXPEDITION)—PRISONERS OF WAR.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any precedent for the employment of British Troops, as has been the case in Egypt, for the repression of a Military rebellion against the Sovereign or Government of a Foreign State; and, whether such precedents establish that British Troops, having captured the leaders of the insurgents and other similar political offenders, have been instructed by the British Government to hand them over to be dealt with by the Sovereign or Government maintained or reinstated by British Arms; and, if so, whether he can state the precedents?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in answer to the noble Lord, I would begin by observing that I do not think the assistance afforded by precedent would carry us beyond a certain point. I am not aware of any precedent in history for an arrangement similar to that which existed in Egypt which led to the course of proceedings which has terminated in the recent operations. The position which we held in Egypt was one which I do not think exactly corresponds with any positions we have held in any other country within my knowledge. There are two cases which throw a certain amount of light on the subject, and those cases I will mention to the noble Lord. One of these is the case of the termination of the great French War at Waterloo. At the time King Louis XVIII., having been before the Hundred Days established in France, was regarded in the view of the Government of this country as the legitimate Sovereign of France, and the military movement under Napoleon, and the whole operation of Napoleon, as being in legal strictness resistance to lawful authority. I am not entering into the question of its correctness; but there is a despatch written by Lord Bathurst, as then being Secretary of State for War, on the 2nd of July, 1815, to the Duke of Wellington. I will not read the whole passage, which is not relevant. I will read a part of it, which, I think, is material to the Question of the noble Lord. This despatch refers to a letter received from the Duke of Wellington on the subject of the arrangement that the Military Commander had made, and it contains this passage—

> "It cannot be imagined that in a Convention negotiated with these authorities"—namely, the French—"by your Grace you would enter into any engagements whereby it would be presumed that His Most Christian Majesty was absolutely precluded from the just exercise of his authority in bringing to condign punishment such of his subjects as had, by their treasonable machinations and unprovoked rebellion, forfeited all claim to His Majesty's clemency and forbearance."

That passage undoubtedly bears upon the Question. The noble Lord is well aware of the circumstances relating to Marshal Ney. They touch upon the province of the Question with which we are at this moment concerned. Well, then, Sir—[Mr. BOURKE: Were these prisoners of war?] I have not said anything about that, and I do not know whom the right hon. Gentleman means. There is another case—that of the Elliot Convention with Spain. One stipulation of that Convention was that no person, whoever he might be, should ever be deprived of life on account of his political opinions without having been previously tried and condemned in accordance with the laws, decrees, and ordinances enforced in Spain. It was further explained in that Convention that this stipulation was only to be understood with reference to those who were not in reality prisoners of war; for, as regards them, express stipulations had already been made. I have supplied the noble Lord with these two cases. I do not think this is the proper opportunity for entering into explanations; but this I may say—that by the term "prisoners of war," under the Elliot Convention, I understand the term to apply not merely to persons who might be taken with arms in their hands, but those who had to be tried for being engaged in the operations of war, and nothing else whatever.

MR. BOURKE: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been directed to the case of the first Afghan War, where British troops were employed to restore Shah Sujah to the Throne when Dost Mahomed rose in rebellion against Shah Sujah, who occupied a position similar to that of the Khedive in Egypt? Dost Mahomed was in open rebellion against Shah Sujah, and surrendered himself to British forces, and was certainly not treated in any way but as a prisoner of war.

MR. GLADSTONE: I conceive that Question to be purely argumentative and contentious. My answer is, that it appears to proceed upon parallelisms between the position of Shah Sujah and the Khedive, which I think to be utterly unsound, and between the position of Dost Mahomed and Arabi, which I conceive to be still more unsound.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN.

MR. O'DONNELL (for Mr. O'KELLY) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government continue to regard the Soudan as forming part of the Government of Egypt; and, if so, whether they will take immediate steps to restore order in that Province, which has been left without defence, owing to the disbandment of the Egyptian Army by the action of Her Majesty and the Khedive?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, this Question, I must observe, is one which does not at all correspond with any state of facts exactly known to me. It asks whether Her Majesty's Government continue to regard the Soudan as forming part of the Government of Egypt. We have had no occasion to give judgment at all upon that question, and we have delivered no judgment upon it. It is no part of the duty incumbent upon us to restore order in that Province. It is politically connected with Egypt in consequence of its very recent conquest; but it has not been included within the sphere of our operations, and we are by no means disposed to admit without qualification that it is within the sphere of our responsibility.

EGYPT—THE EGYPTIAN ARMY—RE-ORGANIZATION.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government assume any responsibility for the future Egyptian Army on account of their recent demand to be consulted by the Khedive's Government in its composition?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the noble Lord will see that as we have at present the whole responsibility for the maintenance of order in Egypt, and as we do not contemplate the continuance of that responsibility when the necessity for it shall have been removed, we must necessarily become judges to a certain extent, in the first instance, of the other provisions which will have to be made in order to carry out the duties which are now performed by our own troops. We shall be responsible for forming the best judgment we can as to the sufficiency of the provisions so to be made in substitution of our own force. Beyond that I am not aware that we should be responsible for the Egyptian Army at all.

LORD ELCHO: I should like to know whether my right hon. Friend can state whether, in the composition of the new Egyptian Army, Egyptians are to be admitted?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, as soon as we can we will acquaint the House with the arrangements that are to be made; but I do not think it would be convenient to enter into detail at the present moment.

EGYPT—SURRENDER OF ARABI PASHA BY THE BRITISH TO THE AGENTS OF THE KHEDIVE.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. O'KELLY) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any precedent for the surrender of a British prisoner of war to a Foreign Power; whether the surrender of Arabi Pacha to the Government of the Khedive was not a violation of the understanding on which he surrendered; and, whether it is true that Arabi Pacha, in constituting himself a prisoner, stated that he surrendered to the English Nation?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not think that I can give any further answer to this Question than I have already given to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill). But for practical purposes I may say it would be a mistake to consider as simple prisoners of war those who are about to be tried upon charges quite independent of the fact of their having taken part in the war.

EGYPT—THE CONTROL.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he is in a position to give an assurance to the House that no appointment of any British subject to any office or duty connected with the control or administration of the finances of Egypt, or its debt, will be made or sanctioned by the Government without the previous communication of the name of such person to this House, and without an opportunity being given to the House of expressing its opinion upon the necessity and fitness of such appointment?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am sorry to say that I cannot give this assurance. We are very desirous that in the new arrangements the amount of foreign control in carrying on the Government of Egypt shall not be more than the real necessity requires; but we cannot possibly undertake to submit to the House every part of our arrangements.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether any bondholders or others connected with the money-lending transactions in Egypt would be appointed as representatives of this country under the present arrangement?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that as regarded the bondholders their rights rested upon the shadow of international engagements. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to give Notice of his Question.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—EDENDERRY SUB-COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he is aware that at the late sitting of the Edenderry (King's county) Sub-Commission on Monday all the tenants who had served originating notices withdrew their cases, as, after the nature of the evidence given by the court valuer at Balbriggan, they no longer had any confidence in the working of the Act; if in one of the Balbriggan cases the judicial rent was fixed at a sum more than six per cent. in advance of what the landlord's own valuer thought fair; if he is aware of the proposal of the Armagh Tenant Farmers' Association to hold a conference of all the Associations in Ulster, in order to consider the propriety of withdrawing from the Courts until some change is effected in the present system of procedure; and, what course he proposes to take in the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the Question. It is the case that a number of tenants at a late sitting of the Edenderry Sub-Commission who had served originating notices withdrew their cases. In one of the Balbriggan cases the judicial rent was fixed in advance of the valuation of the landlord's valuer. With regard to the decision alluded to, of the same Sub-Commission when sitting at Balbriggan, the Land Commissioners only receive the orders of the Sub-Commissions fixing judicial rents, and they can give no opinion as to the propriety of any particular order made. Any party to a suit before a Sub-Commission can, if he thinks he is aggrieved, have his case reheard by the Land Commission sitting as a Court of Appeal. I have no information about the intentions of the Armagh Tenant Farmers' Association.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LORD MAYOR'S DAY.

Mr. WARTON (for Mr. Gregory) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the celebration of the day in the City of London, and the other cities in England, he will consider the expediency of an Adjournment of the House over the 9th instant?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I have given the best consideration in my power to this Question, which is whether we should propose to adjourn the House over the 9th instant. Well, Sir, if it were the general desire of the House—[*cries of* "No, no!"]—of course, it would be our duty to have regard to it; but, looking at it by the unassisted light of my own mind, with such advice as I have taken, I do not think it would be at all in the interests of the House to adjourn over that day, because it would practically be adding a day to the Autumn Sitting, which I suppose no hon. Gentleman is desirous gratuitously to do.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ROMAN CATHOLIC JURORS (DUBLIN).

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has any objection to furnish a Return giving the number of Catholics on the Dublin City and County Panels for 1882; the number of persons sworn at the late Special Commissions; how many of these were Catholics, distinguishing the cases upon which they were empannelled; the number of Catholics ordered by the Crown to stand by; the names of the cases at which they were so ordered; and the number of Protestants ordered to stand by, and the cases in which the order was given?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he had no official information on the subject; but he supposed it could be supplied. He would undertake to supply it, subject to the indulgence which belonged to information of that kind, which was not within the right of hon. Members to claim.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE PROCEDURE RESOLUTIONS.

Mr. NEWDEGATE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is his intention to proceed with the Resolutions on the Business of the House, subsequent to the First Resolution now under Debate, particularly the Ninth Resolution, of which he has given Notice?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; it is our intention to proceed steadily with the Resolutions from the first to the last.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISTURBANCE AT NEWBRIDGE, CO. GALWAY.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant the Question of which he had given him Notice—Whether he has received any information of the dispersal at Newbridge, in the county of Galway, of a large public meeting by Captain Mansfield, R.M., and a force of thirty police, while it was being addressed by Mr. Matthew Harris, and whether Mr. Harris has been arrested for his speech on the occasion in question, and, if so, whether this meeting was dispersed according to the provisions of the proclamation required by the Prevention of Crimes Act authorising the dispersal of public meetings?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that, until hearing the remark of the hon. Member earlier in the evening, he was under the impression that the Question was going to be asked to-morrow. He was sorry that the Papers were mislaid; but he might say that when he saw the statements in the newspapers he at once applied for information. He had been informed by the Under Secretary that at 9 o'cock this morning he had telegraphed to have the fullest account of the transaction sent on. The hon. Member might rest assured that the matter would be carefully looked into.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE (EAST COAST) —HARBOUR AT FILEY.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON (for Sir EARDLEY WILMOT) asked whether it was true, as reported in *The Standard*, that Her Majesty's Government intended to propose the formation of a harbour of refuge at Filey, on the north-east coast; and, also, whether any decision had been arrived at, as stated in *The Scotsman* yesterday, with regard to the construction of a harbour of refuge on the east coast of Scotland?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No decision has been arrived at upon the subject.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—REGENT'S PARK INCLOSURE.

MR. D. GRANT asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he has yet received the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown as to the rights of the leaseholders over the inclosure in Regent's Park; and, if so, whether he will communicate the same to the House?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, owing to the Vacation, and to the necessity of arranging a conference between the solicitors of two Departments, the case is only now ready to be submitted to the Law Officers.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—ENGLISH VOLUNTEERS FOR SERVICE IN THE MILITARY EXPEDITION.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT asked whether there was any truth in the report which had appeared in the papers lately that British officers and men were being allowed to volunteer for service in the Soudan?

MR. CHILDERS said, the hon. Member should give some days' Notice of that Question, in order that he might inquire of Sir Archibald Alison.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [THIRTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by two-thirds of those present, and."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought the speech of his noble Friend who sat near him (Lord Randolph Churchill), which was delivered yesterday afternoon, deserved notice from them, not only on account of its intrinsic ability, but also because it was not in accord with the opinions of hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side. The speech of his noble Friend was well received by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who followed him, for not only did the right hon. Gentleman follow the arguments of his noble Friend, but he used his very phrases; and when they found this portentous coalition between a discontented Whig and an independent Tory for the purpose of supporting the Government, he thought their objections ought to be carefully considered. The first argument of his noble Friend was that the Amendment would introduce an artificial majority, and that they, as Conservatives, ought not to support it, as that was in accordance with the traditions of the House. In that matter the Prime Minister and his noble Friend were in accord; but he would beg to point out that on the same ground they ought to modify the Rule as it then stood, because it introduced a majority of five-sixths, and that was just as much an artificial majority as two-thirds. His noble Friend had pointed out how by a majority of 1 the greatest changes, such as the change of the English Monarchy into an English Republic, might be introduced into the Constitution. His noble Friend, however, forgot that when our forefathers permitted a majority of 1 to decide such important matters such a thing as *clôture* was unknown, and there was no limit to free discussion, everything being thoroughly thrashed out in argument. Therefore, the reason that it had never been found necessary to introduce government by a two-thirds' majority before was because they never before lived under a Liberal Government who were anxious to put a stop to free speech. The next argument which his noble Friend had used was one calculated to appeal with much force to that side of the House; because he pointed out that the Rule of a two-thirds' majority would be much more useful to a Liberal than to a Conservative Government, inasmuch as when a Conservative Government were in Office the Radicals below the Gangway were likely to support the Irish Party. Now, he (Mr. Balfour) did not support liberty of speech in that House from a Party point of view. He granted that a two-thirds' majority might be more useful to the Liberals than to the Conservatives; but those who believed in liberty, or defended liberty, would not defend it less because it was going to be abused. No doubt liberty of speech was abused, and it would be abused in the future; but they were not the less anxious that it should be preserved. His noble Friend had proceeded to observe that the Rule of the two-thirds' majority would merely be used by agreement between both the Front Benches to oppress the Irish minority. It was not his business to defend the Front Benches—at least those above the Gangway. His noble Friend had drawn a dreadful picture of what would be the result of stopping Irish Obstruction in the House, and had said that if they did not have Irish Obstruction there they would have rebellion in Ireland. In his opinion, however, there would be less danger of the oppression of Irish Members under a two-thirds' Rule than under that of a bare majority, for it would be but seldom that the two Front Benches could be brought to an agreement to close a discussion, except where there was an almost unanimous feeling in the House that it had proceeded far enough. The last argument of his noble Friend was that the safeguard of the two-thirds' Rule would be washed away under the pressure of a powerful Radical Minister. He, however, preferred the most slender protection to none at all. In his opinion, however, it would not be an easy matter for a Radical Minister to get rid of such a safeguard, because he would then have boldly to announce to the country that his object was not to put down merely illegitimate Obstruction, but legitimate opposition. The Government had obtained the support of the country in this matter because it was generally believed that their real object was to put down Obstruction, and they would lose largely if it were once clearly understood that their main object was to put down legitimate opposition. The Government had also obtained a great advantage from the interpretation which had been placed on the words "the evident sense of the House," which was supposed out-of-doors to mean the expression of an opinion by the great majority sitting in every part of the House. As had been pointed out, it might happen that closure might be pronounced by a very small majority, so that the Speaker's opinion as to the "general sense of the House" might be shown to be wrong precisely at the moment it was carried into effect. A more extraordinary state of things could not be imagined. The Government had evidently felt the difficulty of the position. It now appeared that what they meant by the "general sense of the House" was the general sense of the Ministerial majority. They held that Radical Ministers ought to be able to pass Radical Bills with the precise degree of rapidity agreeable to them. Now, such a policy was based upon an entirely erroneous assumption. That House was not to be judged, like a mine, by the quantity of its output. It was not a machine of which a Minister turned the handle, and of which an important section could, at the Ministerial will, be thrown out of gear. On the Government theory of the matter, why should they not go a step further and do away with all Standing Orders, and bring matters to the simplicity of Ministers explaining the provisions of a Bill, and then requiring the House to carry it without a division? He saw no reason, if the Government proposals were agreed to, why the Standing Orders should prevent a majority carrying any measure without the arguments on both sides being heard, though it was the very object of Standing Orders to secure perfect freedom of debate. The noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had said that the Conservative Party, in conjuring up the chimeras of an imperious Minister, a subservient majority, and a partizan Speaker were indulging in dreams which could never be realized, and were believing in a state of things which could only come about by a miracle. If an imperious Minister and a subservient majority could only be produced by a miracle, two-thirds of that miracle had already been produced; and he failed altogether to see how the remaining third was to remain unfulfilled if the theory of the Prime Minister was to be accepted. The Prime Minister laid it down as an axiom that the tendency of a majority was to promote, and the tendency of a minority to retard Government. Clearly, therefore, the object of the New Rule was to give Ministers their own way. Now how, in such circumstances, could the Speaker fail to become a partizan? It would be his business to put the Rule in force for the purpose of aiding the Government; he would seek to promote the views of the majority against, it might be, a Constitutional minority. The Prime Minister declared that closure by a two-thirds' majority would be a deterioration of Procedure—that he would rather be without it. If so, why did he a few months ago profess his willingness to accept it? That House was the growth of centuries; it was a machine which had been tested under all kinds of circumstances. The request which the Opposition now made was extremely moderate, for all they asked was that the Ministry should approach this question with caution, and without rashness—that they should begin, not with revolution, but with reform. He asked the Prime Minister to go back to his letter of May, and if they were to have the *clôture* let them have it by slow degrees. Let them err rather in the spirit of caution than in the spirit of rashness, for the Prime Minister, if he found a moderate *clôture* was not sufficient, he, or his Successors, could come down to the House and ask for the *clôture* by a bare majority. Until that necessity was apparent this Resolution was tampering in a most reckless manner with the Constitution, and was revolutionizing it in a Session.

Mr. LABOUCHERE denied that there was any conspiracy of silence on the Government side of the House, where hon. Members had refrained from speaking because they were anxious that the Session should not last too long. As most of the hon. Gentlemen who had risen on his side had been official, ex-official, or Whig, he desired to express the view of the Democracy on the subject. Though they intended to vote with the Prime Minister, they were not entirely agreed as to what the consequence of the Resolution would be. If the result was what the Prime Minister anticipated—that it would never be put in force against a Constitutional Opposition, he would not take the trouble to come down to the House to vote for it.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it would never be put in force against an Opposition when they were fulfilling their Constitutional duty.

Mr. LABOUCHERE accepted the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman. First, however, he wished to make a remark upon the speech of the hon. Member opposite which the House had just heard. That speech seemed to him to be a fair sample of what their debates might come to if closure were not adopted. They had a Conservative Party and also a "Fourth Party;" and now there was a split in the Fourth Party, consisting of four, because an eminent Member of that Party had made a speech to prove that his Chief was wrong. But the speech of the hon. Member was really an argument for *clôture.* He said that hon. Gentlemen did not attack the liberty of the Press, and, therefore, it was monstrous to attack liberty of speech. But in the case of the Press *clôture* was not needed, because a newspaper was limited by its size, and if it exceeded in any particular direction it would not be bought. The hon. Gentleman said that when the Resolution was first brought forward, what he understood to be meant by the "evident sense of the House" was the sense of both sides. He did not know how the hon. Gentleman arrived at that conclusion, as it was not consistent with the terms of the Resolution. If the Speaker were of opinion that the question had been adequately discussed, and if a majority, not by organized but spontaneous clamour and out of the fulness of their hearts cried "Divide!" while Gentlemen on the other side were silent, it would be the duty of the Speaker to put the Question to the House. That was the necessary outcome of the Resolution. No hon. Gentleman on the other side could get up without referring to the letter of the Prime Minister. He was surprised at that, because, if hon. Gentlemen took the trouble to think calmly over the matter, they would see that there was no stronger argument in favour of *clôture* than that letter. The Prime Minister brought forward his Resolutions, and hon. Gentlemen opposite were exhaustive upon the 1st. The Prime Minister proposed *clôture* by a simple majority—he had the Business of the Session before him, and he was obliged to submit to this exhaustive opposition. It was rather *naïve,* therefore, of hon. Gentlemen when, owing to them, there was an Autumn Session, to expect that the right hon. Gentleman would not revert to his first proposal. He would recommend hon. Gentlemen opposite, the next time they were offered anything by a Liberal Government, to take it at once. He was far from blaming the Conservatives for being in favour of a three-fourths' rather than a simple majority, because if they were not they would cease to be Conservatives. The Conservative was a natural Obstructionist. For centuries the Conservatives had obstructed. They said—"We are satisfied; we want no reforms; we want to be left as we are." And when a Liberal Minister brought in a number of measures, they said—"Let us talk a great deal on the first, and we may prevent the fourth or fifth from passing." He was reading a few days ago about the Locrians, who had a *clôture* which would recommend itself to hon. Gentlemen opposite. When anyone among the Locrians came forward with a proposal, a rope was tied around his neck, and if he did not get a seconder he was hanged. The Prime Minister had said that this Rule would not be used for Party purposes. He did not understand what the right hon. Gentleman meant. He hoped it would be used by the Party to carry out the principles which the Party professed. The principles which the Liberals professed were that they ought to have speedy legislation upon a very considerable number of subjects. If, then, they found the Opposition too exhaustive, their principles would oblige them to cry "Divide!" and to do their best to show the Speaker that it was the "evident sense of the House" that the country wanted a particular Bill to be passed and some other Bill to be proceeded with. Using the *clôture,* therefore, for Party purposes on all occasions would be their primary duty. The Democratic creed was that there ought to be very frequent elections—say, once every three years; that certain measures ought to be submitted to the people at those elections; that there should be a *plébiscite* with regard to them; and that if the people made up their minds that they should pass, the Ministry representing the majority, having received an imperative mandate to carry them through, discussion was, therefore, useless. [*Laughter.*] Discussion would have taken place before. [*Renewed laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen laughed; but could they point to one case in which the people, having made up their minds to a reform, and having carried that reform by a majority in the constituencies, had changed their minds in consequence of any discussion in the House? Therefore, he was right in saying that discussion upon those measures on which the people had made up their minds was pure waste of time. He looked forward —perhaps not just yet—to the Radical Democratic Millennium, when they would pass numerous measures in this simple and efficient manner. The Prime Minister had cited 39 burning questions needing immediate legislation. He could easily add 100 to them; but if they did not act upon this democratic view, how soon would not 39 but nine measures pass into law? The distinction which he drew was this—that when a Minister came forward with some measure upon which the country had made up its mind, discussion was waste of time, and the Minister had only to carry it out. But there were other measures brought forward by a small minority below the Gangway upon which the country had not made up its mind—he had himself tried to bring forward measures upon which the country required enlightenment, and upon such some discussion was useful. The country wanted to know what was to be said for and against them. But upon questions which had been thrashed out in magazines and newspapers and on public platforms the country had already made up its mind, and upon these he would give Gentlemen opposite a fair half-hour to state their views. By this means he was inclined to think the Liberal Party would in a short time put the country in harmony with what he termed "the spirit of the age." It had been asserted by some hon. Members that lengthy discussions were useful. He could not subscribe to that belief. At one time the reported discussions of the House were read by the public. Now, however, they were not read. Five or six years ago, when an important debate took place, the newspapers printed a larger number of copies than on ordinary occasions in order to meet the demand for the Parliamentary information. But since discussions had been marked by so much prolixity, it had been found by newspaper managers that it was not necessary to print extra copies, there being no demand to justify such a step. The fact was, that readers of newspapers did not want to read their speeches. They were quite satisfied with reading the speeches of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and of a few other eminent men. There were not, he believed, 5,000 persons in the country who had taken the trouble to read through the speeches that had been delivered in the debates of the last two or three days. When Members laid the flattering unction to their souls that they were instructing and enlightening the people they were making a grievous error; because, in reality, the people declined altogether to be enlightened by them. It was to be regretted that *clôture* had been found necessary; but then they had only a choice of two evils. The question for the House to decide was whether they would place a certain limit on superfluous, and therefore unnecessary discussion, or put an end to practical legislation, which was the primary object the constituencies had at heart and desired to be carried out. There was another reason why he was in favour of the bare majority. The House could be divided into Brahmins and Pariahs, the former being the Leaders of the two great Parties in the State, and the latter those who sat below the Gangway. In many things the interests of the Brahmins on both sides of the House were nearly identical; and it was his belief that the Brahmins on the two Front Benches would always find some good reason or other to unite in putting down anything approaching to opposition on the part of Members below the Gangway. The Conservatives would always agree to the imposition of the *clôture* by a two-thirds' majority, on the understanding that they might never be subjected to it themselves. Their idea was—"Let the *clôture* be applied to the Irish, to the Radicals, and to Fourth Parties; but let it never be applied to ourselves. We must oppose it, of course, and talk a good deal about freedom of speech; but we shall, nevertheless, take a very favourable view of this *clôture* if it is carried in the form which will negative the possibility of its ever being applied to our Party." That those were the views of the Conservatives was shown by the regret which they manifested at not having accepted the offer made by the Prime Minister in May. It was all very well to talk of freedom of speech; but the real question was whether they were to limit speech or to put an end to legislation. He believed that the people considered that the primary object of that House was legislation. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had said that if the people were consulted on the question under discussion, they would be found in favour of the two-thirds' majority, because they understood that it was only to be used against minorities; but he (Mr. Labouchere) maintained that the country understood that this Rule was intended, not only to put an end to Obstruction on the part of small minorities, but to Obstruction on the part of all minorities; and they hoped that it would be passed, because they believed that instead of the wasteful and aimless discussions that went on in that House they should have sound and good legislation upon many questions upon which it was urgently demanded.

Colonel STANLEY, referring to the speech which had just been delivered, said, "*Magna est veritas et prevalebit.*" They knew now what were the true motives that caused the Democratic Party to support the Ministerial Resolutions. He proposed to explain the reasons why he should vote for the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin. The speech which the House had heard from the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) was an amusing and able speech; but it was, he thought, only the expression of an isolated opinion. Anyone who had examined very closely the arguments of the noble Lord must have been driven to the conclusion that he had rather wilfully argued the question on its lowest grounds. The question was not whether this or that Party should fail or succeed in carrying Party measures. If the constituencies of the country returned a Liberal Parliament, the Conservative Party had no right whatever to find fault with the Government for passing Liberal measures, provided they were fully and fairly discussed. Nor did he think that the Prime Minister had ever himself complained of such discussion during the course of these debates. But a very different character had been given to the subject by the frank utterances of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); and they now knew that Radical Members would be quite willing to limit the time for reply by the minority to half-an-hour, and to carry the programme of the constituencies through Parliament with as great rapidity as possible. He (Colonel Stanley) objected to the *clôture* altogether, and therefore he supported anything which would lessen its restricted provisions. It had become clearer and clearer that the *clôture* must mean a power exercised by the mere will of the majority acting under cover of the Speaker or Chairman. He wished to show that the safeguards were inefficient and unreliable; that the position of the Speaker or Chairman would be almost untenable; and that the Rules would be operative far beyond the scope of Obstruction, properly so called. Enough had been said to show that there was a real feeling on both sides of the House that the impartiality of Speaker and Chairman might be imperilled. The Prime Minister, after defending the impartiality of the Speaker, touched very delicately upon the position of the Chairman, and entered into no details to show that the Chairman's impartiality would, in future, be above suspicion. He thought it would be a real peril if for one moment the impartiality of the occupant of the Chair should ever become the subject of suspicion. It was plain, from the utterances of the Prime Minister, that, as far as he knew, there was no reason why the Chairman of Committees should not continue to be a Party man, liable to be reminded by his Party of the fact. Fairly enough the Chairman might be told—"The power to enforce the *clôture* has been conferred upon you, and you must use it." The steps leading to such a result might be slow, but the process would be sure; and, therefore, few things could tend more to lower the position of future Chairmen than the proposal which the Government had made. He could give further reasons why the position of the Speaker or the Chairman seemed to him untenable; but he would endeavour to show why the other safeguards failed, and why the sole protection upon which they must ultimately rely was the Speaker's or the Chairman's view of what was adequate discussion. The expression "evident sense of the House" was very like that of "fair rent." Everyone agreed with the principle; but it was impossible to define the expression. The evident sense of the Speaker must depend upon what came under his eye. But it might be that the evident sense of the Speaker was in one direction, and that of the House, as evidenced by a division, in another. How was the Speaker's view of the "evident sense" of the House to be formed? It was not to be expected that either the Speaker or the Chairman would know by intuition how Parties were distributed. Either the evident sense of the Speaker was to be framed on what passed before him, and he was not to have any assistance, or, on the other hand, if it were to be fatal to his authority to be mistaken, then he must obtain information as to the respective state of Parties, either directly or indirectly, from the Government Whips. In times past, perfectly legitimate communications as to the Business of the House had passed between the Government and the Chair. Such understandings had very much profited the House; but they were now told that the Speaker was to be cut off from all communication with the Front Benches, and to be left to his own unassisted judgment. But that was not the sole difficulty in which the Chair would be placed. The Home Secretary had said that no Speaker of any common sense would put the Question at the dinner hour. The "evident sense of the House" might, however, be clearly evidenced at the dinner hour; and yet, according to the Home Secretary, the Speaker was not only not to be guided by it, but was positively to disregard it. If he was not to believe his own eyes, it was difficult to understand the position in which he would be placed. How could he refuse to put the Question? What comments would be made, both in Parliamentary circles and the Press, at his conduct under these difficult circumstances! No doubt, a vast improvement had been made in the Resolution by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey). Now they fell back upon adequacy. The Speaker was not to move until convinced that the subject had been adequately discussed. But that was only matter of opinion, for no one could define adequacy. It was only the Speaker's or the Chairman's opinion. Let them imagine the comments that would be made if the *clôture* were carried in a thin House because the Speaker regarded the "evident sense" of the House. New arguments must be brought forward in all directions which it could be truly said might have been rightly and legitimately used if the Speaker or the Chairman had not applied the *clôture*. He maintained that the Speaker and the Chairman were placed in a most invidious position; that the safeguards had proved to be none at all, or very slight; and that, with the sole protection of "adequacy," which was an unassignable property, the entire responsibility was cast upon the Speaker or the Chairman. As to the statement that the Rule was not aimed against mere opposition, but against Obstruction, that might have been the original intention; but it had been made distinctly clear during the course of the debate that, though the Prime Minister might not mean that the *clôture* should be used for the suppression of debate, that was not the view entertained by some of his Colleagues on the Front Bench; and that it was meant by advanced Liberals to go much further was made very clear by the frank speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). Nothing was more clear than the utterances of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India. In his ominous speech in the earlier part of the debate, the noble Marquess said that if they discussed a large number of subjects at great length, they could not discuss other subjects at all, and, therefore, the Rule really tended to freedom of debate. The President of the Board of Trade had expressed himself to the same effect; and it was clear that on the minds of some Members of the Government there was a line between legitimate discussion and Obstruction which would be included within the Rule as to *clôture*. The noble Marquess clearly indicated certain Motions which the House did not care to listen to, and intimated that he would apply the *clôture* to them if it were adopted. There was another form in which the *clôture* might be exceedingly valuable. A Minister with an unpopular Vote might cultivate the acquaintance of some unpopular Member, and ask him to rise at a convenient time and prolong the discussion with wearisome reiteration, until at last the House would support the *clôture*, and the unpopular Vote would be passed quietly without further trouble. The noble Marquess had said—and the hon. Member for Northampton had repeated—that there was a large amount of Business which Parliament desired to press forward without delay. They quite admitted the necessity of many of those measures, but thought that the pressure of Public Business might be relieved, to a certain extent, by better arrangements; and he was of opinion that very much could be done by arrangement without recourse to the *clôture.* Many pressing measures, no doubt, cropped up from time to time; but it was impossible to carry everything; some legislation must be postponed. He believed that one bad season was more injurious to the country than any amount of arrears of legislation. The present subject was so mixed up with that of the general Business of the House that it was almost impossible to keep them entirely apart. He supported the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin, because it assigned a fairer proportion for the minority, and one which ought to commend itself for many reasons to the sense of the House. He supported it on another rough-and-ready ground—namely, that it would reduce the difficulties of the Speaker. There were many Amendments on the Paper—no less than four—proceeding from various quarters of the House, with the object of fixing the same proportion. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had asked why two-thirds—why not any other proportion? He admitted there was no exact figure or line of finality; but he thought that two-thirds was a proportion to be well recommended. As to the charge that this Amendment would draw the two Front Benches too close together, and bring the Opposition to a position of responsibility which some thought they ought not to assume, he thought it would possess a great advantage if it introduced the weight of a responsible Opposition. There might have been those who, out of Office, had thrown such responsibility away; but those were comparatively few, and the bulk of the Opposition in this House had loyally rallied to the side of the Government when, in their opinion, the general interests of the country demanded that they should do so; and that was a position which he hoped to see continued. Then, the Prime Minister had said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) was inconsistent, because in 1877 he had made a speech condemnatory of a two-thirds' majority. But that was in an entirely different matter. The object was to mitigate the restrictive provisions to be enforced against Members of this House in a matter different to that which was now the subject of debate. The Prime Minister asked what would be the result if the House adopted the principle of an artificial majority? But his hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour), whose able speech they had all listened to with much pleasure, had shown that this Resolution adopted an artificial majority as great as that which the right hon. Gentleman denounced. The right hon. Gentleman said that safeguards would disappear, and that the only remaining safeguard would be the limit of two-thirds. But why should not the Prime Minister say, in future, that this limitation should be swept away down to the bare majority? The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) said the Opposition could not forget the Prime Minister's letter of May last, and that they were always whimpering over their bargain. Certainly it was hard to forget such letters as that referred to. But the hon. Gentleman did not seem to understand the position, which was that both Parties were now free. As to the letter, what they said was that the Prime Minister had either said too little or too much. If the present proposal was good in May, why should it be denounced in October or November? Again, the Prime Minister used the extraordinary argument that the two-thirds' majority would not in many cases show the "evident sense of the House," because Members would not like to vote against one of their number with whom it might be they usually acted. That was a reason why the right hon. Gentleman should follow the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) that vote should be taken by ballot. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that the two-thirds' majority was an innovation; but the real innovation was the *clôture.* The Prime Minister said further that the Amendment would be less favourable to small minorities than the Government proposals. The fact was, however, that they did not propose to touch the Government proposals, and there was no reason whatever why they might not still be carried into effect.

The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had said this was a dyke which they were trying to erect to stem the flood by which they were to be swept away, and that this was a very frail defence. He admitted that this, if relied on alone, would prove a very slender defence indeed; but, at any rate, it was better to have a frail defence than no defence at all. He confessed he did not share the fears that were entertained by some hon. Members on this side of the House. He did not believe that the constituencies wished that there should be only one Party. If any attempt were made to crush all political opponents out of existence, depend upon it the country would not tolerate it for a moment. The Opposition were bound, to the best of their power, to resist any measures which might tend in that direction; and if they were to go to the country on this question he was sure the Opposition would have the support of the constituencies. What he mostly feared was the danger of a reaction. When a change of Parties took place—as would undoubtedly happen sooner or later—a feeling would be found to exist amongst those who were at present in the minority that they had not received fair play, and legislation would be introduced of a reactionary character to undo that which was now being forced upon them by a majority. At present legislation was fairly fought out, and when fairly fought out was fairly accepted. It was to be feared that those conditions might be reversed. The case was argued as if legislation was everything and discussion nothing, and views were presented to the House of a very varied character. The hon. Member for Northampton had very frankly said, in supporting that measure, that he thought the primary duty of his Party would be to use it for Party purposes, and that discussion should be stopped. He confessed that he was one of those who did not believe that either the duty of the House or of the constituencies would admit of such a view of the situation. It would be a very wide departure from Parliamentary traditions if hon. Members were to come to the House with an imperious mandate from their constituents, and if the real business of legislation was to be done out-of-doors by *plébiscite,* and that hon. Members were only to come to the House to register the decisions arrived at elsewhere. That would be a great and an essential alteration in the character of the House of Commons; and, fearing these Government measures might tend in the direction of such a change, he was determined, as far as possible, to oppose, or, at all events, to restrict them. It was in the House of Commons that grievances were stated and brought to light, and that great principles were affirmed. Both of those functions had not always been performed by the majority. In many instances they had been exercised by the Party which had only a few Representatives in Parliament. He could not help having great fears that if not now, yet in the not very remote future, a change would come over the spirit of Parliament, and that those Rules would be used, not in the way they understood by the Prime Minister, but in the spirit in which they were supported by the hon. Member for Northampton. Freedom of speech was everything, the Prime Minister said, and no one for a moment doubted that he believed it; they only wished that, in that matter, he would act as he felt. It was sometimes said to be a strange thing that the Conservative Party should be those who were now standing up for liberty of speech. If it fell to the Conservative Party alone to vindicate the freedom of speech the fault was not theirs. It was the fault of those who brought in the *clôture.* They believed that they were the legitimate successors of those who had stood up in that House for freedom of speech. They were not satisfied even with the half-hour which the hon. Member for Northampton and the Democracy of the future might be graciously pleased to afford them. They believed they were doing their duty in endeavouring to maintain the right of representation, which they advocated for the whole world, the spirit of fair play, which had always been a characteristic of Englishmen, and that freedom of speech which hitherto it had been the honour of the House to uphold. For those reasons, and believing that the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend was sound, he should give it his best and most unqualified support.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who had addressed the House seemed surprised that the *clôture* was wanted by the Government in order to pass certain measures. That was the chief ground on which he (Mr. Jesse Collings) intended to vote for it, and he trusted that object would be plainly avowed from the Government Bench, so that when the power was used hon. Members on both sides would not be able to say that there had been any breach of agreement. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman had said it was only intended to put down Obstruction; he trusted that would not be its only use. The country was tired of the endless speeches and continual repetition by which the progress of all the National Business was delayed from year to year. But if hon. Members opposite so disliked the idea of the *clôture*, why did not they object to the *clôture* that was at that time being practised by means of an agreement between the two Front Benches, without reference to private Members, that the debate should finish on Friday? It was time that the Radical Party—or, rather, the Radical Members, for they were not yet a Party—should organize themselves into a Party to resent such a proceeding, which seemed very much like dictation. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had compared the House of Commons to a machine, and so it would be dangerous to meddle with it. But if the machine did not answer the purpose for which it was required that machine ought to be altered so that it did. He had also denied that the House of Commons was to be judged like a mine by its output; but, in his opinion, the output was a very important matter. If the Government would only decide to bring forward a moderate programme at the commencement of the Session, and sit until they had finished it, they would find the rapidity of their progress in the month of August wonderful. After all, it was a very disinterested thing for private Members to advocate the *clôture*, because it might possibly be put in force against them. If debates were compressed, as he hoped they would be under the *clôture*, private Members would probably have less opportunities of beinng heard, as precedence would still be given to the occupants of the Front Benches, and to other prominent Members of the House. He, however, declined to be represented by hon. Members above the Gangway, and it would be a great misfortune if Radical private Members were to be crowded out of the debates. To avert this evil he recommended less speaking from the Front Benches on both sides of the House. The exceptional privileges of those not on the Front Benches ought to be done away with, and right hon. Gentlemen, and others with "prefixes," ought to stand on the same footing as the younger Members of the House. The former, possibly, had views which were worn out, while the latter had a more recent mandate from the constituencies. The right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition had said that if it once became clear to the country that the House was incapable of transacting its Business the consequences would be of the most serious character, and the House would perish by the worst of deaths—the contempt of the nation. He thought that the House was approaching that state. All Governments came in with definite objects, and the present Government had exceeded all others in the number and importance of the measures it had foreshadowed at the beginning of the Session, though effect had been given to hardly any of its promises. Unless the Rule were passed—and it was the only one for which he much cared—Parliament would be completely discredited. The arguments that had been used against the *clôture* were weak and inconclusive. The Opposition professed to desire full discussion; but that was precisely what no measures ever received, and the Estimates in particular were never adequately debated. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) had frankly opposed the Resolution on the ground that it would enable the Government to pass their measures. But that meant only that the minority, defeated in the country, should take its revenge by defeating the work of the majority by the aid of the Forms of the House; and he could place on that utterance of the hon. and learned Gentleman no other construction than this—that the will of the country, as expressed at the Elections, should not be carried into effect. Having some insight into the mind of the constituencies on this subject, he desired that the Government should be thanked for the firmness they had shown. The Prime Minister's speech the other evening had been a relief to the country. If he had given way by consenting to accept a two-thirds' majority, a feeling of discouragement would have taken hold of the country; the Government would have been weakened by adopting a vacillating and a compromising policy; and the country would have settled down into the belief that Parliament was, after all, going to waste its time, and there was to be little or no useful legislation. As it was, the speech of the Prime Minister was read in the light of a guarantee on the part of the Government that the promises they had given would be redeemed as soon as possible by practical legislation.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he had listened to the latter part of the speech of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), and it had explained to him, in some degree, the difficulties with which the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had to contend. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman, in his Mid Lothian speeches, had enunciated a very extensive programme, and the hon. Member for Ipswich, who was at the head of a powerful organization, seemed inclined to prove himself a severe creditor. The hon. Member's speech was a Party speech, if ever he heard one, and on a subject on which it was to be hoped Party feeling would not govern in the House. The House had heard a most able speech from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Did that right hon. and learned Gentleman's proposal violate public liberty? He proposed that the debates of the House should not be controlled by a majority of 1, but only by a majority of two-thirds. He (Mr. Newdegate) asked the hon. Member for Ipswich, if he was so blind a vindicator of small majorities, that he would not consent to the assurance, which the Amendment would give him, if it was positively the "evident sense of the House" which demanded the *clôture?* Was that the hon. Member's version of public opinion? The history of the world taught them that ultra-democracy ended in despotism; and he (Mr. Newdegate) revolted against this legislative machine, the House of Commons, being dominated by a small majority. He could appreciate the difficulty in which the present Speaker and his Successors would be placed when they had to declare the "evident sense of the House" in favour of the *clôture*, when that depended upon a majority of 1, or perhaps 2 or 3. He had served with the present Speaker as a Party organizer on opposite sides of the House, and he was always proud to remember the connection into which it brought him with the Speaker. He (Mr. Newdegate) had watched with him which way the majority would go, and he knew the difficulty of that speculation. But now the Speaker was to have no aid in coming to a decision as to the "sense of the House." The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government promised the House that the Speaker should have no aid in his judgment. He promised the House that the Speaker should not be approached. The demand for a judgment from the Speaker, sitting unaided in the Chair, was an attempt to declare him infallible as to the general "sense of the House," when it was to be so doubtful that it must be expressed by something far less than two-thirds on a vote, and would render the position of the Speaker and his Successors most difficult. He (Mr. Newdegate) shrank from the unfairness of imposing upon the Speaker a task which might expose him to the imputation of attempting to set aside the "evident sense of the House," when that sense might be only intimated by a majority of 1. He would acknowledge that there had been great discontent in the country on account of the sluggish action of the House of Commons. He was one of the first who moved in the matter, for, in 1875, he began agitating, and he had been agitating ever since, to persuade the House in some degree to correct its Procedure, in order to accelerate its action. He was not, therefore, one of the sloths who was liable to the reproach of doing nothing whilst the House of Commons was in danger of being paralyzed. He held that some measure was necessary after the rebellion of the Irish faction on the 2nd and 3rd of February, 1881, when the authority of the Speaker was defied, and when the Speaker had to step forth as the guardian of the honour of the House after a Sitting of 41 hours. That was an instance of the grossest Obstruction. He thought the Government greatly to blame that they did not sooner pass effectual measures for relieving the House of the great stigma which had rested upon it, ever since the difficulty of preserving its own order and dignity had been consummated upon the occasion to which he referred. After that began the difficulty of dealing with the *cacoethes loquendi;* but that was a minor evil. A Resolution was brought forward by the Prime Minister on the 3rd of February, 1881—

> "Resolved, That, if upon Notice given a Motion be made by a Minister of the Crown that the state of Public Business is urgent, upon which Motion such Minister shall declare in his place that any Bill, Motion, or other Question then before the House is urgent, and that it is of importance to the public interest that the same should be proceeded with without delay, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, no Debate, Amendment, or Adjournment being allowed; and if, on the voices being given he shall without doubt perceive that the Noes have it, his decision shall not be challenged, but, if otherwise, a Division may be forthwith taken, and if the Question be resolved in the affirmative by a majority of not less than three to one, in a House of not less than 300 Members, the powers of the House for the Regulation of its Business upon the several stages of Bills, and upon Motions and all other matters, shall be and remain with the Speaker, for the purpose of proceeding with such Bill, Motion, or other Question, until the Speaker shall declare that the state of Public Business is no longer urgent, or until the House shall so determine, upon a Motion which, after Notice given, may be made by any Member, put without Amendment, Adjournment, or Debate, and decided by a majority."

When the author of that Resolution was asked by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) that there should be a two-thirds' majority for the termination of a debate, he proclaimed that he could not be a party to any fictitious majority, and would consent to nothing else than closure of debate by a majority of 1. He (Mr. Newdegate) could not help thinking, if the right hon. Gentleman carried the Resolution in the form he had proposed, it would be acting, not in the interest or for the future efficiency of the House of Commons. There was an old saying, "That second thoughts are best." The second thoughts of the right hon. Gentleman were embodied in the Resolution he had laid before the House. The right hon. Gentleman originally proposed a bare majority; he then proposed a majority of two-thirds, and he (Mr. Newdegate) feared, that under the pressure of the hon. Member for Ipswich and others, he had departed from his second and better thoughts. On the 3rd of February, 1881, Obstruction assumed the form of rebellion in the House, and the right hon. Gentleman had postponed dealing with it until the 9th Resolution, which he (Mr. Newdegate) would not then touch upon, but in the principle of which he fully agreed. Let the House remember that it was a minor evil with which they were now dealing. It was the evil of the *cacoethes loquendi,* which was very disagreeable to the House. In the earlier Parliaments in which he had the honour of serving, the public feeling was the best and the real corrective, and he regarded these measures as a very inefficient substitute for what ought to be the action of the public opinion of the House within its own walls. The adoption of the *clôture* would check the revival of that public opinion, and disgrace that great Assembly by showing that its public opinion had become too feeble for its self-coutrol. He hoped the House would forgive him as an old Member for those few words; but he was pained by another expression the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister used, in excusing himself for not having proceeded earlier with the evil of Obstruction in the form of rebellion on the part of 36 of its Members in 1881, on the ground that there was important Business to be got through first. What could be more important than the regulation of the action of this great legislative machine? And yet the Prime Minister avowed he wanted to get amendment of Procedure out of the way! The Prime Minister reminded him of some engine-driver, who saw his steam escaping, or the boiler leaking, and would not stop the engine, but seemed to think keeping his time and reaching the end of his journey was of more importance than any care of a rattle-trap piece of iron. That was the impression the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman made upon his mind. But was the order of Procedure a matter to be lightly dealt with? Were the Forms of the House of Commons matters to be lightly dealt with? Were they not the fruits of centuries of experience? They had not lately proved defective from need for re-adaptation; but he asked whether they had not hitherto been the means of combining in a public Assembly securities for the most mature deliberation combined with the promptest action? He had seen, when there was occasion for promptitude, the House suspend its Standing Orders and pass an Act through all its stages in three hours, and he had seen the House of Lords suspend its Standing Orders and pass the same Act in two and a-half hours, making five and a-half hours expended before a Bill became law. Did the hon. Member for Ipswich need greater promptitude than that? The hon. Member, in the course of his speech, had disagreed with the unwritten rule, that those who had long experience in the House and in legislation should have precedence in debates. What sort of order would there be if the prescription of the hon. Member for Ipswich were applied? How would the proceedings be conducted, when the Minister of the Crown would not be called before the last new Member sworn at the Table? The hon. Member for Ipswich seemed never to have seriously contemplated the state of confusion in which the House would be placed if the customs of the House were recklessly changed. The system of the *clôture* was alien to, and in direct contravention of, the securities for the freedom of debate, or for deliberate action in legislation. He might be told that it prevailed under the name of the "Previous Question" in the Houses of Assembly of the United States. But, he asked, had the United States escaped from internal wars? Had the practice of abruptly closing their debates insured the peace of that country? It was notorious that this practice in the United States produced a dreadful war, from which they seemed lately to have recovered. The result of the use of this power of closing the debate in the United States had been to produce discontent. He hoped that the House would act upon the second thoughts of its Leader, and not be betrayed or misled in this matter.

MR. WILLIAMSON observed that, after the brilliant political battle which they witnessed on Tuesday evening, and in which the Prime Minister achieved, as usual, he thought, a signal victory, very few fragments of solid argument had been left to future speakers, and he did not understand why a division was not taken that night. He would have been content to maintain entire silence; but representing a Scottish constituency, and as only one Scottish Member, he thought, on that side of the House had ventured to speak or had been able to catch the Speaker's eye, he desired to say that, as far as he understood the feeling of Scotland, these Rules, and the 1st Rule in particular, were urgently demanded from one corner of the country to the other. He desired only to say a few words in opposition to the arguments that had been used on the other side of the House in support of the Amendment. These arguments, he thought, had been presented to them chiefly on three somewhat portentous considerations. In the first place, the dread and horror of partizan Speakers had been held up to them, and they had been warned that danger and evils would come upon the House that they were now altogether ignorant of, and would derange all their Business, and upset their legislative action. That was the language of sheer apprehension; but history told them that vague and uncertain apprehension was the very life and breath of Toryism. If they spoke of extending the suffrage, apprehensions were crowded upon them from all quarters of Toryism. If they spoke of removing the tax on bread, the country, they were told, was filled with alarm; and if they spoke of doing away with entail, or still further extending the suffrage, again they had dread and apprehension. He was inclined to make very little of this dread of partizan Speakers. The second portentous consideration very much forced upon their attention was the character and position of the Chairman of Committees; but then when it was sought to derogate from his position and Office, singular to say the Office and position of Speaker were lauded in almost fulsome eulogy. Then they had been told of tyrannical majorities and Ministers who were to use for Party purposes the powers granted under this and other Rules. But what the supporters of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had not put before them was the case of a Conservative minority bitterly opposed to useful legislation—bitterly opposed to that legislation which the country demanded which, by much waste of time and words, set itself against the determination of the majority of the House and the people of the country. Now, yield this two-thirds' majority, and the Ministry, backed as it was by a large majority, might just abdicate their functions. He was convinced that, in order to carry out useful legislation, it was essential that this Rule, as it stood, should be carried in its entirety.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) showed much natural glee over the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). And so he well might, for that most amusing speech was about the only pleasure by which the House had been enlivened amid the laborious efforts of Gentlemen opposite to demonstrate the undemonstrable. But it seemed to him (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) that the intrinsic weight and propriety of his right hon. and learned Friend's Amendment might encourage them upon this side to make light of the right hon. Gentleman's glee, and of the speech by which the noble Lord gave him cause for it. They could afford to dismiss the inquiry to what extent the Conservative Party could count upon the habitual support of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock. Such an inquiry was not of much more concern to them than the question whether or no the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was entitled to speak on behalf of the whole of the moderate Members of his Party. That noble Lord's speculation on the conduct of *The Fortnightly Review* had no more relevance to the subject of their present debate than had the strangely fortuitous resemblance between the language in which *The Fortnightly Review* urged that the lead of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) should not be followed, and that in which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock urged that this Amendment should not be accepted. The noble Lord's attack on the Amendment was founded on two principal considerations. These were—the novelty of the idea of proportional majorities, and the danger of tyrannizing over small minorities. As to the first, those who were importing the *clôture* from abroad must not complain if they imported also from abroad some of the artificial safeguards by which its operation was mitigated. But the noble Lord objected to any importations of the *clôture;* and he was, therefore, free to confine his arguments to demonstrating the want of English precedent for the adoption of proportional majorities. Entirely forgetting, or affecting entirely to forget, the adoption of that principle, with scarcely a murmur, in the case of the Urgency Rules, the noble Lord was not afraid to venture into illustrations from English political life outside the doors of this House. Anxious to show that the principle of decision by bare majorities was universal in English politics, the noble Lord actually had the face to tell the House that in all their largest constituencies Representatives were sent to this House by the bare majority of voters; and he cited in support of that audacious proposition the City of London, the boroughs of Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham, and Leeds; all of them, as it happened, constituencies in which the Minority Clauses of the last Reform Act had made it impossible for a bare majority of the electors to deprive the minority of all share in the representation. So much, then, for the noble Lord's illustration of the dearth of English examples of proportional majorities. But it was in support of his other argument that the noble Lord waxed most eloquently prophetic. He said, in effect—"Require a two-thirds' majority, and you will perpetuate the dangerous and unwholesome spectacle of the oppressing of small Irish minorities by a combination of English Parties." Now, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) wanted to be told what it was that, under a system of proportional majorities, could be done to a small Irish minority by a combination of English Parties, which could not be done more swiftly, more easily, and more frequently by the bare majority vote of either one of the great English Parties? How could it be said that a Liberal majority was more free to apply the closure under circumstances where it required the consent of the Conservative minority before it could do so? Were they to be told that a Liberal majority was less likely to trample upon Irish national feelings, when it could do so at its own sweet will, and without the consent of a Conservative minority? Surely that which could not be done without the consent of others was more difficult than that which could. And it was, surely, no unreasonable thing to presume that what was more difficult to do would be done less often. How, then, could it be said that, under a system requiring majorities of 2 to 1, the closing power would be applied as against the Home Rule Party more often, and not less often, than where a bare majority could do it? This was a question which not the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), nor the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), nor the right hon. Member for Ripon, nor the Prime Minister himself, had condescended to give anything distantly resembling an answer. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock feared from this Amendment the repeal of the Union. He foresaw "bloody explosions," and other horrors, which terrified his democratic imagination and gave exercise to his transcendent powers of metaphor. If he really feared these, let him join them in voting for the Amendment, as a security inferior only to voting against the Resolution as a whole. In one respect, certainly, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) was disposed to agree with the noble Lord. He warned them that they had little hope of being supported hereafter by the Liberal Party if their votes should ever become necessary for the purpose of giving a two-thirds' majority to a Conservative Government. They had many warnings as to this, besides the noble Lord's own. And he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) submitted that their support of this Amendment should on that account be regarded as the more disinterested. What other warnings had they? The Prime Minister had been careful not to admit that "persistent reiteration of argument" was Obstruction. He would not say more than that it was "not necessarily Obstruction." The Prime Minister had carried to a fine art the practice of wrapping up in the most apparently unqualified declarations the greatest amount of qualifying matter. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) believed that in every sentiment that the right hon. Gentleman had uttered about Obstruction they would find some adverb or some dependent clause which reserved the way to exceptions which were hereafter to eat up the Rule. Need they ask whose would be the exceptional Obstruction for which a justification was thus provided beforehand? But that was not all. The Prime Minister had further laid it down as a probability, and had thereby hinted that it might be a legitimate Parliamentary practice, that Leaders of Parties should abstain from giving any vote that might tend to condemn or restrain the obstructive tactics of their independent followers. Of course, that hint would be taken by the Liberal Leaders of the future. Again, let not hon. Members forget the Prime Minister's magazine article about Obstruction. Nor let them forget the mysterious and somewhat obscure language in which, on February 20 last, he described the kind of Obstruction which was legitimate. Bearing all these in mind, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) was much inclined to agree with the noble Lord as to what would probably happen. If ever a Conservative Government should come to require the help of the Liberal Party to give them a two-thirds' majority, he believed with him that that help would be refused excepting only in the few cases in which its refusal would be so discreditable as to be politically unprofitable and unsafe. The Government claimed for their Resolution as it stood—firstly, that it insured that debates should be closed only by the act of the House itself, and not by the act of a Government; and, secondly, that it cut away all semblance of a connection between the Speaker and any political Party. In his humble opinion, it was by the Amendment, and by the Amendment only, that these good results could be secured. The vote of a bare majority expressed only the will of a Party. To require a two-thirds' majority was by no means requiring too much if they wished the vote to reflect something more than the will of a Party. Let them not forget that they once saw this year a majority of two to one in a purely Party division. Clearly, then, two-thirds was not too much. By associating the Speaker with the action of a bare majority they would be inevitably, and, as Her Majesty's Government truly said, most unfortunately, associating the Speaker in the public mind with the Party that composed that majority and the Government that led that Party. He had ventured before to express his belief that the conspicuous stability of their legislative results was due and was mainly due to the fact that under their present Rules the minority had not only been heard but had been able to give effect to some of its wishes. It was on those terms that the minority was willing to accept reforms and to abstain from intriguing to revoke them. Such was his view of the advantages of giving the fullest recognition to the rights of minorities. He valued those advantages not less than he deprecated the error of giving to the acts of the Legislature and of the Speaker the appearance of the acts of a political Party. And he found in both those considerations what appeared to his humble judgment to be convincing reasons for supporting the Amendment.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he thought the little quarrel between the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the Members of the Conservative Party was one that might be left to be settled among themselves. The speech of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had brought home to his mind this fact—that the inevitable had already attacked the Fourth Party, and it was now in the position of having Leaders that did not lead and Followers that did not follow. He would like to look at the question as to how it would affect the House irrespective of the fortunes of any political Party, for he took it they were bound in a question of this kind, which affected the character and honour of the House of Commons, to consider it irrespective of Party gains and losses. The Resolution of the Government conceded the principle of proportional majority in a House of certain limits; in fact, in a House composed of one-half of its normal number—that was, in a House of 300 Members—the Resolution conceded the principle that the majority should be one of two-thirds, for in a House of 300 it would require a vote of 200 to out-vote a vote of 100. The Amendment raised this question, Why should you not extend this principle to a House of 400, 500, or 600? And that was the case which they who were arguing on that side of the House in support of the Government had got to meet. His answer was this—that in a House consisting of one-half of its normal number, in a House of 300, a majority of two-thirds was still within the four corners of a majority of the House, and the principle of the majority deciding all questions would not be violated. Let them take a House consisting of 658 Members. One-third of that number would be 220. Now, the proposition of the Amendment was this—that a minority of 220 Members should practically control the whole Business of the House of Commons. ["No, no!"] Well, if a majority of two-thirds was necessary in a full House, they would practically be giving a veto to the one-third; and, as the Prime Minister said the other day, that would be destroying the *clôture* altogether. If the Resolution were needed simply for the purpose of putting down Obstruction, he was quite willing to concede that there was no harm in keeping the power in the hands of a large minority. If it was simply to deal with the rebellous action of a small minority, he would have no argument to use against the principle of a two-thirds' majority; but he made no secret of it that it was not for that reason that he voted for the Resolution. He believed, that so far as putting down Obstruction was concerned, a great many of the other Rules would do it, and do it far better. But had hon. Gentlemen opposite forgotten the argument used many months ago by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India? He said that the House had only a limited quantity of time at disposal and an unlimited quantity of Business to do. Who was to settle how the House was to appropriate its own time? Was the House to settle it, or were individual Members? His (Mr. H. H. Fowler's) reason for supporting this Rule was in order to enable the House to regulate the appropriation of its own time to its Business. Hon. Gentlemen opposite always spoke in favour of free speech; but had they defined it? Did it mean the unlimited right of every Member to speak upon every subject at any length? That was the logical definition of free speech. If once they admitted that the House was to control that absolute right the principle of the *clôture* was conceded. His hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), the other night, contemplated the possibility of the Government bringing in a Bill next Session to reform the Corporation. He described the speeches that would be made, and said that the debate would probably be brought to a conclusion before every one of the Metropolitan Members had had the opportunity of stating his opinion. That was exactly where he joined issue with him. Every one of them had not the right to be heard in such a case. The Corporation had, of course, the right to have its case stated, but not stated

20 times over. They had been told that if they accepted the two-thirds' majority they might rely on the support of the minority in exceptional cases and in times of emergency. He was not so sure about that. They had heard a great deal about a tyrannical Ministry and an unscrupulous majority; but he was not sure that they should never have a tyrannical Opposition and an unscrupulous minority. He did not suppose that so long as the Front Opposition Bench was occupied by the now Leaders they would depart from the Forms and Practices of the House, or that they would be in their opposition other than exceedingly fair and moderate to their opponents in the mode of carrying on Public Business. But suppose in these days of revolts and rebellions that there should be a rebellion on the other side, and that some political Arabi should raise the standard of Tory Democracy and rally round him, say, a couple of hundred votes, what use would he make of his power? The noble Lord opposite told them in plain language that he would give resistance to these Resolutions by all the Forms of the House. That was the euphemistic way of threatening wilful, persistent Obstruction. He re-echoed the words yesterday afternoon. If he had control of the Opposition, would he consider it his duty to fight his opponents in the way the Leaders of the Opposition did? Now, in the course of the debate there had been a challenge thrown out to give an instance of opposition carried to Obstruction by the Party opposite against a measure introduced from the Liberal side. He would take up that challenge and instance a form of Obstruction perhaps as deadly and as unfair as the Forms of the House admitted of, and he would take the instance from the present Parliament. In 1880 there was a question brought forward in which a large number of Members took the deepest interest, and in which a large section of the people of this country took the deepest interest, and upon which a majority of the House had pledged themselves in black and white to vote in a certain direction. What happened when this question came on? The hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) brought on a very simple Motion to evoke an expression of opinion from the House as to improving the mode of the transfer of land, and a debate ensued; everything that could be said was said. One of the Law Officers of the Crown stated the course which the Government proposed, and when he sat down the hon. Member opposite said he was perfectly satisfied, and he asked leave to withdraw his Motion. And then what happened? On the question that leave be given to withdraw the Motion a debate was kept up hour after hour by men whom he would venture to say, with all respect to their great acquirements and great experience, were not authorities on the question of the settlement of real property and the transfer of land, but they were avowed opponents to the next Motion, which related to marriages with a deceased wife's sister, and they watched the clock—as the Covenanters in *Old Mortality* watched the clock reach the time when they could perpetrate the crime they contemplated—so hour after hour did the Opposition watch the clock with the object of preventing the measure they disliked from coming on. That was wilful, persistent Obstruction. This Session the same comedy had been repeated. Again an evening was arranged for the question to be brought forward; there had been a strong expression of public opinion, and there was a crowded House, and then the question of "Lunatics" was raised. That ran the ordinary course of debate; then the Government stated their views, and then again the debate was kept up for no purpose but that of consuming time and preventing the next debate coming on. Talk of free speech! Was that not gagging the House of Commons by an unscrupulous and tyrannical minority? Now, it was this sort of thing he wanted to put an end to, and by what he called the fair rights of the majority. Why should not the majority, be it Liberal or Conservative, carry out the policy it was sent to the House to support? As he took it, the great majority in this Parliament were sent with two purposes—to remove the late Government from Office and to carry out a large amount of Liberal legislation. Well, the late Government recognized the evident sense of the House and the evident sense of the country, and without waiting for any formal vote left Office. And it was to be remarked they would not have been opposed by a two-thirds' majority. If the present Prime Minister, then lead-

ing the Opposition, had at the Table moved a Vote of Want of Confidence, he could not have carried his Motion by a two-thirds' majority, although the country had expressed its feeling more distinctly than on any other occasion. Why, then, being returned to power, should the Liberal Party not carry the measures which it was elected to pass? Why should not the majority put the *clôture* in force to stop frivolous discussions of frivolous measures, and on which discussion was kept up to prevent real measures which the country desired, and which a majority of the House was prepared to carry? He might point out that the Constitutional Opposition had an ample safeguard against any unfair proceeding, and it had not been mentioned hitherto. It was a well-understood custom of the House, and he supposed the Prime Minister, with his 50 years' experience, would confirm this; it was the custom that in any great debate, or a full-dress debate as it might be called, the Leader of the Opposition was either the last to speak or the last but one. Now, put this case. The Government, say, wish to close a debate on a Tuesday, and the Leader of the Opposition thought it ought to go over until Friday, and the Leader of the Opposition refused to speak. The Government and their majority might stop debate when the recognized Representative of the Constitutional Party had not spoken; and if they were so inconceivably foolish as to do such a thing, there was "another place," quite undisturbed by the Birmingham Caucus or even Mid Lothian speeches, where they would give short shrift to a measure received under such circumstances. Would they lose the opportunity of posing as the defenders of free speech? Would not the sentiment "Thank God we have a House of Lords" be loudly expressed at banquets throughout the country because the House of Lords had thrown out a measure which the Commons had passed in the teeth of a Constitutional minority prevented from speaking by means of the *cloture?* The idea of gagging legitimate opposition was one of the wildest of chimeras. [An hon. MEMBER: How is it in France?] They were in England; not in France. They had what France had not; they had a Constitutional freedom growing with their growth and strengthening with their strength, and between this country and France there was a chasm which nothing could bridge over. As to the particular point under discussion, let it be remembered that there had not, since the first Reform Bill, ever been a Government that held a majority of two-thirds. And every great measure had been opposed at first by two-thirds, and had never been carried by a majority of two-thirds. He declined to argue on the hypothesis that the Speakers of the future would be either rogues or fools. He did not believe in the coming degradation of the House of Commons; but he thought the House would get better as it got older, or, at all events, it was not a great amount of optimism to express an opinion that it would continue to be as good as it was. But if the House became the degraded Jacobin Club that was anticipated, did hon. Members opposite think that they could resist the wave of Democracy by means of this two-thirds' majority Rule? Why, in such a case, such a Rule would be swept away in a single night. For his part, he did not believe that this tide of Democracy was about to flow over us, but that, on the contrary, the House of Commons would remain what it had ever been—the guardian of the liberties of the people of this country. He believed that when this debate was terminated it would be admitted that the Liberal Party were as loyal to the traditions of that House as the Conservatives were, and that their only desire was to see the House resume its old place and exercise its old power.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that he had been a little disappointed with the speech to which they had just listened, as he had hoped to have heard from the hon. Member who sat below the Gangway opposite an explicit statement of his views upon the utterances of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The language of the hon. Member for Northampton could not fail to give rise to grave reflections to every Member of that House, and the Ministers who heard it were evidently much disconcerted by the frank admissions of their very frank and candid Friend. According to the hon. Member for Northampton, the Radical Millennium, under the influence of the *clôture*, was rapidly approaching, and he disclosed a great variety of opinions, which, under different circumstances, he would have thought it rather more prudent and discreet to withhold. The hon. Gentleman had initiated the House into the mysteries of the Democratic creed, and a very pretty creed it was. Under the *clôture* they were to have triennial elections, at which all important questions were to be submitted to the electors, who were forthwith to give an imperative mandate to the Ministry of the day, who were to carry them into effect without the superfluous necessity of any discussion whatever in that House. Discussion was thus, they were told, to become useless, and freedom of speech as extinct as the Dodo. The hon. Gentleman stated that he would allow half-an-hour to the Opposition for the discussion of measures which had never before been considered, and that was part of a programme which they had been seriously told required the earliest attention of Parliament. He always admired the candour of the hon. Member, who never beat about the bush; but what he (Mr. Chaplin) wanted to know was, how far the views of the hon. Member for Northampton were shared by those who sat behind and around him below the Gangway? The question was one of vast importance to the House, for experience taught them that the doctrines of the Radicals of to-day inevitably became the policy of the Liberal Leaders to-morrow. So far as the present Administration was concerned, they were all aware that it was not the dog which wagged the tail, but the tail which wagged the dog. If there were any hon. Members in that part of the House who disagreed with the startling doctrines which had been that night propounded by the hon. Member for Northampton, it was their bounden duty to rise and disavow them. The hon. Member who had just sat down said that in prearranging the close of a debate, as had been done that night, the two great Parties in the House had conceded the principle of the *clôture.* So they had. That principle had been conceded for many years; but it was the principle of individual *clôture* which had been conceded, and not the principle of arbitrary and general *clôture* such as the Prime Minister was endeavouring to force upon the House. In the debate which had taken place he had been struck by one thing more than anything else, and that was the total absence of any valid argument against the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend. There had been plenty in its favour, even from its opponents, and, indeed, from the Prime Minister himself. On the first occasion, he said that he granted that if it were solely a question of a very small minority, a majority of three-fourths was more effective than a bare majority of 1. That was exactly the case of the Opposition. It was clear that there was only a limited section of the House in conflict with the majority; and, that being so, he could not conceive why the Government should resist the principle of the proportionate majority, which, on the showing of the Prime Minister himself, was infinitely more effective than a majority of 1. But, said the right hon. Gentleman, what security was there against a debate being unduly prolonged? He would say the same security as at present—that unwritten Rule to which the Prime Minister had so often alluded, and to which the majority of Members still paid deference. The infinitesimal minority could be dealt with by other means. Then came what, after all, was the Prime Minister's main objection to the Amendment—namely, that it handed over the rights of the majority to the minority. Rights of the majority! What did this mean? There was no distinction between the rights of the majority and the rights of the minority in that House. The rights and privileges of the House were common to all Parties—to minorities as well as majorities—to the humblest as well as to the most distinguished Member; and he protested against any attempt to bring into contumely and disrepute some of the noblest and best traditions of Parliamentary life. But how did the Prime Minister illustrate his position? By the most extraordinary argument he (Mr. Chaplin) had ever heard. The right hon. Gentleman said —"Sometimes, unfortunately, there is more than one minority in this House, and, under the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, it would be possible for the larger minority in the matter of *clôture* to overrule the majority and the small minority combined." In other words, the Government, uniting some day with the Home Rule Party, in virtue, perhaps, of another Kilmainham Treaty, would be unable to silence the Tory minority, and a very monstrous and intolerable state of things that would be, said the right hon. Gentleman. It was precisely because the Tory Party saw the possibility of such a danger that they united to support the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] United—he forgot. He had forgotten his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill), and the speech which he had delivered, and he was glad he had been reminded of it, for he had heard the speech with great interest and great amusement; and though he did not share the estimate formed of it by an hon. Friend near him, he must say that it was full of mischief, and ability, and fun, and humour. But the whole gist of the speech might be described and the argument disposed of in a sentence. What the noble Lord said was that the two-thirds' majority would afford no permanent protection to the minority, because if two or three times the *clôture* were rejected under it the two-thirds' majority would disappear altogether; and, on the other hand, it would cripple a Tory Government anxious to pass legislation. The noble Lord failed apparently to see that if the two-thirds were so swept away they would only be forced back on the bare majority. He was afraid that it was useless to try to argue with his noble Friend, or to endeavour to get him to support the Amendment; but it might be some consolation to the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) to know that he might look for the support — the erratic support — of his noble Friend on the ultimate decision of this question. The Opposition might be defeated to-night—he believed they would. But why? Because dark rumours were already in circulation in the Lobby—that the Kilmainham Treaty was to be literally fulfilled, and that they would see to-night, in the division about to be taken, a new and ill-omened combination between the Government, on the one hand, and the Irish National Party on the other, for the suppression of the Constitutional minority in the House of Commons. But he might remind the Government that the question was not settled yet; and they might rest assured that, with the assistance, as they hoped, of lovers of freedom and liberty in every quarter of the House, and of every man who was determined to maintain the best and noblest traditions of the British House of Commons, the Tory Opposition would enter with vigour and energy on the struggle against *clôture* with a bare Party majority of 1.

Mr. WALTER said, that he had the disagreeable duty to perform of stating his objections to a course which had received the sanction of the great body of those Gentlemen who sat around him. It was no slight aggravation of that difficulty to follow so closely the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who spoke so ably a short time ago. But, as one of the older Members of that House, he might be pardoned for entertaining a very strong wish at this period, when the old era of Procedure was about to close, and a new era to come in, to state as succinctly and as strongly as he could the reasons which actuated him in the course he was about to take. He would endeavour to make his meaning as clear as possible by stating, in a few words, what he conceived to be the nature of the problem which they were called upon to solve. That problem, as he understood it, was this. Admitting for the sake of argument—and he, for one, admitted it, not only for the sake of argument, but in all sincerity and earnestness—the necessity of *clôture*, the problem was how to reconcile its enforcement with that consideration for the rights of minorities which, either directly or indirectly, was, he was sure, entertained by every Member of that House. Two modes had been proposed in connection with that Resolution for protecting those rights. The one was that adopted by Her Majesty's Government, and the other was that proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); and the question for the House to determine was which of these two methods was the more reasonable and just. The method proposed by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin recognized the rights of minorities, and protected them by requiring a proportional majority when enforcing the *clôture*. The proposal of the Government began by disavowing the rights of minorities. ["No, no!"] He would prove that in a few moments. Departing from that harsh and unreasonable conclusion presented in its naked form, it adopted an artificial quorum, for which no special or valid reason had been or could be given for preventing that majority from obtaining its legitimate ends. What was the speech of the Prime Minister in February last?—because upon that speech his (Mr. Walter's) objections to the plan embodied in the Government Resolution were mainly founded. The Prime Minister, in the course of that speech, laid down this doctrine as an article of faith to be received by every Member of that House at the peril of his political salvation, that there was but one sound principle—that the majority of the House should prevail. And the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to say—

> "God forbid that we should see so vast an innovation introduced into the practice of this House, applicable to our ordinary procedure, as would be a Rule of the House under which the voice of the majority was not to prevail over that of the minority."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 1146.]

That was the doctrine which found acceptance with a great number of the Members of the House, probably the majority. But how did the Prime Minister illustrate that doctrine? He brought forward a number of test cases to prove its value and importance. He informed the House truly that the Reform Bill was carried by a majority of 1; that the Education Bill under the Privy Council was carried by a similar majority; that the Melbourne Ministry was turned out by a majority of 1, and that a Ministry of which he himself was the head experienced the same fate. Who denied it when applied to main questions? Did the Prime Minister suppose that it ever entered into the mind of any human being of the defeated Party in the division on the Reform Bill that he was injured, or that his Party were injured, by being the victims of a division in which a bare majority prevailed? Were their rights as Members of that House affected? They knew perfectly well that there never had been, or could be, a question about the sufficiency of a bare majority on any of the main questions that might be brought before the House. But did that doctrine hold good when applied to the relation of Members to each other as regarded debate? He held distinctly and firmly that it did not. He held that the theory of the Prime Minister upon which his proposal rested was an unsound theory—namely, that the relations to each other of Members of that House as Members of Parliament were the same as existed between opposite sides of the House. Would anyone maintain for a moment—though, indeed, the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) maintained it distinctly that evening—but would anyone else maintain that 300 Members of that House had a right to say to 299—"We are a majority; you hold your tongues and go about your business; we will shut your mouths; what rights have you against us?" Such a doctrine would be scouted and repudiated by the strongest advocate of this measure. But now, how did the supporters of the Prime Minister propose to meet this difficulty? They repudiated the doctrine of the two-thirds' majority, and then the Prime Minister proceeded incontinently to construct, by the most arbitrary process possible, an artificial quorum which differed from the normal quorum of 40—a quorum of 200. But, as had been pointed out over and over again, the creation of that quorum had this defect—that in a House of 300 Members a division could be carried against the minority only by a majority of 2 to 1, while in a House of 400 Members a majority of 1 was sufficient. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton thought he had a sufficient answer to that, when he said that it was perfectly true that in a House of 300 Members a proportionate majority of 2 to 1 might be obtained; but that was only half the House. But the House of Commons was as much a House, and was as competent to transact any Business whatever, if only 300 Members chose to come together, as 600. And then they were told a great deal about the necessity of protecting small minorities, but that great minorities could always take care of themselves. Now, he would put this point, which had not been mentioned before. He remembered reading a very remarkable sermon by one of the profoundest minds that ever flourished in the Church of England, the late Regius Professor of Divinity—the Prime Minister would probably remember it—on "Our Duty to Equals," in which it was clearly laid down that our duty to equals was a much more difficult matter than our duty to inferiors. The duty of a majority to a small minority was somewhat of a condescending character, and appealed to their consideration. But the fact was that a large minority really required consideration a great deal more. It should be remembered that the measure of the stringency of the *clôture* was not to be found in the number of persons composing the majority who exercised it, but rather in the number composing the minority against whom it was employed. There was one admission he would make. He, for one, most distinctly admitted that it was the inherent right of every Legislative Assembly whatever to devise means for bringing its debates to a close; and, therefore, he did not object to the *clôture* in principle. It was a question of degree, a question of adjustment, a question of consideration for the rights of others, those others being the minority—it was a question of Procedure. What he contended was that in a case of ordinary Procedure, for which this Resolution was framed, the principle of a proportionate majority was the right one. But he should be met by this answer—"Assuming your proposition, you will still leave it in the power of the minority to carry on the debate to an interminable length." That was an objection which had to be met. The Rules for ordinary Procedure tried to meet the wants of the House of Commons in time of peace, when questions were being debated as they should be debated among gentlemen, not with a view to Obstruction or improper delay, but with a view to information which would be to the general advantage of the whole body. He believed that a Rule requiring a two-thirds' majority would amply suffice for such occasions. But supposing that a proposal for the *clôture* had been rejected by a two-thirds' majority, and supposing that, after two or three nights' debate, the Speaker were to come to the conclusion that the debate was then being prolonged for purposes of wilful Obstruction, he should be ready, without hesitation, to give the Speaker absolutely the power of bringing the discussion to a close without the intervention of the House. Indeed, he would far rather see the power to impose the *clôture* vested in the Speaker himself, to be applied *mero motu*, the Speaker being such a person as the Prime Minister had described, combining all the virtues characteristic of an English gentleman of high position with twice the patience of Job himself—he would rather see the power of the *clôture* intrusted to him altogether, without any appeal to the House, which must too often involve an appeal to Party feeling, than see it exercised under the conditions laid down by the Government. It was remarkable that the Prime Minister the other night, after expatiating with great force and eloquence on the protection afforded to minorities by the lofty position of the Speaker, and showing how damaging to that Officer's character any abuse of the contemplated power would be, should have selected, as an illustration of his meaning, the very case which appeared to him (Mr. Walter), as well as to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), to be a most glaring instance of the abuse of the power. The Prime Minister said he thought it would be most monstrous that the *clôture* should be prevented from taking effect by the action of the Constitutional Opposition against the majority composed of all one side of the House and of a small fraction of the Members sitting upon the other side. As he (Mr. Walter) had said, he could not conceive a worse case of the abuse of the *clôture* than such an application of it as was contemplated by the right hon. Gentleman in that instance. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton said that retaliation might be resorted to by the Opposition, and that, if they were unfairly treated, the Leaders sitting on the Front Opposition Bench might easily give the signal to the light troops of the Party to continue making speeches *ad infinitum*. Well, he, for one, did not wish to see the Opposition pushed to such extremities and induced to adopt retaliatory measures of that kind, for the consequence would be that the character and dignity of the House would be fatally injured. Supposing some sort of *clôture* to be necessary, he would much rather see a light weapon constructed, which would be handy and useful, and might be used as often as need be, than a great unwieldy gun, which the officer in charge would be afraid to fire lest it should burst. The Prime Minister had spoken in feeling terms of his connection with that House as being more in the past than in the future, and he was about to bequeath this Rule as a legacy to his successors. He (Mr. Walter) feared it was a dangerous legacy, and he declined to accept his share of it; for he believed if the New Rule were carried out not in the spirit intended by the Prime Minister himself, but in the spirit in which many Members would be disposed to enforce it, Parliamentary life in this country would become more and more difficult to maintain, and the position of independent Members, above all others, would become intolerable.

MR. E. W. HARCOURT: I listened with the same pleasure everyone else did to the oratory of the Prime Minister. I heard him disclaim the notion that the *clôture* was ever to be imposed by the Treasury Bench in stirring periods, and I was afterwards edified by hearing him demolish this Constitutional proposition in impassioned language. He told us the majority would be fools if they did not make use of their power. Well, if it so happened, therefore, that a considerable number of Members were in the Library, the Tea Room, or other places, when the Speaker was deciding upon the evident sense of the House, then, if the Division Bell were answered by one more supporter of the Government than of the Opposition, we should be landed in the homely old doctrine of "might makes right," and we should perceive that brute force was available for the Government when their arguments were expended. I suppose all serious politicians are agreed upon the necessity of forwarding the Business of the House; the only difference is as to the method of doing it. All are agreed that whatever goes beyond the mark is mischievous. The only difference is where the line shall be drawn. If we could look at this matter without Party prejudice, I think an agreement would not be difficult. We were one moment so near that point of agreement that it seems matter for regret that point was ever receded from. A proposition was made by the Prime Minister which appeared, even to some of his own followers, to go beyond the mark. An Amendment was proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin which satisfied objections, and which was accepted by the Prime Minister. This shows that he had no objection to the principle of the Amendment. I have asked myself with wonder ever since why it was receded from. Certainly not because the Opposition had given reason to the Prime Minister to suppose it would be necessary for him to crush them, to destroy them, to pulverize them before Obstruction could be scotched. The right hon. Gentleman, with his long experience, knows the necessity for, and he knows the usefulness of, an Opposition. He knows perfectly well that where the honour of the House is concerned, where Imperial interests are concerned, the Opposition is not one whit behind the Government in its jealousy to maintain them. The right hon. Gentleman knows full well that two-thirds of the House can always be relied upon to support any Minister in withstanding wilful Obstruction. If the right hon. Gentleman did not know it, he would never have agreed to the two-thirds' Amendment, from which he is now receding. It is fruitless to question motives; but perhaps I may be allowed to point out, though I am surprised it should be necessary to do so in the face of a great Liberal Minister, that the best way of managing men is by themselves. It is a dangerous thing for any man to make himself responsible for order unless the country is in a state of siege. "The Republic, it is me—as for order, I will be responsible for it," were the words of the Third Napoleon, and grievously did that Third Napoleon answer it. How was it the great Arnold made Rugby that model school of management? Was it by saying—"Rugby, it is me—I will answer for its order?" Far otherwise; his motto was —"Rugby for the boys and the boys for Rugby." And so, to carry my comparison to the highest point, if the Prime Minister says—"The House of Commons, it is me—I will answer for its order;" vast as is his experience, lofty as is the order of his intellect, he will be the first to acknowledge that there is something still vaster, that there is something yet more lofty, and that is the spirit of the English House of Commons. I would say to the Prime Minister—

"Learn, then, to lead us, you may guide us still,
Incline our hearts, but not control our will;
Force will inflame where fear cannot appal,
And kindness soothes where rigour saddens all."

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he must congratulate the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) upon his recent courageous manifestation of the truth, which they had all suspected for some time—namely, that he was, after all, a Radical in disguise. He also felt bound to compliment the noble Lord upon the robustness with which he had trodden, almost trampled, upon the fossil officialism of the Front Opposition Bench. Before proceeding any further, and speaking for himself as an humble unit of the Radical Party, he (Mr. Russell) wished to state that his reasons for supporting the Prime Minister's Resolutions were widely different from those by which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had declared himself to be influenced. It was not the intention of the Radical Party, as the hon. Member appeared to imply, to do away with all discussion—such a suggestion seemed farcical—but their desire was that all the measures in which they were interested should be fully, fairly, and equally discussed. They did not wish to be overwhelmed with floods of intolerable eloquence on one or two uninteresting measures, to the exclusion of others in which they were vitally concerned. The Liberal Party accepted the proposal for a closing power not with enthusiasm—for who could be enthusiastic in favour of a discipline so irksome?—but with a calm conviction that it was required by the necessity of the case; and the question they had to consider was what remedy the exigency of the case demanded. *Clôture* by a two-thirds' majority seemed to him to be open to two real and opposite dangers. It would either create a tyranny, or it would be wholly futile. In the first place, if a Ministry desired to pass certain measures or to put down a certain form of Obstruction, and were supported in that by the Opposition, there would arise a tendency to deal harshly with small minorities, and the result of that would be that unpopular opinion would be crushed and put down. In the case of such a conjunction, there would be short shrift for those whose enemies regarded them as the apostles of ideas, and were regarded by others as the advocates of crotchets, and Irish Members must see that the two-thirds' majority was aimed with the utmost possible nicety to meet their particular requirements. In practice, the two-thirds' majority would exercise the most grievous tyranny over the smallest minorities and individual opinion; but the real danger, he believed, and that which formed the second objection, would be this—that where a Ministry desired to put down flagrant Obstruction, they could not be certain of the support of the Opposition, who, in many instances, themselves might take advantage of the embarrassments of the Administration. Granting the Leaders of the Opposition would co-operate with the Goverment to put the *clôture* in force, then the full significance of the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock would become apparent. As sure as his official Leaders determined to support the Government in this enterprize of repression, so surely would the noble Lord take an independent line. The troubles in the Soudan had their analogy in the troubles of the Tory Party. The False Prophet had come from Woodstock and raised the standard of revolt, and declared that he, and not the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), was the true Leader of the Faithful. ["Oh, oh!"] What gave that a grave significance was that, as far as they could judge from what they had seen and read, a certain section of the Conservative Party was inclined to consider the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock the Leader of the Faithful, and to follow him rather than the right hon. Baronet. For his part, he (Mr. Russell) was not ashamed to say that his object in voting for the Resolution was not merely to crush the outrages of Obstruction, but, in large measure, to facilitate, and, if possible, also to secure the passage of those great measures to which the Liberal Party were so deeply pledged, and for the carrying of which they had been sent to the House of Commons; and, for these reasons, he would consent to no proposition by which a Rule for closing a debate would be at one time a tyranny and at another utterly futile. In some constituencies a deep feeling of dissatisfaction prevailed at the long delay that had occurred between the promise of certain measures and its fulfilment. Circumstances had arisen which had retarded the progress of measures—such as those with respect to corrupt practices, local government, and the extension of the franchise—in which the country was deeply interested; and it was their object to bring them within the range of fair debate, and, without stifling any expression of opinion, to pass the will of the majority into law. He, for one, therefore, would be no party to an arrangement such as that proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), that would sacrifice all the results of their Party cohesion and solid discipline to the feeble Leadership and distracted counsels of Her Majesty's Opposition.

Mr. PARNELL: Mr. Speaker, I wish to explain, in a few words, the course which I, and the hon. Members who act with me, propose to take this evening, and also our reasons for taking that course. I cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. George Russell) that *clôture* in any form will facilitate legislation. If you even succeed in passing one or two measures more quickly by the action of the *clôture* than you might otherwise have done, this gain will be effected at a certain loss to yourselves in another direction. It is bound, I think, to increase the friction of Parties in the House of Commons to a very remarkable extent; and I think, also, it will increase the desire and the tendency in "another place" to throw out Bills which have been passed apparently by the agency of the *clôture*. So far, then, from facilitating legislation, I think that the *clôture* will do nothing except crush and check the liberties of the House of Commons. But as regards the particular issue which it is for us to decide to-night, I can have no hesitation whatever, and I never had any hesitation whatever, as to what I ought to do as between *clôture* by a two-thirds or any proportionate majority, and *clôture* by a simple majority of the House. I wish to say, in passing, that I agree thoroughly with the spirit, and most of the sentiments, of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), as expressed in that most admirable and able speech of his the other night. I think that he showed an example of true wisdom to some of those who have been much longer in the House of Commons than he has been, and who, by their age and experience, might have been supposed to have taken the course which the noble Lord pointed out. But I have not the slightest hesitation in expressing my belief that the *clôture*, by a two-thirds' majority, such as the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) asks us to support in voting for his Amendment, would be simply a *clôture* which would be fatal to the rights and liberties of the Irish Party. It would have a tendency to bring the two Front Benches together, and I have always noticed that, in proportion to the approximation of those two Front Benches, so we have been trampled upon and kicked out of the House. It may, perhaps, have appeared to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) to have been a light thing when, a year ago, he agreed to *clôture* the Irish Party on condition that a two-thirds' or three-fourths' vote of the House should sanction it. But when I heard that the Front Opposition Bench had agreed to our immolation I knew they had also agreed to their own; for, as between the question of a two-thirds and a simple majority, there cannot possibly be any reason why the House should very long insist upon that distinction, as must be evident to everybody who carefully looks into the future. And it ought to have been evident to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sit above him, that it must necessarily follow, some day or other, when they sacrifice our rights and the rights and liberties of the people we represent without compunction, theirs would come also. No, Sir; I cannot support the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin; and, looking at the point in all its bearings, and although many of us, undoubtedly—perhaps all of us—feel it a disagreeable thing, and one to which we decidedly object, to go into the Lobby with a Government which is associated with such atrocious Acts of coercion in Ireland, yet, looking to the future of our Party—the Members for Ireland—we have come to the conclusion that we ought to do our best to defeat the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin by voting on this occasion against his Amendment. We believe that in taking that course we, at least, shall secure that whatever may be meted out to us in the future shall also be meted out to the right hon. Gentleman and to the Party who are responsible for this coercion of the House of Commons by their action a year ago. As regards the question of *clôture* or no *clôture*, that is a matter which is still before us. Our vote upon that question is free, and is our own. It is not prejudiced one way or the other by the action which we intend to take to-night; and when the time comes for voting on the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon to reject the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, we, as a Party and as a body, will be free to consult together and to take such action as we may consider right for the interests of our Party and our country.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I intend to detain the House as short a time as possible in the observations I propose to address to it; but it is impossible for me altogether to keep silence in this discussion. I have listened with due attention to the speech—the short, but very significant speech—of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). I understand him to speak, not only in his own name, but in the name of the Party with whom he usually agrees and acts, and in accordance with a resolution taken recently by that Party. I do not think it would be at all becoming in me to attempt to pry into any secret understanding that may have taken place. For my own part, I entirely respect the decision, and I am not altogether sorry that, if we are to be defeated on the present occasion, we shall be defeated, amongst others, by those who are generally supposed to have brought this Motion upon the House of Commons. I said that I did not wish to pry into the counsels of the Party whom the hon. Gentleman represents. I think there is a little too much prying into the proceedings of those who act together, and who occasionally consult together. I have read with considerable surprise—I suppose it is an uncorrected account, and therefore I must not assume that it is a literally true one—but I have read a report of some observations made by no less a person than the Prime Minister himself this very day to a deputation of Liberal Members, in which he was pleased to express his opinion not only upon the particular matter upon which they came to him, but he also gave some information upon what he understood to be the state of the Conservative Party. He was good enough to inform the deputation which waited upon him this afternoon that his belief was there would have been a manifestation of differences in the Conservative Party in this House but for the rigour with which the screw had been applied. He condescends to particulars, and he tells us that in the Carlton and elsewhere the pressure of the Party has been applied in its extremest form.

MR. GLADSTONE: I stated according to my belief.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am stating the right hon. Gentleman's belief; but I would appeal to my own Friends whether there has been any pressure of the screw upon them at all? The fact is, the right hon. Gentleman is very susceptible to a hoax of that kind. I could not help taking notice of it, because it seems to be a very extraordinary statement to be made by such an authority, at such a moment. But I must apologize to the House for detaining them with a matter not immediately connected with the question they have to decide. The question that we have to decide is, as the right hon. Gentleman himself, and many others, have freely admitted, one of the very gravest importance. I do not speak so much of its importance in relation to the question between a proportionate and a bare majority. That is an important point; but it is not the one to which we have to address ourselves at this moment. The question at the present moment is one connected with the larger and more important question of the introduction of the *clôture* at all. And I wish again, as I have done many and many times in this House and out of this House, to repeat what I have expressed—my own strong feeling that the *clôture*, in any form or shape, is a measure against which we ought to offer the strongest opposition in our power. In supporting the Amendment of my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson), I do so not because I think the Resolution, as amended by him, would be a good Resolution, but because, if we are to have it at all, it would be less mischievous than having the *clôture* pure and simple. Now, Sir, the first observation I would venture to make upon this great question is that, undoubtedly, it is, as the Prime Minister himself said the other day, the largest and most important change ever proposed in the Procedure of the House. [MR. GLADSTONE: The whole Code.] Well, the whole Code is important, no doubt; but this particular Resolution is, I think, by far the most important and the most significant part of it. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the condition of Business in the House of Commons had, for a long time, been such, and increasingly such, that it was recognized by all authorities that some changes were required in order to enable us properly to get through the work that lay before us. He said, with truth, that this had been the subject of inquiry before a large number of Committees—I think he mentioned as many as 14 Committees of the House of Commons—within the time during which the Reformed Parliament has existed, and many excellent and wise suggestions have undoubtedly been made by those Committees. "But," said the right hon. Gentleman, "there is the want of a motive power strong enough to induce the House to act on those suggestions. It is not that we are in want of counsel; but we are in want of a motive power to induce us to adopt and act on the counsels that we have received." If that be so, I wish to know by which of those 14 Committees was the *clôture* recommended? It is not here, as is the case with many other parts of this Code, that they have made suggestions which may have never been sufficiently pressed. The *clôture* is a suggestion which has not been made; and not only has it not been made, but it is one which, having been proposed and considered by a Committee, and by a recent Committee, has been deliberately negatived. And, therefore, it is not from the assistance or by the advice of any Committee of the House of Commons that this part of this great change is now proposed to us. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) sat with me, only two or three years ago, on a Committee to which this particular proposal was made by a Member of the Liberal Party—the present Lord Brabourne—who pressed the subject on the attention of the Committee, and he received next to no support. I think one Conservative Member was disposed to support him; but, generally speaking, the whole Committee, including the noble Marquess opposite, felt that the matter was not one which they could recommend. Well, if there was nothing in the recommendations of that Committee, was there anything about this matter in the charge that was given to this Parliament when it was elected? Not at all; the question was not before the constituencies; it did not originate with them. Therefore we have none of these authorities for it. Is there any other authority for it? Certainly, there is one very high authority which we have to consider, and that is the authority of the Prime Minister himself, who comes forward, I admit, with great and various claims on our attention; for not only his great position in this House stands in the account in his favour, but also his great abilities and power, and the very large experience he has had of the working of the House of Commons' system, must cause his authority to be regarded as of much importance. Therefore, as far as authority goes, I very willingly admit the authority of the right hon. Gentleman. But that authority, I would remind the House, is weakened by one or two considerations to which I must call attention. In the first place, it is weakened very much by the course which the right hon. Gentleman himself has taken with regard to these Resolutions. There has been, from first to last, an amount of hesitation and uncertainty in the mode in which he has dealt with these Resolutions, which has very greatly weakened the authority with which he has put them forward. I might mention, as one small evidence of that hesitation, the fact that when he first brought forward his Resolutions he did not propose to make them Standing Orders. He said—

> "We do not propose, at first, to make them Standing Orders, but to adopt them, for the present, experimentally; and if they are found to work well, we shall propose to make them Standing Orders of the House."

That was not a very strong form of recommendation. Nothing has happened since then that has very greatly affected the question; but now we find that he has taken a step forward, and he proposes to make them Standing Orders. There were points which would naturally be considered when the Resolutions were brought in. One great question was, how we are to proceed in Committee; and we had a proposal made that the initiation of the *clôture* should rest with the Speaker and the Chairman of any Committee. Then the suggestion was made, that that ought not to be extended to the Chairman of any casual

Committee. That was accepted. Then we were told that there is to be a special provision made for these casual Chairmen; but that is not to be done at present; it is laid aside for a time. Now, considering how important a part the Chairman of Committees will bear in the operation of the *clôture*, it is altogether astonishing to me that that point should not have occurred to the right hon. Gentleman, and that he should not have considered it carefully and maturely. I am almost ashamed to refer to it again; but there is next his letter of May. I am not mentioning it to throw the slightest blame on the Government, or on the right hon. Gentleman, for having withdrawn their offer; but only to show that, at one time, and very recently, the right hon. Gentleman held quite a different opinion with regard to *clôture* with a two-thirds' majority from that which he holds now. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman, I see, shakes his head; but I do not see how he gets out of the dilemma, which was put very forcibly a little while ago—I think by my hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—but, at any rate, by some speaker to-night. If he held then the opinion of the two-thirds' majority which he holds now, he then distinctly agreed to accept a proposal, which he himself says would deteriorate the Procedure of the House of Commons, and make things worse than they are. Was there any necessity for that? It would be worse with a two-thirds' majority, he says, than to have no *clôture* at all. Well, he wanted to get on, and to take the other Resolutions, and he says—"There may be a good deal to be said for that." But why did he propose to accept something that he thinks worse even than the present state of things? It would be better to leave the present state of things as it is, if he was anxious to get on with the Business. I do not deny that many of the Rules I see here will expedite the Business of the House, and command pretty general assent from all Parties, and he might have said—"I am prepared to lay aside for the moment, without surrendering my opinion, that Rule which causes all this doubt and embarrassment." But he has not done that, and, therefore, it is evident that at that time he did not hold that strong view of the mischievous character of the *clôture* by a majority of two-thirds that he does now. His conduct is altogether unintelligible. There are other circumstances also, which seem to me to weaken the authority of the right hon. Gentleman; and one is the obvious impulse which is driving him on to adopt some measure or other, which will enable him, before the close of his great career in this House, to pass certain legislative reforms which he is anxious to bring about. I will not inquire into what the character of those measures is. I have no right to charge the right hon. Gentleman, or to impute to him that he desires to introduce legislation of the Socialistic and Democratic character mentioned by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). That is not what I suppose the right hon. Gentleman intends; but he is most anxious, and not unnaturally, to wipe away the sort of reproach which has been undoubtedly cast against his Government. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] Well, I will withdraw the word reproach, if you like, and say disappointment—a word used, I think, by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler)—felt by many of the constituencies at the non-fulfilment of some of the great promises made to them at the time of the General Election. Well, that anxiety on the part of the right hon. Gentleman is such, that it leads him to make all these feverish movements in endeavouring to bring about this change, and to adopt some plan or other in order to obtain the power he seeks. He told us himself very frankly when he brought forward the Resolution, and he has told us again since then, that he did not really value this proposal of the *clôture* for its power of putting down what is commonly known as Obstruction; for that, he said, it was not intended or adapted. It was a different kind of measure that was wanted in order to deal with wilful Obstruction; but he said very plainly—"What I want it for is to enable me to get on and to pass some of my measures." Even his definition of Obstruction shows this. What was the definition he gave us of Obstruction? He said it was "the disposition of individual resistance to the will of the majority of the House by means other than argument." That is, generally, what we understand by Obstruction, and for that purpose the effect of the two-thirds' majority would be just as good as a bare majority, because there is no doubt it would be the "general sense of the House" that a persistent and unreasoning Obstruction is not creditable to the House and ought to be put down. But that is not what he is aiming at and is not what this Resolution is calculated for. What he aims at is entirely different—namely, the stifling of fair discussion. We cannot, therefore, attach all that value we might otherwise be expected to attach to the opinion and authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and we have to look a little to some of the recommendations and some of the views of those by whom his measures are supported. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) and others of his Colleagues appear to hold views somewhat different from those of the Prime Minister—that is to say, that they attach very great importance, and avowedly so, to the power of stifling discussion. I need not remind the House of what the noble Marquess said at the beginning of the Session, with regard to the way in which hon. Members who did not please his fancy, or the fancy of a considerable number of hon. Members, were to be quietly extinguished by the application of the *clôture.* I am not surprised at that on the part of the Members of the Government. They are anxious to get on with Government measures, and any device by which they can secure the rapid progress of these measures may naturally be allowed to commend itself to them. But what are we to say to the Members of the Radical Party, of whom I will take, as a Representative, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), who spoke yesterday. The right hon. Gentleman speaks now from an independent position. The right hon. Gentleman is just one of those who ought to have considered what effect this measure of the *clôture* will have on the kind of Motion which he is himself so anxious to bring forward. There are hon. Members of this House like the right hon. Gentleman—like the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and others, who have taken up opinions which are not favourably regarded by the great majority of the House, but which they feel themselves bound to press forward, and to recommend by repeated arguments and by repeated discussions. Are they aware that, by the introduction of this system of absolute *clôture,* they run a very great risk of finding themselves shut out and precluded from expressing those opinions by the impatience of the House? ["No, no!"] I hear murmurs. Is Obstruction such a thing that it never can happen? I say, wait until you see. This is just one of those cases in which impatience grows by what it feeds upon. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) represents another school, and he says it is inconceivable in this, that, or the other case —it is inconceivable that the Liberal Party could ever be supposed to interfere with and stop and stifle discussion. Well, Sir, I only hope the right hon. Gentleman is right. He ought to know more of what the Liberal Party are capable than I do; but his view is not, I confess, in accordance with my experience. Then we have another authority, on the present occasion, to consider and to strengthen the Prime Minister, and that is a very high one indeed—one with whom I feel some little difficulty in discussing matters, because he looks at matters from so very high a point of view. I mean my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). He has, somehow or other, managed to elevate himself into a position, from which he finds himself capable of looking down upon the Front Benches on both sides, and of regarding all Parties in the House with an impartiality which is quite sublime. I do not know what can have taken my noble Friend up into such great heights, or whether he went there to consult the Angel Gabriel, or—what is sometimes suspected—to look for the lost principles of the Liberal Party, some of which have gone to the Planet Saturn, and some, I think, to the Planet Mars. But, whatever may have become of them, his argument seems to me to have been completely answered by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who sits near him; and I do not think it necessary to dwell further upon it. It certainly appears to me that my noble Friend has overlooked, from the great height from which he regards these matters, the real importance of those safeguards which he treats as little lights, which would very quickly be swept away. I can only say that if he is right, and they would quickly be swept away, we should not then be in a worse position than if we never had them at all; but I do not believe that they will be so soon swept away, because, as the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said, it will take some little time to do that, and, in the meantime, the voice of the country will pronounce on the propriety of the sacrifice that is demanded. I am glad to think that my noble Friend, at all events, agrees with me in that which is the real root of the matter. He does not like the *clôture* any more than I do, and I hope that when the time comes for deciding on the Resolution finally I shall have his support—and I can assure him I value it very much—in the resistance which I shall offer to the Resolution as a whole. I will not attempt to go into the recondite reasons that may act upon the Irish Party. I suspect that they are under a delusion, and I fancy they have been taken in—though to do that is not very easy, for they are not easily taken in—by all this talk about small minorities. It is no part of my right hon. and learned Friend's (Mr. Gibson's) proposal to diminish the securities to be given to small minorities at the close of the Provisoes of the Government Resolution. These will remain just the same, even if my right hon. and learned Friend's precaution is taken. But they have been taken in by the fine words of the Prime Minister, who has been quite gushing over small minorities. I can remember nothing to compare them with, except the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman, a good many years ago, on behalf of small boroughs. There are not many present in the House who will remember them; but those who do will remember how very powerful and very touching the words of the right hon. Gentleman were on behalf of the small boroughs. Just before small boroughs were extinguished, we had a very powerful and interesting speech from the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of them, and his expressions on that occasion remind me of the touching way in which he has spoken of small minorities. My own belief is that it will not be very safe for hon. Gentlemen to rely on the tenderness of the right hon. Gentleman, as the reason for this tenderness towards a small minority is to be found in the fact that the Government know they can sweep it away without difficulty, and so can afford to speak kindly of it. The rights of small minorities, which are not strong enough to protect themselves, can easily be swept away, if the Government find that they are in the way. But the real difficulty is the large minority. That is the enemy with whom they cannot deal in this way, because it represents the Constitutional Opposition in this House; and a large minority is an abomination in the eyes of the true Ministerialist. We are told that we are perfectly safe, because a large minority can defend itself. But how can it do so? In two ways—either in the House or out of it. If the Members of a large minority are to defend themselves in the House, as far as we can make out from the explanations that have been given, it is by throwing themselves into every form of Obstruction; so that the right hon. Gentleman, in order to put down Obstruction, is going to encourage the further and more ingenious development of it. That is a very wrong way of regarding the matter, and it will have the effect of demoralizing those who are driven to take such a course in order to get anything like a hearing for themselves. But if they are not to defend themselves in the House itself without Obstruction, how are they to defend themselves out-of-doors? The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is very candid on the whole subject. He says—"It is perfectly absurd that we should have discussions in the House of Commons on any questions on which the country has made up its mind. Discussions of an academical character may be all very well—the discussion of crotchets may be all very well in this House—but real discussion must take place out-of-doors—it must take place in the Press, and it must take place on the platform." "And then you are to have," says the right hon. Gentleman, "Parliaments elected every three years, and an imperative mandate is to be given to the Minister in power;" and, I suppose, although the hon. Member did not say so, also to the Speaker and the Gentleman who may act as Chairman; and, having got these mandates, we are then to be told that discussion in the House is useless. We are to have a good Radical Democratic Millennium; that is the prospect which the hon. Gentleman holds out to us. But he gives us a safeguard. He treats us very much as if we were a small minority, and he says he will give us a good fair half-hour to put on record our objection to these delightful Democratic and Millennial measures; and so, he says, we should soon put ourselves in harmony with the spirit of the age. I do not know how hon. Gentlemen opposite like that prospect; but they will have to accommodate themselves to it, if they do not take care. The hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. G. Russell) said that he did not share these views; but I do not quite understand what is the distinction between his position in principle, and the position of the hon. Member for Northampton. He would not go as far as the hon. Member for Northampton; but if he is going to lend himself to proposals which will have the effect of diminishing our freedom of debate, he will find himself in a very slippery position, in which it will be difficult to stop short of the Radical Millennium into which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) invites us to enter. I feel very strongly the force of some of the appeals that have been made to us on the present position of the House of Commons. I know that we are heavily weighted, in some respects overburdened, by the work that falls upon us, and I feel very strongly that it is of the greatest national importance that we should adopt any measures that can be reasonably devised for maintaining the efficiency and high character of the House in the eyes of the country. I wish to adopt any measures that may be necessary or that can be presented to me to improve our methods of doing Business; and I cannot help saying that I see in the Code which the right hon. Gentleman has put before us several proposals which will have a beneficial effect in enabling us to get through our Business. But, after all, the great thing we have to rely upon is the good feeling of the great body of the House. Make what Rules you please, shut up what outlets for Obstruction you please, you will never succeed in doing any good, unless you get at and deal with the good feeling of the great body of the House. I am quite sure that the tendency of the *clôture*, as a whole, will be to diminish that good feeling. It will make us more bitter than we have been; and I say it with very great sorrow, and with the greatest respect for yourself personally, that I do believe the effect of the adoption of this system and its working, if it is worked in the spirit of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) desires, will be to diminish that which is so exceedingly valuable an element in the conduct of the Business of this House—it will diminish the confidential and friendly relations between the Speaker or the Chairman and the Members in all parts of the House. I am sure that the loss of the kindly and moderating influence which you, Sir, exercise upon every Member of this House, without regard to Party or position, would be a most serious loss. I do not intend to go into the question, which the right hon. Gentleman says has been threshed out over and over again—that is to say, the position of the Speaker of the future; but I would venture to say a word with regard to the Chairman of Committees. The really difficult part of the Business, and particularly of the Business conducted in this House, especially if we are to have what we are told we are to have—great legislative measures of a character which will provoke great contention—will necessarily fall on the House when it is in Committee; and the great strain will be thrown upon the Chairman of Committees. Now, there are many ways of evading the control of the Chair which cannot be resorted to in regard to the Business which is conducted in a full House. In Committee you can move any number of Amendments; if you are stopped at one point, you can bring on another; and the difficulty which will beset the Chairman of Committees will be largely increased if he be called upon to exercise this power. You may say that he will not exercise it; but he will have the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) at his back at once, telling him that it is his duty to do it, for that has been very plainly laid down by the hon. Member to-night. I cannot say that I look with the slightest comfort to any of the qualifications or safeguards which are proposed if you adopt the *clôture*. If there are occasions—unfortunately there have been, and may be again—when a small number of Members set themselves deliberately to impede and obstruct the Business of the House, then, I say, we ought to co-operate in any endeavour to put that down, and to prevent that kind of interference; and I say that the moral effect of a large vote in doing that will be much greater than the moral effect of the mere casting vote of a majority tinged with a Party character. There would be very little moral value in the general feeling of the House, if you so call for it, as to make it the expression of the feeling of only a bare majority. I will not detain the House any longer; but I could not help saying a few words on the present occasion. I would desire to impress upon the House my own sense of the gravity of the whole question in which we are engaged. I do not for a moment say I am satisfied with the suggestion that we should have the *clôture* guarded by a two-thirds' majority; but I think it will do something to materially diminish the evils I otherwise apprehend, and on that ground, and that ground alone, I give my support to the Amendment.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Sir Stafford Northcote) has, in his speech, consoled himself, in anticipation, for the defeat which he sees imminent, by some reflections upon the attitude of those who, at some former time, were found among his allies—that is to say, the Members from Ireland. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "When?"] An hon. Member asks "When?" The right hon. Gentleman said he did not want to pry into secret counsels, or into any secret negotiations which have taken place with the Irish Party. If the right hon. Gentleman has any means of prying into their secret counsels, I should not have the slightest objection to his doing so. As to his prying into any secret negotiations that have taken place between the Government and the Irish Party, that is beyond the powers of the right hon. Gentleman, because no such negotiations have ever taken place. The right hon. Gentleman says the Prime Minister has the habit of prying too much into the private affairs of Party, and is peculiarly liable to be hoaxed. I am not quite certain whether the right hon. Gentleman is himself not liable to that infirmity, and whether he has not been hoaxed by some reports made to him of secret negotiations between the Government and the Irish Party. Of course, the Irish Party, I suppose, in this or in any other critical Party division, must vote one way or the other. ["No!"] Well, they may walk out of the House; but probably a few of them would wish to assert their weight in the House by voting either with the Government or the Opposition. I do not see why it should be absolutely necessary, in the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, that some secret negotiations should have taken place in order to account for the fact of their voting on this occasion with the Government. An hon. Member asked me just now when the Irish Party voted with the Opposition, or when the Irish Party supported the Opposition. If you think that secret negotiations account for all these proceedings, I may ask, what secret negotiations took place before the Irish Party voted with the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends in support of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) on this very question? The right hon. Gentleman devoted the greater part of his speech to an examination of the authorities by which this measure was supported, and a depreciation of the authority of our proposal. I do not want to follow him by vindicating our authority. I do not think, in this case, we rely upon authority; what we rely upon is the state of Public Business in this House, and the proved necessity for some action. What we rely upon is the arguments we can adduce in favour of the efficiency of this measure, and the want of efficiency in any other that has been suggested. But if we want an authority, I might appeal to the authority of the right hon. Gentleman himself, when he had the difficulty of leading the House and coping with Obstruction, and the difficulty of conducting the Business of the country in the state in which the House was then placed. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking in the year 1879, on the subject of Obstruction, said—"There was one measure, and only one measure, which could ever be an effectual remedy against Obstruction, and that was the power of closing debate." The right hon. Gentleman, however, put that aside at the time, because he said it was a remedy which the House would never consent to agree to. Well, we have had much more experience since that time, and we have come to the conclusion that that is the remedy which, as the right hon. Gentleman said at that time, will be an efficient remedy, and which the House is, in our opinion, prepared to accept and adopt. I am much mistaken, indeed, if the right hon. Gentleman himself, with certain modifications, would not be prepared to support the principle of a closing power. I do not know that it is necessary I should follow at any length the course the debate took yesterday and on Tuesday, and which it has taken this evening. I think that we on this side of the House, at all events, may well leave one matter for the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) to settle among themselves—namely, that question which appears to have such interest for them, whether the principle of a two-thirds' majority will tell most in favour of the Conservative Party, or of what they are pleased to call the Radical Party? They all start from the assumption, which we entirely deny, that the Party in power has no other desire than to suppress and silence its opponents. They also start from the position that it will be in the power of the Party in power so to silence and so to suppress the Opposition. Now, as we have no intention or desire to silence the arguments of those who are opposed to us, we are not much pressed by the arguments that are used; and though we are asked to believe, even on the authority of hon. Members opposite, that when they are in power they will use that power against us, yet, as we believe that, under the proposals which we make to the House, no such power will be conferred on them, we are not at all alarmed by the prospect they hold out to us. Therefore, we can, with perfect confidence and composure, let the matter be settled between themselves, for we do not think this proposal will either inflict any injustice or injury upon the Opposition, nor do we expect that we shall suffer in any degree from it when we find ourselves in Opposition. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) admitted that one reason why he supported a two-thirds' majority was that it would be inoperative, because, in his opinion, there existed so little sympathy at any time between the Government and the Opposition that it would very seldom happen that they would act in concert with each other.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not say that it would be inoperative, but that it would be very seldom used.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In that the hon. Member is flatly contradicted by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who spoke a little later, for he said that, for all practical purposes, a two-thirds' majority would be as good as a bare majority; and that, in all cases where the closing power should be used, the two Front Benches of the Opposition and the Government would be found acting together in harmony. I am not surprised that considerable use should have been made by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) and the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Sir Stafford Northcote) of the remarkable speech delivered in the earlier part of the evening by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). I admit that, if I thought it probable that the closing power would be used by the Speaker, or by a majority of this House, in the manner shadowed forth by my hon. Friend, I should have very great doubt about being a party to any such measure. But, although my hon. Friend may be, as he professes to be, a faithful exponent of what he calls the Democratic opinion of the country—and I have some doubts on that subject myself—I absolutely deny that my hon. Friend can, in any sense whatever, be held to be an exponent of the Liberal opinion represented by the great majority of the Members of this House. It is perfectly true that on the occasion of a General Election Members are returned, pledged to support a particular Party and particular men in Office, or to turn particular men out of Office, and they are pledged also to support certain measures; but I am very much mistaken if my constituents, or the constituents of the great majority of the Members on these Benches, had any idea whatever in returning us to Office that any measures, however much they might desire them, were to be passed or ought to be passed in any particular shape, without undergoing the fullest consideration and discussion. Therefore, I altogether disregard that argument. We have in this country no such thing as an imperative mandate for certain measures to be passed without full and free discussion. Sir, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) referred to the total absence, in his opinion, of argument against the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). I had thought that a considerable body of argument had been adduced against that proposal. But if I wanted any of what he calls valid argument, I can supply it from a source with which the hon. Member will not quarrel. I find in a speech delivered in the country not long ago this statement—

> "I am not one of those who look with much satisfaction upon this proposal, and I will tell you why—because, if it were carried, you may be certain the day is not far distant when all security will be swept away."

And for this reason it seemed to him a good and fitting answer to the Government when it was supposed they were going to accept this proposal.

> "If," he said, "you require a two-thirds' majority to carry *clôture*, you will always be placing the power of using the *clôture* in the hands of the Opposition, instead of the Leader of the House of Commons, because, unless the Leader of the Opposition gave his sanction to the proposition, the Leader of the House would have no earthly chance of carrying the *clôture* on any occasion by a two-thirds' majority."

That, I presume, is an objection to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and it is an objection which ought to be considered a valid one by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, because it is one made by himself, in a speech delivered on the 14th of October in the present year. If the hon. Member has been struck by the absence of any valid argument against the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, I must say that I have been struck by the absence of any argument whatever in its support, except from certain terms contained in favour of the Resolution itself. In the anxiety of the Government to protect, and not to press hardly on, small minorities, we have introduced certain provisions, certain numerical checks, which can possibly, by the exercise of extreme ingenuity and by strained legal acumen, be twisted into the semblance of the principle of a proportionate majority. But, Sir, that is really not the case. All that we have done has been to provide that this novel power shall not be exercised in a House of the ordinary quorum. We have provided that the power shall only be used in a special manner. We have provided that a special and exceptional quorum shall be necessary. Sir, it is altogether contrary to the fact, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, that any extraordinary power can be exercised as against a large majority. The right hon. Gentleman said that we require a majority of 200 in order to enforce the Rule against a minority of 40. Then, he says, you require a majority of 5 to 1. But he did not go on to say that that majority was equally effective against 50 or 100 or 150, or against 199; and, therefore, there are no such sudden leaps as the right hon. Gentleman indicated in the case of large minorities. A great deal has been made of the terms which we have used in the Resolution with respect to the evident sense of the House. It is urged that the direction to the Speaker is inconsistent with the provisions by which the ultimate decision of the House is to be obtained. But the term "the evident sense of the House" is a direction to the Speaker or Chairman, given for his guidance. It is a direction to him as to the principle upon which he is to act before allowing this power to be put into operation. It is impossible to leave so great a power as the actual decision of the question—it would be too great a responsibility to be placed in the hands of any hon. Member of the House, to have the decision of the question rest with himself. There is only one way in which the decision of the House can be taken, and that way is well known to us—namely, by division. And now I come to the monstrous proposition now put forward to us for our adoption—When we have resorted to the usual and ordinary form of the House for obtaining the evident sense of the House by division, unless the majority amounts to a greater proportion than 2 to 1, it shall not be held to be the evident sense of the House. The House has divided for the purpose of ascertaining the evident sense of the House, and after the division has been taken the evident sense of the House is to be declared to be, not the opinion of the majority, not the opinion of two-thirds, but the opinion of one-third. Is it possible to have a greater inconsistency? Could anything more inconsistent with the principle on which we are accustomed to act be introduced? But, Sir, leaving altogether aside the arithmetical calculation into which many Members have been drawn, what appears to me to be the practical question is whether or not the evident sense of the House is to be declared to be as we propose it should be—by a majority ascertained in the ordinary manner, and without unduly limiting in any degree the freedom of debate. Now, Sir, the answer to that question depends in a great degree on the sense you attach to the term "freedom of debate." If, some three or four nights ago, or some six months ago, we could have arrived at some general understanding as to the meaning of that term, the debates might have been greatly curtailed. We mean by freedom of debate that every subject which is brought before the House should receive full and adequate discussion, but no more than full and adequate discussion. There is no subject upon which there is more than a certain amount that can be said. When certain arguments have been urged, when certain points have been stated, no more in the way of discussion can usefully take place. Repetition of the same arguments, endless reiteration of the same points do not tend to strengthen the arguments or to make the points clearer. On the contrary, they rather tend to dilute and weaken the force of the arguments, and to obscure the clearness of the points which have been raised. That is the practical view taken by hon. Members of the House in their individual capacity. When an important debate is begun, Members listen with attention to two or three of the first speeches, and return to the House when some speaker, who they know is likely to interest, rises to address the House. But during the greater portion of the debate Members absent themselves altogether, and only return, as I have said, to listen to some Member who they know will raise some new point or advance some new argument. That is what has happened in the course of this debate itself. Hon. Members opposite say that we are debating a subject of most vital importance, affecting the efficiency and freedom of the House of Commons, and they are horrified if anything is said about limiting the length of this discussion, or if anything were to happen to bring the discussion to an abrupt close. But what have they done themselves? They listened with attention while the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) addressed the House in support of his Amendment. They listened to the reply of the Prime Minister. But what happened during the remainder of the evening, while my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) and my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) were addressing the House—the last hon. Member even arguing your cause? Even while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), one of the Leaders of your own Party, was addressing you in support of the Amendment, there never were on the Opposition Benches, or on the Benches below the Gangway, at any moment during that evening, more than 30 Members present. On the whole of the Opposition Benches above and below the Gangway there were never more than 30 Members present. What interest did you have in that form of freedom of debate, and what impression did that discussion produce upon your minds? It was much the same yesterday, and on that occasion the original sentiments of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) were listened to by an audience of only 40 Members. Perhaps you think you are informing the country and that you are informing yourselves of what is going on during this debate? Sir, one passage there was in the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) with which I agree, and I think it is almost the only one—I do not believe that the country does take any interest in these protracted debates, and I think the estimate of from 5,000 to 10,000 throughout the country of the readers of Parliamentary debates is probably an extremely exaggerated one. To what purpose, then, does this unlimited prolixity of debate tend? Is it for your own instruction, or for the instruction of the country; is it for the purpose of raising arguments which require to be raised, or for another purpose? This prolixity of discussion, or, as you call it, freedom of debate, consumes the time of the House, which is a limited quantity, and, in respect of the Business which the House has to transact, an extremely limited quantity; and although the arguments used may do little to instruct Members of this House or the mind of the country, a debate unduly prolonged has this effect—that it imposes a physical obstacle to legislation of which the minority does not approve. Taking up the question of freedom of debate, I ask, which of these views does the House take of it; does it regard it as the means of instructing its own and the public mind, or merely as a means of wasting time and preventing legislation? I believe there is but one answer to the question so put, and that we must all acknowledge the only object of legitimate debate to be the complete discussion of the subject; while any object beyond that is an excrescence, and an abuse which has arisen from the forms of our Procedure, and which ought to be disallowed by this House. We are told by many hon. Members who have spoken in the course of this debate, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, who has just sat down, that the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would, in practice, afford greater protection to small minorities than the proposal of the Government. We all admit that the great difficulty in the way is the case of small minorities. We all admit that small minorities have done a great deal in times past in preparing the public mind for beneficial legislative changes, and we all admit that there is great danger lest, in the alterations we are about to make in our Rules of Procedure, minorities should be unduly oppressed. On such a point as this, however, it is not at all unfair that we should appeal to the opinion of the Representatives of the small minorities themselves. And what do the Representatives of the small minorities tell us? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), who has been, during a great part of a long Parliamentary career, and who is still the Representative of one of the small minorities in this House, told us in his speech yesterday that he held the opinion that the proposal of the Government offered greater protection to small minorities than that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Again, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who has just spoken, and who is pre-eminently a Representative of a small minority, unfortunately opposed to the opinion entertained on both sides of the House, also agrees that our proposal affords more protection to the opinions which he represents than that suggested by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, apparently in their interest. Sir, the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) appeared to me altogether to misapprehend the argument of the right hon. Member for Halifax. The noble Lord appeared to think that the right hon. Gentleman claimed that every Member of a small minority should be heard. That was not the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, nor is it necessary, in the interests of any minority, that each of its Members should be heard; all that is required being, as was a short time ago well stated by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), that the opinions of that minority should be stated; and, so long as these are fully laid before the House, it does not signify whether they are the opinions of a large minority or a small one. But what would be the practical effect of the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman? It has been admitted on all hands, and stated alike by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, and other speakers, that its practical effect would be to place the power of closing a debate in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition. Reference has been made to a speech which I delivered on this subject some time ago, and I should have been glad if some Member of the Opposition had attempted to answer the argument I then made use of, and which seems to me to be fatal to the proposal to place this power in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition. I will not repeat the argument I then laid before the House. My position, however, was, that by placing such a power in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition, you place it in the hands of one who has no responsibility for the exercise of it. What are you to do in a case where the Leader of the Opposition refuses to allow the Question to be put upon some subject which, in the opinion of the Ministry, and in the opinion of the majority of the House, is of vital importance to the interests of the country? In such a case you cannot make the Leader of the majority responsible for the failure of legislation or policy, if he has done all that lay in his power to carry it into effect. Nor can you make the Leader of the Opposition responsible, because he is not in a position to assume responsibility in the matter. The result of accepting the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would therefore be that, for the first time in the history of your Procedure, you would place power in the hands of one whom you cannot hold responsible for exercising it. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock says that the Liberal Party have always been much more factious in Opposition than the Conservative Party, and had more unsparingly used the power of Obstruction. I do not know what may be the conduct of the Liberal Party in future; but when such a charge is brought against the Liberal Party in the past, it would, I think, have been more to the purpose if some instance had been brought forward in which they had obstructed the Conservative Party when in power. [An hon. MEMBER: The Educational Endowment Bill.] I recollect a debate of some length upon a most objectionable measure, introduced by a Conservative Government; but I should be surprised to learn that the opposition we felt it our duty to offer on that occasion took up one-half the time which has been consumed in the discussion of this Amendment. But, whatever may be the use made of this power in future, I have no hesitation in saying that the power now sought to be conferred on the Leader of the Opposition would be a baneful and, perhaps, a fatal gift. I do not see how it would be possible for a Leader of the Opposition to use it without placing himself in a dilemma, because its exercise must lead either to a waste of public time, or to the discredit and destruction of his own Party. Sir, that is a position which would seem to be undesirable for any Opposition to occupy; and the power so placed is, therefore, in my opinion, one which would not in the slightest degree conduce to the order of our debates, or to the interest of the public. But there is another point which has been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen)—namely, that this power, if permitted to be used by the Leader of the Opposition, would have an inevitable tendency to promote a most objectionable practice of compromise between the two Front Benches. The Government would go, upon occasion, to the Leader of the Opposition, and say—"Are you prepared to assist us in the matter of this debate, which, in our opinion, has been unduly protracted?" The Leader of the Opposition would reply—"It is possible that the debate has been extended to somewhat too great a length; but it is a great concession you are asking from us. What will you give us in return?" And he would probably ask for the abandonment of some measure, or of some course of action which the Government proposed to follow. In fact, he would be almost bound not to give such great assistance to the Government unless something in return were obtained. I need hardly observe that compromises made in this House, in consequence of open argument, are very different in their character from those which we might expect to see extorted from the Government in return for the exercise of this power by the Leader of the Opposition. I have already referred to the speech which I made on this subject in March last, one part of which seems to me to have received a very unnecessary and unfair amount of attention. It is charged against me that I not only indicated the measures which the Government seek to pass by means of this Procedure, but also the Members of the House against whom it is to be used. Now, I think that charge would never have been urged by anyone who took the trouble to read attentively the speech I made. I was not attempting to indicate in any way the manner in which this Rule would be put in practice, but was arguing against the position, maintained by some Members of the House, that the closing power was unnecessary, and that Obstruction should be dealt with by penal Procedure. I was arguing that the time of the House was unduly consumed by Members acting perfectly within their rights, against whom it would be unfair to proceed in any penal manner, but who were, from a mistaken sense of duty, often guilty of occupying an inordinate share of the time of the House. I may have been mistaken, and if, in so speaking, I offended any hon. Member of this House, I beg to express my most sincere regret for having done so; but I was endeavouring to show that the House should have the means of defending itself against unwarrantable intrusion upon its time, without resorting to penal Procedure. I have no difficulty in understanding the position, and I can, to some extent, sympathize with the feelings of those who are offering a decided and direct opposition to the proposal of the Government. I can understand that those who are not directly responsible for the conduct of affairs do not feel as strongly, perhaps, as we do, all the inconvenience, all the actual danger of the delay and difficulty which now besets the progress of almost every kind of Public Business. And I can also understand that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are not in general of opinion that any considerable legislative changes are required, are averse from alterations in our Procedure which are apparently intended to render those legislative changes possible. But I ask whether they think that the barrier in which they place so much reliance—the Obstruction which can be offered by delay, concealed under the name of discussion—will ultimately prove to be a strong and valid barrier against legislation? The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock told you yesterday that the dyke to which right hon. Gentlemen attached so much importance would soon be swept away. Do you think that the process of delaying measures by the simple method of talking against them, the barrier you now possess, would really stand against the strongly-expressed desire of the people for any measure of legislation? That feeble barrier would, undoubtedly, be swept away by any strong current or wave of popular opinion, and to rest upon the contrary belief would be to dwell in a fool's paradise. I believe you will find a stronger and firmer security in raising the character of the debates in this House, and in restoring to them the interest they once possessed, and which of late has unquestionably abated. But, Sir, whatever may be your opinion on this subject, whatever may be your opinion as to the Rule itself which the Government is proposing, I cannot believe that the House of Commons, prepared, as it is, to assent in principle to a Motion of this kind, will, at the same time, introduce into it conditions which will, while destroying the efficiency of the Rule, import into our proceedings an innovation hitherto unheard of—which will destroy the sense of responsibility of those who are responsible for the proceedings in the House, and place in the hands of those who are not responsible a power which they will have no means of exercising for the public good.

Mr. CALLAN said, he could not give a silent vote in the division which was about to take place. He must confess he was an unwilling and reluctant participator in that decision. He quite agreed with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), who spoke yesterday, that a two-thirds' majority was much more objectionable than even a bare majority. He (Mr. Callan) would prefer a three-fifths' majority, because, in that case, the *clôture* could not be applied to either side in the House without the sanction and the complicity of the Irish Party. He remembered that the last time they were asked to vote as a Party was on the second reading of the Irish Land Bill—a Bill beneficial to the Irish people —and upon that occasion they were asked to abstain from voting because of the arrest of one of their Party. They were asked to vote to-night, and he and many of his Friends were, in consequence of the mandate of their Party, to be dragged at the wheels of a coercive Government. In the Session of 1880, when they took their place in the House, they were a Party of upwards of 60; but now he found, in consequence of a number of their Party having gone gradually to the ranks of those whom the Prime Minister so happily called "the nominal Home Rulers," there were, in fact, only one or two who might be called "the Last Roses of Summer." Some of the nominal Home Rulers, or Whigs, who sat on his side of the House, still professed to belong to the Irish Party. There need be no secrecy observed, because it was stated to-night, in the newspapers, that the division, on which 23 votes in the forthcoming division depended, was carried merely by the casting vote of the Chairman of the meeting (Mr. Parnell). The Irish Party would have been abstainers from the division to-night, but for the votes of one or two nominal Home Rulers. It was well that the country should know that the Irish Party were so united that some of them would even consent to vote with the Government upon this question, rather than be disobedient to the decision of their Party, though that decision might be brought about by the votes of one or two arrant Whigs in their midst. He wished it to be quite clear that he and others were about to vote out of obedience to their Party's mandate, and not as supporters of a coercive and atrocious Government.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 238; Noes 322: Majority 84.

AYES.

Alexander, Colonel
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barne, F. St. J. N.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, rt. hon. Sir M. H.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hon. G. C.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Biddell W.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, rt. hon. R.
Brise, Colonel R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Brooks, W. C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burnaby, General E. S.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collins, T.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Courtauld, G.
Cowen, J.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. W.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, G. W.
Elliot, Sir G.
Emlyn, Viscount
Ennis, Sir J.
Estcourt, G. S.
Feilden, Major-General R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Fitzpatrick, hn. B. E. B.
Fitzwilliam, hon. C. W. W.
Fitzwilliam, hn. H. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Fort, R.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gore-Langton, W. S.
Grantham, W.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Grey, A. H. G.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Harcourt, E. W.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hinchingbrook, Visc.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J. G.
Jackson, W. L.
Jenkins, D. J.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, T.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Mac Iver, D.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
March, Earl of
Marriott, W. T.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Miles, C. W.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Monckton, F.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Murray, C. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W.
Nicholson, W. N.
Noel, rt. hon. G. J.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, H. S.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Onslow, D.
Paget, R. H.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Peek, Sir H.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sandon, Viscount
Schreiber, C.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, Lord H.
Scott, M. D.
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Shaw, W.
Smith, A.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F. A.
Stanley, E. J.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, T.
Tollemache, hon. W. F.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walpole, rt. hon. S.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walter, J.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Welby-Gregory, Sir W.
Whitley, E.
Williams, Colonel O.
Wilmot, Sir H.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.

Crichton, Viscount
Winn, R.

NOES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Acland, Sir T. D.
Agnew, W.
Allen, W. S.

Amory, Sir J. H.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Bass, H.
Bass, M. T.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Biggar, J. G.
Blake, J. A.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, H. R.
Brassey, H. A.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Buxton, F. W.
Byrne, G. M.
Caine, W. S.
Callan, P.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H.C.E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Colthurst, Col. D. La T.
Corbet, W. J.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Creyke, R.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Currie, Sir D.
Daly, J.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
Dawson, C.
Dickson, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, Sir C. W.
Dilke, A. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Adm. hon. F.
Errington, G.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gabbett, D. F.
Gill, H. J.
Givan, J.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Glyn, hon. S. C.
Gordon, Sir A.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Gray, E. D.
Grenfell, W. H.
Guest, M. J.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Healy, T. M.
Heneage, E.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, E. S.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Illingworth, A.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.
James, Sir H.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, rt. hon. W. M.
Johnson, E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Laing, S.
Lalor, R.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lawrence, Sir J. C.
Lawrence, W.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Leigh, hon. G. H. C.
Lloyd, M.
Lusk, Sir A.
Lymington, Viscount
Lyons, R. D.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Coan, J. C.
Macfarlane, D. H.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Lagan, P.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, E.
Martin, P.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. Story-
Matheson, Sir A.
Maxwell-Heron, J.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Molloy, B. C.
Monk, C. J.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Noel, E.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Beirne, Colonel F.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donoghue, The
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Kelly, J.
O'Shaughnessy, R.
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Otway, Sir A.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, A.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Peddie, J. D.
Peel, A. W.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.
Philips, R. N.
Porter, A. M.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, J. O'C.
Price, Sir R. G.
Pugh, L. P.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Sellar, A. C.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheil, E.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Slagg, J.
Smith, E.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, J.
Storey, S.
Stuart, H. V.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Synan, E. J.

Talbot, C. R. M.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Verney, Sir H.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Vivian, A. P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waterlow, Sir S. H.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
Whalley, G. H.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.
Grosvenor, Lord R.
Kensington, Lord

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 3rd November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—PRESENCE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AT THE DEPARTURE OF THE MECCA CARPET.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can give the House any explanation of the circumstances under which the Commander in Chief and Her Majesty's troops attended the departure of the Holy Carpet for Mecca?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that I have discussed this question with Sir Garnet Wolseley, who has furnished me with a Memorandum, which, if the hon. Gentleman will move for it, shall be laid on the Table. The facts, in short, are that no people are more averse to idolatry than Mussulmans, and that no worship is paid to the Mecca Carpets presented by the Sultan and Khedive respectively, but that the Howdah or litter, which is supposed to represent the presence of the Suzerain, has always been the object of honours, and is annually saluted as the Queen's Colours are saluted throughout Her Dominions. The Khedive's Egyptian Army has ceased to exist, and Sir Garnet Wolseley as Military Governor of Cairo considered that Her Majesty's troops, which on this occasion were to a large extent Mussulmans, should give the same salute as that given by Egyptians. Their presence was, in fact, essential for the preservation of order on an occasion of great annual interest, when large numbers of the population in and around Cairo are collected. Section 2, paragraph 70, of the Queen's Regulations, especially sanctions such salutes as may have been customary on these occasions, and I consider that Sir Garnet Wolseley acted in accordance with the spirit of that Regulation.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—LONDONDERRY MAGISTRATES.

MR. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a report contained in the "Irish Times" of Tuesday, the 24th October, giving an account of a case brought before the bench of magistrates at Londonderry on the previous day, in which a man named Patrick Wray was accused of having publicly cursed the Queen and Constitution; whether it is true that Mr. O'Neill, one of the magistrates trying the case, used the following language while the prosecutor, Serjeant Major Pigeon, of the East Yorkshire Regiment, was giving his evidence:—"It is a mere cooking up of a case, and nothing else;" and later on: "It is making a mountain of a molehill," and other remarks of a like nature; and, whether he will make an inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have seen the account of the case referred to by the hon. Member; but I do not see any reason for inquiry into the circumstances. Indeed, I have no power to order such an inquiry, because any complaint against a magistrate for his conduct while acting in his judicial capacity should be addressed to the Lord Chancellor.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CHARGE OF "MOONLIGHTING" AGAINST "EMERGENCY MEN" AT MURROE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that the emergency or property defence men, tried for "moonlighting" on the 23rd October at Murroe, were discharged, though three respectable witnesses fully identified them, and positively swore they were the men who with blackened faces demanded money and arms from them on the night of the 10th October; whether the only evidence to rebut this was that given by other emergency men, comrades of the prisoners; whether one of the accused, named Parker, is the individual a short time since charged with deliberately firing on some children in Cappamore, and who still more recently underwent a month's imprisonment for assaulting the police, and whether he had been only a few days out of gaol; and, whether the Government will allow such persons to carry firearms?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have read the papers in this case with great attention, and I consider it my duty to refer them to the Attorney General for his advice upon the subject. I shall see that the matter is brought before the notice of the licensing officer, who will decide whether this is a proper person to be trusted with a licence for firearms.

Mr. HEALY said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give a specific reply to the latter part of his Question.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he did not think that it would be right to answer fully the Question of the hon. Member at the present time. On a future day the hon. Member might, if he should think fit, repeat his inquiry.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—MURDER OF A WOMAN AT ONITSCHA.

Mr. ERRINGTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the trial and conviction at Sierre Leone of two ex-employés of the Church Missionary Society for the murder of a woman at Onitscha on the Niger; and, whether, considering the gravity of this case, as well as the long delay of five years which elapsed before the culprits were brought to justice, Her Majesty's Government will consider the expediency of directing its representatives, especially on the oil rivers, to exercise greater vigilance in the detection and punishment of outrages on Natives?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, Onitscha, where this crime was committed, is outside the jurisdiction of any of the African Colonies, and the delay in bringing the criminals to justice may be explained by the fact that it was not till the early part of 1880 that any adequate evidence was obtained, when the Administrator of Lagos forwarded it to the Colonial Office. It must further be remembered that a cumbrous Commission under the provisions of two Acts of George III. was the only means whereby the prosecution could be carried out, and that prisoners and witnesses had to be fetched and brought down a distance of 2,000 miles to Sierra Leone. On the whole, I must congratulate our representatives on the coast for the perseverance and success with which they have pursued the authors of the most abominable cruelties. The terms of a new Order in Council are under consideration, under which it is hoped that British subjects guilty of crimes within the Consular jurisdiction on the West Coast of Africa may be more easily punished.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND)—SCARLATINA IN ARKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that scarlatina broke out in the Constabulary Barrack at Arklow, and that a child died of the disease; whether he is aware that the Barrack is the most isolated building in the town, and has two vacant wings, notwithstanding which fact the medical attendant ordered the men's families to leave and go into lodgings in the town, to the great consternation of the inhabitants; whether this order was carried out as late as eleven o'clock at night; whether it is the fact that complaints were made against the head constable for taking the complaints of the men against the medical attendant, and that after the investigation by the county inspector the head constable was sent to Connaught; and, finally, whether he will order an independent inquiry on oath into the whole facts of the case, including the alleged stoppage of one shilling per month from each man's pay for medical attendance?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I find, Sir, that scarlatina did break out in the Constabulary barrack at Arklow, and that two children died of the disease. The barrack is the most isolated building in the town. It has but one vacant wing, which, in consequence of the outbreak of scarlatina, has been occupied by the head constable's family. The medical attendant did not order the removal of the men's families from the barracks. The children were removed in accordance with the Regulations of the Force. Those affected were sent to hospital, while the remainder went with their parents into lodgings. The Sub-Inspector states that he is not aware that there was any consternation in the town, and that all the children had left the barrack before 9 o'clock in the evening. The medical attendant did complain of Head Constable M'Coy for inviting the men to express dissatisfaction and want of confidence in the Medical Officer; but, while the Inspector General considered that the head constable was wanting in discretion on the occasion, no censure or punishment was administered. The head constable's removal to Castlerea some time afterwards was wholly unconnected with the question relative to the medical attendant. The Inspector General informs me positively that there is no stoppage made from the men's pay for medical attendance, and I cannot see why an inquiry on oath should be asked for.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—GUN LICENCES (MR. JAMES BOYLAN).

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. LEAHY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds the resident magistrate refused a gun licence to Mr. James Boylan, of Carbury, who is a large farmer, and was recommended by two justices of the peace?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Resident Magistrate, in the exercise of his discretion as licensing officer of the district, declined to grant Mr. Boylan a gun licence unless he produced a certificate such as the law requires from two magistrates residing in the district. Whenever he does so, the Resident Magistrate is quite prepared to grant him a licence.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—RURAL LETTER CARRIERS.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the letter-carrier between Kesh Carrigan and Drumcong, county Leitrim, has to perform his duties at all seasons of the year and chiefly during the night, only receives an annual salary of £4 13*s.* 6*d.* to carry the letters a distance of ten miles; and, whether it is contemplated to make any revision of the scale of wages of rural letter-carriers with a view of giving an increase of salary?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, the facts of the case to which my hon. Friend refers are simply these. The sub-postmaster of Drumcong has to send twice a day to meet the mail cart at Kesh Carrigan, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, and for this, in addition to his allowance as sub-postmaster, he receives £5 a year. He ought to give the whole of this sum to the letter carrier who does the work; I find, however, he gives him a few shillings less. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I may state that, although there has been no general revision of the scale of wages of rural letter carriers, the system of good-conduct stripes, which has hitherto been confined to London, has now been extended to the entire country, and a certain number of these stripes will be bestowed on the rural letter carriers who are on the establishment. I may add that the introduction of a parcel post will probably render it necessary in numerous instances to re-arrange the duties of rural letter carriers.

MR. SCHREIBER asked the right hon. Gentleman when the parcel post would be introduced?

MR. FAWCETT: I am sorry I cannot state with certainty when it will be introduced. It is, as I have already said, very undesirable to bring it into operation until all our arrangements are complete. No effort is being spared to hasten the arrangements, and I can assure the hon. Member and the House generally that the very moment the Post Office is ready the country shall not have an hour's delay.

MR. BROADHURST asked when the good-conduct stripes would be served out to the rural letter carriers?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, he thought that the arrangements had already been made. The authorities were then engaged in finding out the letter carriers entitled to receive the stripes.

VACCINATION ACTS—BEDFORD MAGISTRATES.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a case of distraint under the Vaccination Acts, at Bedford, in which, for a fine of 11*s.* 6*d.*, laid on the 13th March 1882, goods have been seized of the value of eleven guineas, on the 6th September 1882, six months after the case was heard, and while the parents were mourning for the loss by death of the child for the non-vaccination of which the prosecution was instituted; and, if he will make such representations to magistrates, or issue such instructions, as will prevent in future similar proceedings?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had no particular information as to the details of this case; but he wished to point out to his hon. and learned Friend that he had no power to set aside the decisions of magistrates. He had often stated in that House that he had no power to issue instructions to magistrates which would prevent them from putting the law into execution. If the law were put into execution in a manner which appeared to be harsh, then the Secretary of State had, under limited conditions, the power to interfere with the sentence being carried out; but he had no power to give instructions to magistrates how to exercise their functions.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—OCCURRENCES IN BRITISH SHERBRO.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether information has been received respecting occurrences in British Sherbro, on the West Coast of Africa, in April last; whether the town of Mattroo was blown up, many natives slain, and a chief named Lahsarris taken prisoner by a force commanded by the Governor of Sierra Leone; what was the justification for this action, and whether the chief has been set at liberty; and, whether the Despatch of the Governor, relating the circumstances, be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that it would be impossible for him to go fully or fairly into the matters to which this Question related in the course of a limited answer. He therefore proposed at once to lay upon the Table the documents which would supply his hon. and learned Friend with the information he required. With respect to the Chief Lahsarris, he might say that he was still in custody under the provisions of an order passed by the Legislature of Sierra Leone?

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—HYDE PARK CORNER.

Mr. WARTON asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether any contract has been entered into in respect of the contemplated alterations near Hyde Park Corner; and, if so, whether the contractor has undertaken to remove the arch near Hyde Park Corner bodily to its new position; and, if not, if he could state why?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, I have entered into a contract for the execution of the works at Hyde Park Corner, and they are now in course of progress. With respect to the Wellington Arch, I told the House in July last that I expected it would be moved bodily. I had been advised by more than one authority that this could be done at a considerably less cost than that of pulling it down and rebuilding it. When, however, the plans for removing it were submitted to a contractor, it was found that, owing partly to the flimsy construction of the arch and partly to the slippery nature of the soil on which it would have to be moved, the cost of the removal was about the same as the cost of pulling it down and rebuilding; and consequently, by the advice of Mr. Fowler, the eminent engineer, I abandoned the project of moving it in a more adventurous manner.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked what course it was proposed to take with regard to the statue?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The statue will come down in consequence of the arch being pulled down. When the arch is rebuilt, the statue will not be reinstated without some previous experiments to find some better and more dignified place for it.

RAILWAYS—USE OF MIRRORS.

Dr. CAMERON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his Department possesses any information regarding the use of mirrors fitted on a locomotive engine on the North British Railway, by Mr. Lockhead, of Glasgow, in such a manner as to enable the driver clearly to see the whole train behind him without turning round; and, whether, in view of the recent fatal fire in a Pullman car in the Scotch Midland Express, he would consider the advisability of recommending some such arrangement on all passenger trains?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I have made inquiries into this subject, and I am informed that the arrangement referred to in the Question is not a novel one, but was employed on the South Devon Railway some 20 years ago; and as regards the particular experiment which has recently been made on the North British Railway, I have received a report from the general manager of that line to the effect that one of their locomotives was fitted up with a mirror, but after a fair trial it was removed. He says—

> "The experiment we made showed that the mirror was unsuitable, as the drivers complained of their eyesight getting dazzled, and so confused their look-out ahead for signals,"

which was considered of much more importance than any advantage which might be derived from a mirror.

IRELAND—THE LABOURERS' QUESTION—LEGISLATION.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government are preparing any scheme for the settlement of the Irish labourers' question during the next Session of Parliament?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, if I had noticed this Question in time, I would have written to the hon. Member suggesting that, as this Question relates to a matter of policy, it should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: I will ask the Question of the Prime Minister on Monday.

EGYPT—MISSION OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN.

MR. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any representations have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government by any of the Great Powers, or by the Porte, with reference to Lord Dufferin's Mission to Egypt; and, if so, whether he can state their tenour; and, whether a special Turkish Mission is also proceeding to Egypt?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, no representations have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government by any of the Great Powers. Representations have been made by the Porte, but under a misconception, the Porte believing that Lord Dufferin's visit implied some change in the nature of our diplomatic relations with the Porte, and also thinking that there was no precedent for a visit to Egypt by the British Ambassador at Constantinople. It has been explained that there is no change in our diplomatic relations with the Porte, and that there are two precedents—those of Sir Henry Bulwer and Sir Henry Elliot. We know nothing of any special Turkish Mission to Egypt.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked if the Government would lay upon the Table the Instructions given to Lord Dufferin?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that no promise of that kind could be made up to the present moment. Those Instructions would, in all probability, be despatched that night. He should think it probable that they would be included in a future series of Papers.

SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM, DUBLIN.

DR. LYONS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will consent to appoint a Committee to reconsider the question of the designs and site for the proposed new Museum in Dublin? He also wished to ask on whose advice the site of a great National Museum was restricted to one angle of a space covering more than four acres?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, my hon. Friend wishes to have a Committee appointed to re-open the questions of the site and designs of the Science and Art Museum in Dublin. The establishment of this Museum was proposed more than six years ago by Lord Sandon, and Leinster House and the neighbouring area was designated as the most appropriate site. Some time elapsed before Government could obtain control of this area; but two years since this had been done, and a choice had then to be made between the Leinster Lawn site, on the east, and the Kildare Street site, on the west of Leinster House. It was considered desirable that an opportunity should be afforded to the people of Dublin of considering this question. Sketch designs were prepared, showing how the two sites might be occupied, and sent to Dublin, where facilities for inspection were afforded to all those interested, it being explained that whichever site were adopted the designs would be thrown open for competition. The Visitors of the Museum were also consulted informally. The opposition to the Leinster Lawn site was, however, very strong, and the Science and Art Department reluctantly abandoned it. Steps were at once taken to obtain designs; and early in September, 1881, a public competition was invited for designs for the erection of the Museum in the position and within the area designated on the plans then published. As my hon. Friend is aware, a large number of sketch designs were sent in; and out of these, the authors of them being entirely unknown, five were selected by a committee consisting of Lord Powerscourt, Dr. Moyers, the then Lord Mayor of Dublin, Sir George Hodson, Sir Robert Kane, and Mr. M'Curdy, the President of the Dublin Institute of Architects. It was afterwards discovered that no Irish competitor had obtained a place among the five. I may regret this result; but I cannot find in it, or in any other circumstance of the case, a justification for the proposal to re-open the question of the site and plan. The Leinster Lawn site was rejected in deference to local feeling more than two years since; the alternative site was then accepted, none other having been suggested, and no remonstrance has been heard in respect of it, although its exact situation was publicly known and advertised until after the result of the recent competition. I need not point out the enormous inconvenience and delay of starting this question afresh, not to speak of the liabilities we should be under to the architects who have engaged in the recent competition.

Dr. LYONS: My hon. Friend has not answered the latter part of the Question of which I gave him private Notice.

Mr. COURTNEY: It is involved in the answer which I have already given.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—ARREST OF MR. M. HARRIS.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any information with regard to the dispersal of the meeting at Newbridge, county Galway, by Mr. Mansfield, R.M., and the arrest of Mr. Matthew Harris while addressing the meeting; and, whether notice required by the Crimes Act was given to those composing the meeting previous to its dispersal?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the matter with regard to which the hon. Member for the City of Cork inquires has ever since the first announcement in the newspapers received the earnest attention of the Government. The Question divides itself into two parts. The first part is retrospective as to the proceedings at the meeting—the arrest of Mr. M. Harris—and the circumstances under which that arrest was made. The Government is bound to have a decided opinion upon what has passed; but it is equally bound to make up that opinion after a close and full inquiry. I may say that a telegraphic answer has come to the effect that the meeting was not interfered with, but that the chairman dissolved it verbally. I state this because I am bound to give the hon. Member the best answer I can to his Question; but I have taken care that this point, like others, will be the matter of careful inquiry. The next part of the Question is as to whether Mr. Harris's speech was such as to render it proper to prosecute him under the Intimidation Clause of the Prevention of Crime Act.

Mr. PARNELL: I have not asked that Question.

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Question, I think, was asked yesterday, and it is so closely connected with the inquiry of the hon. Member that it can be dealt with in the same answer. Now, on this point an absolute rule has been laid down that no prosecution is to take place under the Prevention of Crime Act for words spoken on a platform, or for writings in a newspaper, until the question has been brought before both the Lord Lieutenant and myself. We shall, as always, examine into the matter and decide on our responsibility.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman says that the meeting was not dispersed. I beg to ask him if he has read the newspaper report containing these words—

"Mr. Stewart, S.I.: Stop the meeting, sir.

> "Mr. Kirwan: By whose authority are you interfering with this constitutional meeting, sir?
>
> "No answer."

I quote these words from the report of *The Daily Express* of Dublin, an organ not likely to be favourable to the meeting.

MR. TREVELYAN: I do not attach much weight to the newspaper reports. I have read that report, and it is in consequence of that that I gave the hon. Member the best answer I could. But I have taken special care that the matter shall be completely inquired into.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: It appears to me that the Question is not in reference to a prosecution at all. It is in reference to the arrest of Mr. Harris, and whether that arrest was justified or not.

MR. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman states that the meeting was dissolved by the chairman. I beg to ask him whether the dissolution did not take place when the bayonets of the police were at the throats of the people?

MR. TREVELYAN: As I said, I have not the facts beyond those contained in the telegram, and I gave the best answer I could.

EGYPT—M. NINET.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to M. John Ninet's statement that, on Sir E. Malet's application that he should be released from prison in Egypt, he was sent on board the Egyptian steamer "Dakalieh," with papers falsely stating him to be an Ottoman subject bound for Smyrna; and, whether this was in accordance with the suggestion of Sir E. Malet, or any other English authority, as explained to M. Ninet by the Egyptian authorities?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: As I stated yesterday, this second letter of M. Ninet, which contains the statement in question, has been sent to Egypt for report.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT — LOCAL TAXATION AND ROADS SUBVENTION.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed next Session with the measures for the relief of Local Taxation indicated in the Speech from the Throne, at the beginning of the Session, and to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, with reference to the incidence of local burdens; and, as regards the Treasury Subvention for Roads, and the amount voted by this House (namely, £250,000), whether, in case of a considerable surplus after payment of the Subvention on the scale proposed, the rest of the money will be applied for the purpose for which it was voted?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, my hon. Friend may understand from what the Government have said, and have advised to be said, in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speeches from the Throne, what is the general position in which they consider the question of local taxation stands; but as to any positive engagement with regard to the measures which it would be their duty, or may be their duty, to introduce next Session, the Cabinet will not think the time to have arrived for making any such engagement, until they know more exactly what are to be the Rules of Procedure under which they will have to ask the attention of the House to those subjects. As to the latter part of the Question, the hon. Member asks—

> "Whether in case of a considerable surplus after payment of the subvention on the scale proposed the rest of the money will be applied to the purpose for which it was voted?"

Whatever the ordinary rule is, it will be applied. The form of Vote is "A sum not exceeding" the given sum; but as far as the facts are made known, there is no reason to believe that there will be a surplus such as the hon. Member appears from his Question to imagine.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

MR. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, With reference to the obligation imposed by the comity of Nations, when a friendly Government comes forward and asks for the arrest of certain men, undertaking to make a case for their extradition, whether Her Majesty's Government regard it to be the duty of another friendly Government to comply with such a request; and, whether the conduct of Her Majesty's Government will in future be guided in this sense in all cases of a demand for the extradition of persons who may find refuge in Great Britain? The hon. Member explained that he put the Question in consequence of an answer given last Thursday by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I would rather the Question had been referred either to the Representative of the Department concerned with such subjects, or to some of the legal authorities of the Government. As far as I can form a judgment, I do not think the Question refers with exactitude to the answer given on a former occasion by my hon. Friend (Mr. Evelyn Ashley). My hon. Friend was giving an answer, as I understand it, with reference to a case where a Treaty of Extradition exists between two countries, and where a certain power has been exercised for proceeding under that Treaty. But, of course, an obligation imposed by a Treaty is not an obligation under the comity of nations, and consequently the Question, as it has been put, appears hardly to apply to the answer given by my hon. Friend. With respect to any obligation imposed by the comity of nations, that presumably would have to be considered not as a general rule, but as a case to be judged according to the circumstances, and also as limited by the provisions of the Municipal Law. As the hon. Gentleman knows, Her Majesty's Government have no general power under an Extradition Treaty to deliver persons up to a foreign Government on a mere allegation of offence, but only certain powers under the Extradition Treaty given in consideration or in consequence of that Treaty.

Mr. LEWIS said, that he had drawn up his Question in accordance with the statement of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, but was very courteously informed by the Clerk at the Table that the Question was not in Order. He had ventured to restore it to the original form, and he hoped that when he put it again it would not be ruled out of Order.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Captain AYLMER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, seeing that the chamber in which the House of Commons sits is constructed to seat only half the number of Members, he contemplates proposing the erection of another chamber capable of seating all the Members, so that in the event of the 1st Resolution becoming Law, Mr. Speaker may be able to take the evident sense of the whole House and not of a part thereof?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, if an opinion had been framed by any impartial spectator of the capacity of this House to accommodate its Members from the observation of the attendance during the recent important debates, undoubtedly he would have been disposed to say, not so much that the House required to be enlarged, as that it admitted of being contracted. This is a subject which cannot be dealt with in an answer to a Question. It was a subject of considerable and serious discussion in this House about 12 years ago, and there is, no doubt, a great deal to be said upon it. At the same time, however, I must say that we have not arrived at the conclusion that another Chamber is necessary and ought to be built.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FOURTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. E. W. HARCOURT, in moving an Amendment requiring the consent of five-eighths of the Members present previous to putting the *clôture* in operation, said, he had no wish to make another speech that night upon the same subject as last night. He thought, however, that it was such a serious matter for the honour of the House to be made a Party question that he could not help hanging upon it a little. He had been asked what his Amendment meant. Well, in simple language, it meant that in a House of 80 Members the consent of 50 Members should be obtained before *clôture* could be granted, and so on. Although it might be an acknowledgment of stupidity on his part, he must confess that he could not appreciate all the refinements the right hon. Gentleman had introduced into his Resolutions. Indeed, several of the right hon. Gentleman's Friends had asked him the meaning of them. He could not think the right hon. Gentleman believed that the Opposition was the least less tender of the honour of the House or of the economy of its Business than the occupants of the Treasury Bench. He would say that if the objects of the right hon. Gentleman's Resolutions were not confined to the repression of Obstruction, then the country had been deceived. If the country were canvassed to-morrow, it would be found that it never intended to furnish new weapons for the majority to use after its arguments had been exhausted.

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "taken," to insert the words "unless it shall appear to have been supported by five-eighths of those present, and."—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought the House generally would feel that this question was but infinitesimally different from that decided last night. The House had rejected an Amendment requiring a majority of 66 out of 100 for the ruling of the question of the closing power, and now it was proposed to require a majority of 62. The hon. Gentleman must himself be disposed to agree that, in the main, the House had decided the question by the vote of last night, and that all the arguments used against the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson's) Amendment were applicable to this proposal. The House need scarcely enter into a system of regard for minute fractions. If they did, it would be necessary before electing a Speaker to the Chair to put him through an examination in what were known as vulgar fractions.

COLONEL MAKINS desired to protest against the charge of wilful and persistent Obstruction that had been made by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) against that side of the House and against himself. The hon. Member had instanced the cases of the discussion on the Bill to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister and on the Transfer of Land Bill. Such charges were wholly unfounded. The hon. Member had also imputed to him Obstruction in connection with the Transfer of Land Bill. He had thought himself entitled to take part in the debate on that measure. Perhaps the cost of the transfer of land did not appear to be a matter of so much importance to the branch of the Profession to which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton belonged as it did to other people.

MR. SPEAKER pointed out that although the hon. and gallant Member might, by the indulgence of the House, make a personal explanation, he was now travelling from the Question before the House.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he had been anxious to prove how impossible it was that the odious charge of persistent Obstruction could fairly be made against him; but he would not pursue that personal matter further. Turning to the Question before the House, perhaps the division of last night might be presumed to cover, to a great extent, the ground taken by the Amendment now before them. But he would urge that the large question of a proportionate majority was not exhausted because one particular form of it had been decided upon by the House, and that that question was one not unworthy of further discussion. With respect to the *clôture* generally, he regarded it as being undesirable, and as likely to prove destructive, to a great extent, to the character and prestige of their debates. He could not help foreseeing that the powers sought for by the Government, if some hon. Members opposite had their way, would be used so tyrannically as to produce a feeling of irritation which would not tend to smooth the course of debate or facilitate the transaction of Public Business. It could not be said with any fairness that the Conservative Party, as a Party, had ever been guilty of Obstruction; and there were frequent occasions in the last and in the present Session when the Conservative Party, if they had thought it their duty to place Party interests above the dignity of the House and the interests of the country, might have abstained from affording the Government the assistance which they had rendered them. He thought it was unfair, therefore, for the Government suddenly to seek so to alter the Rules under which Party contests in the House had been conducted for generations as that they might carry on the game more to their own advantage. He entirely separated the 1st of the proposed Resolutions from the rest of the series, and he believed that if passed in its present form the 1st Resolution would create a soreness and an exasperation which would hardly facilitate the progress of legislation. By its agency a particular debate might sometimes be cut short; but it would probably tend to multiply occasions of debates, and thus fail to save the time of the House. Another and still more serious injury to the House would be, not that the Rule would affect the impartiality of the present Speaker, but that it would produce a doubt whether the Speaker of the future would not on some occasions, in spite of himself, be involuntarily influenced by Party feeling. In conclusion, if the present Amendment was pressed to a division, he would consistently vote for it, having previously supported the Amendment in favour of a two-thirds' majority.

Mr. MUNTZ said, he was at a loss to understand the attitude taken up by hon. Members opposite on this question. When he looked at the Front Opposition Bench, and recollected the intolerable Obstruction to which they were subjected four or five years ago—when he remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) was obliged to admit that under the use which was then made of the powers of the House the conduct of Business would become impossible—he should have thought they would gladly adopt this Resolution. In fact, he should have thought hon. Gentlemen opposite would have been glad to afford all the assistance they could to Her Majesty's Government in passing the proposals they had brought forward; for the time must come when they would occupy these Benches. For his own part, he was extremely grateful to them for bringing forward these Resolutions, and would give them his support. They all knew perfectly well that Englishmen would never part with liberty, and that, therefore, no attempt would be made to prevent the free expression of opinion. If anything of the kind were done, there would be such a whirlwind of indignation that it would sweep away any Government; and, in addition to what might occur out-of-doors, the House itself would turn out the Government of the day. He was not talking of anything that would take place while Mr. Speaker was in the Chair; but there might be a Chairman of Committees who would listen to the dictation of Parties, and take a Party view. There were even occasions on which it would be impossible for him to do do otherwise. He had paid a great deal of attention to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and his proposal of closing the debate by a two-thirds' majority. The proposal was decided in the negative on the previous evening; but it was a proposal well worth debating, and he was very much inclined to think that it was much better than the one now before the House. The proposal before the House was one which was met by the provision brought forward by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), and consented to by the Prime Minister, which gave security that there would be full play given to a debate before it was closed. Therefore, the House had ample safeguards for anything that might be done under these New Rules. He admitted that the proposals of the Government seemed to him to be unfortunately like a large net with wide meshes to catch the large fish and let the little ones through. Yet some measures were necessary, for it could not be denied that Obstruction had been rampant of late years. In former years the House never had its Business obstructed by 30 or 40 Members, and obstructed in such a manner as to render it unendurable. That had been the case lately, and he only feared that the Rules did not go far enough, and would not have the effect required. He thought the Amendment of the hon. Member in favour of a majority of five-eighths would be a failure if carried, and for that reason he felt bound to oppose it.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he could not understand the objection of the hon. Member who had sat down to the principle of a proportionate majority, because, unless he was very much mistaken, he had seen a letter signed by the hon. Gentleman in favour of *clôture* by a proportionate majority.

MR. MUNTZ said, that the House had now decided in favour of a bare majority.

MR. CHAPLIN observed, that it would be interesting to know how the hon. Member had voted last night.

MR. MUNTZ replied, that he was unavoidably absent from the division.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that the hon. Member, with great prudence, and with something less than chivalry, was unavoidably absent, and there were other hon. Members who shared his views who had followed very much the same course. At any rate, they would have been glad of some expression of opinion; but the hon. Member had been silent until the day after the division was taken, and then said that the matter could not now be questioned, because it was finally decided. But did it follow that it was finally decided? The Opposition were contending, to the best of their ability, against the proposition which they honestly believed would be injurious to the House of Commons and the interests of the country, and they must avail themselves of every means in their power to defeat the scheme of the Government. The hon. Member had said the Resolution would not stop Obstruction. Did he think with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that the real purpose of the measure was the pressing forward of some drastic legislation through the House? If he was in favour of the two-thirds' majority, why had he not the courage of his opinions to vote in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson)?

MR. WARTON complained that the Prime Minister had stated that if the proposals were carried the Speaker would have to pass an examination in vulgar fractions. He should like to suggest one or two other mathematical problems of the same character for the Prime Minister's consideration. What fraction of his original majority was the number 84? The Prime Minister began with a majority of 176, and now it had been reduced to about one-half. There was no principle in two-thirds any more than in five-eighths; and he believed that they would be perfectly justified if they took every fraction that they could, and resisted from point to point this proposal which was intended for the basest Party purposes. The opinion of the Prime Minister with regard to proportionate majorities appeared to be very much like that of Dogberry upon another subject—that they were "most tolerable, and not to be endured."

MR. O'DONNELL said, if it were the policy of the Opposition to make use of every technical right which they still possessed to compel the Government to take the view of the country and the constituencies before that loathsome Resolution was passed, he could understand the object of the hon. Member who had asked the House to consider the question of a five-eighth Amendment. He certainly thought that the Opposition would be justified in using to the very utmost technical rights which, on the present occasion, were the real rights, not only of the Opposition, but of every independent Member of the House; but he had not yet attained to that exalted idea of the resolution of the present Leaders of the Conservative Party to imagine that for a single moment they would contemplate a determination half so desperate. If there was to be no real opposition worthy of the importance of the occasion to be offered by the Conservative Party, he did not think it was worth fighting for the difference between a five-eighths' and two-thirds' majority. The previous night he could not vote in accordance with the most deplorable decision arrived at by the Irish Members. Last night the liberties of independent Members of that House were given over, without hope and without mercy, to a bare Ministerial majority. [MR. NEWDEGATE: Hear, hear!] As far as the Irish Members were concerned, their power of expressing their opinions in the future was absolutely dependent upon the bare Ministerial majority. The pretended provisions for the protection of minorities were mere shams as regarded their practical effect. What a slight exertion on the part of the Government Whip would be required to get together a Ministerial rump of 100 Members to silence 20 Members! Though the provisions had served their purpose of gulling a portion of Irish opinion, they were arrant shams. It would always be easier for a powerful Minister to get together 200 servile Members, than for Ireland—poor, and compelled to choose her Members from the poor—to place 40 or 45 men in the House; and he also knew that it would be within the power of both English Parties to prevent the enlightenment of the Irish constituencies to that degree by which they would increase the number of their Representatives. Apart from the Irish Members, he would still remind the Conservative Party that, after all, they had not so very much in the immediate future, at any rate, to dread from the passing of the bare majority *clôture.* First of all, they had the guarantee of such a Speaker as the present, who was not at all likely to behave unfairly to them; and, in the second place, they had a guarantee that, in all probability, the Speaker's immediate Successor would be a gentleman who would remember what was due to English gentlemen. Again, there were these two powerful guarantees under even the bare majority *clôture* for the English Opposition—the guarantee of the opinion of the English constituencies, which, in all probability, might be relied upon to resent the improper use of the *clôture* against English opinion. And, finally, it might be a matter of special consolation to the Conservative Party that the action of the Government in erecting a Liberal majority into a chartered tyranny over the House of Commons would bring into a prominence which it had not possessed for centuries the ancient Constitutional Privilege of the House of Lords. The House of Lords would be a small guarantee for Irish Members; but, under the New Constitution, it would be the sheet-anchor of Conservative freedom. Even Radicals and Democrats would be very careful about using this tyrannical power against English Conservatives, as it would enable the House of Lords to come forward, and, with the applause even of English Democrats, vindicate the outraged liberties of English freemen. It was a painful and a dangerous matter for the contemplation of Englishmen that such restrictions as those of the constituencies and those of the House of Lords must be exercised in order to protect freedom of opinion in that House. Still, as he had said, the position of the Conservative Party was tolerably safe for a considerable time to come; and if next year, or the year after, the half-jocose, half-serious statement of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was carried into execution, and the *clôture* was used in order to cut short Conservative discussion, and to suppress Conservative liberty, they would find a remedy in the House of Lords and in the English constituencies. However slight might have been the liberty of Irish opinion in that House previously, and however slight it might have been under a two-third system of *clôture*, it was totally destroyed on the previous night; and the only hope remaining to the Irish nation was to look elsewhere than to Ministerial minorities and the Conservative Opposition in the House of Commons.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, that if the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) entertained so strong an opinion on the effect of *clôture* by a bare majority upon the fortunes of his Party, he ought to have voted last night for the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). He was, however, perhaps, as not having voted for the Government proposal, the only Member of the Irish Party from whom those opposed to the intended degradation of the House could accept consolation. It was necessary that the House should examine the arithmetical puzzle involved in the latter part of the Resolution, and also that the country should understand the nature of the restrictions and impediments under which hon. Members would hereafter have to perform their duties. If anyone could be safely intrusted with the great authority which attached to the Chair, it was the present Speaker. But he (Mr. Newdegate) did not look with any satisfaction upon the prospect that the Speaker was hereafter to be a kind of an officer, invested, like a schoolmaster, with the power of putting the House of Commons into the corner. He thought, therefore, that if his hon. Friends deemed it fit to protract the debate, they would do a service to the country, because he was perfectly convinced that no subject was less understood out-of-doors than the internal discipline of the House of Commons; and the more that was understood, the better prospect there was for a discriminating decision at the hustings upon the measure now before the House. In anything that concerned the great Assembly of which they were Members, their first duty was to maintain its honour. It had been acknowledged that hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side had been ready to support Her Majesty's Government when they thought the public interests or those of the House, which formed a large part of the public interests, were imperilled. He had known Liberal Members support a Conservative Government; and one of the worst effects of this measure would be the exaggeration and exasperation of Party spirit, until future Houses of Commons would forget the public interests and their public duties in a spirit of faction which had never before to the same extent prevailed in the House.

MR. CRAIG: I think most of us understood when we met last month that we were bound to discuss and to become familiar with the general principle of the Resolutions proposed by the Government, which we thought would work for the better regulation of the proceedings of the House; and it is lamentable to see that the discussion has degenerated into a mere question of arithmetical quibbles. We have had full discussion of the question as to whether it should not be two-thirds' majority or bare majority; now a question has been raised as to whether it should not be five-eighths. I must say that the hon. Member who felt it his duty to introduce this Amendment did so with good taste, and in a manner which consulted the convenience of the House and the dignity of his Party; but the speeches which have followed from the Conservative side are by no means in harmony with the spirit which animated the hon. Member for Oxfordshire. I think it is almost impossible to say anything new on this question of *clôture*. It seems to have been fully thrashed out on every point; but while the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) was speaking, it did occur to me that there was a possibility of raising a new point, and it is in order to lay that before hon. Members that I have risen to say a few words. We have had the point of liberty of debate well discussed; and it was well asked by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) last night that Members should first define for themselves what is meant by liberty of debate. He said that if we had done so we should have saved much discussion. We have heard also from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that our object in assembling in this House is to pass measures, and not discussion. But the point to which I would respectfully call the attention of the occupants of the Conservative Benches is to define for themselves the legitimate object of discussion. There has never been, in my hearing, a word said upon that point. It is generally said, and I think universally believed, that the object of discussion is to elucidate to the collective mind of the House the questions which are submitted for its consideration; and I think hon. Members opposite might very beneficially follow out the further question, and that is whether that object is always attained or not. I think that everyone will be painfully conscious that that object is not always attained, and that simply because the time of the House is wasted by redundant oratory, by tedious repetition, by speeches which in no way elucidate the subject, but really darken counsel by words without knowledge. Now, Sir, these Resolutions proposed by the Government are intended, and I think are thoroughly well calculated, to remedy that evil; but hon. Members raise up this and that and the other quibble in order to prevent them being passed. Surely they must be aware, after what took place last night, that it is utterly impossible for them to influence one single vote on one side or the other by any discussion which can now take place on this question. When these Rules are passed they will enable the Government to carry into effect the promises which they have made to the country, and of which the country has a right to expect the fulfilment. There are great questions awaiting legislation, as we were reminded on Wednesday by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—questions relating to the extension of the franchise, questions relating to the land,

and questions which will come to the front with reference to Ireland. The noble Lord gave his Party a very fair hint that unless they attempted to grapple with some of those subjects the little dyke which they attempted to raise against this Resolution would not be a very effective shelter, and that they would soon lose their position. It seems to me that their trust is already reduced to a spider's web, and the Party to a state of impotency. Well, Sir, I think that when these Rules of Procedure are passed, the debates in this House will be much freer, and there will be much more real liberty, and the legitimate objects of debate will be more effectually gained. They will enable the subjects brought before the House to be well discussed in their varied aspects. At the present time we find that speech follows speech with really and truly no result at all but to prevent the House from understanding what is submitted to it. Now, I believe there are many hon. Members who come here with a sincere desire to do their duty, and who, from their special calling, or it may be from private studies, are well able during the debates on many questions to say something which would be helpful in enabling the House to understand the subjects under discussion; but they are prevented from speaking by men who spend most of their time in little else than trying to gather and scatter the flowers of exordial and perorational eloquence. Now, those men who would often be most useful in the elucidation of a subject are not the men who desire to shine as orators, but are men who would give their information in a plain, straightforward, and logical manner. No one can doubt that such Members are frequently prevented from speaking by others who know little or nothing about the subject, but who, as the Prime Minister has said, speak chiefly to please a section of their constituents rather than to instruct the House. No one can doubt the beneficial effect of any Rule which will check that class of oratory and give time for such speeches as I have alluded to, speeches which really stand very much in the same relation to a question submitted to this House as evidence does to a case for trial by a Judge in a Court of Justice, and which are essential to enable the House to comprehend and clearly understand the subjects brought before them. There are many Amendments on the Paper; but I hope that the Conservatives will consult the dignity of their great Party, the convenience of the House, and the expectations of the country, by withdrawing them. That will do far more good than can be obtained by these fruitless arithmetical discussions.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had given the Opposition a pretty strong hint that there was no chance of their influencing a single vote by anything they might say. He feared that had been the case for many months past, and he believed the hon. Gentleman was stating, not only his own opinion, but the conviction of most, if not all, who sat on the same side. Nevertheless, he hoped that there still remained a small remnant of independent feeling on the other side of the House which might be disposed to look at the Amendments impartially and without foregone conclusions, and not to close their ears to every argument addressed to them from the opposite Benches. With reference to the observations of the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), the hon. Member represented what remained of what he might call moderation and freedom from prejudice amongst his constituents; and he did not desire to attack the action of the hon. Member last night in not taking part in the division. The hon. Gentleman had very candidly informed them that he held opinions in favour of *clôture* by proportionate majority, and still entertained them, but was unavoidably absent from the division last night. No doubt, he was called upon to consult with an important political body, whose mainsprings were within the limits of his own constituency, and so was unable to be in the House.

Mr. MUNTZ: I beg pardon. I was acting under medical advice, and was asked to leave the House before the vote was taken.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he was sorry this had been the case; but he was glad that the report of the cause had been denied. The absence of the hon. Gentleman, however, not only deprived the Opposition of one vote, but a very important vote, carrying with it the mind of a large constituency. Surprise had been expressed that the Opposition were opposing the adoption of some method of closing a debate, considering the difficulties they had themselves had to encounter in a previous Parliament, with, he was bound to observe, very little support from the then Opposition Leaders; but it had been admitted in the speeches made in support of Amendments that Obstruction must be met in some way. He never had been in favour of a two-thirds' *clôture*, and he felt no great grief at the rejection of the Amendment proposing it; but he supported it, as his hon. Friends did, because he considered it less objectionable than the Resolution. It was avowed now that its object was not to put down illegitimate Obstruction, but to enable the Government of the day to carry measures in the teeth of legitimate opposition. The avowal, reiterated by several Members, remained without reproof from the Treasury Bench. The Mover of the present Amendment had done well to give the House one more opportunity of reconsidering the unfortunate position arrived at. Without going into arithmetical puzzles, the hon. Member had stated the case in such a way as to present an alternative to Members, who might have objected to the two-thirds' Amendment, to support this; and he trusted there would be some who would avail themselves of the opportunity.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that the hon. Member (Mr. O'Donnell), in the speech he had a short time ago delivered, declared that the Irish Party in voting last night against the two-thirds' majority Amendment had acted under a delusion. He (Mr. Macfarlane) wished to explain that he was subject to no delusion on the subject. In the vote he gave he acted solely on the principle of Samson, who pulled down the house upon himself in order that he might at the same time overwhelm a large number of the Phillistines. He had been asked by some Conservatives —"What better will you be by giving your vote against the Amendment, and helping the Government to get a bare-majority *clôture?*" He had replied—"We shall be no better, but you will be much worse." It was on that principle he voted, and on no other.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT contended that the arguments had shown very clearly that the 1st Resolution of the Government was addressed not so much to put down Obstruction as to bring about the close prematurely of a debate. The Resolution was intended to act upon individual Members; but the Rules which were constructed in the last Parliament were quite sufficient for the purpose of putting a stop to Obstruction. After the arguments which had been addressed to them, was it not clear that Members would be less oppressed by a numerical majority than by a bare majority? Some hon. Members repudiated the idea that the House of Commons could ever possibly be subjected to demoralization; and yet it had been stated by the Prime Minister that the House had actually suffered demoralization during the last three or four years. In fact, that was the chief ground on which the arguments in support of the Resolution were based. What had happened in countries where *clôture* by a bare majority prevailed? In the French Assembly there had been the greatest demoralization. During the past 10 or 15 years important debates had been closed there by the votes of bare majorities after exceedingly brief discussions. Debates had been closed in the most tyrannical manner, and the result was that French minorities looked for the redress of grievances, not to Constitutional means, but to the violent methods of revolution. If, as they were often told, this system of *clôture* was to be applied in order to pass a series of drastic revolutionary measures through the House, they would, sooner or later, find a tendency in English political life to look to revolutionary and not to Constitutional methods for a remedy. The mistakes committed by the Prime Minister in his various speeches, with regard to Colonial precedents, afforded a considerable argument against trusting the right hon. Gentleman on other questions. The right hon. Gentleman deliberately stated that the *clôture* by a bare majority prevailed in the majority of the Colonies of England; whereas, in fact, it only prevailed in one. In two Colonies this *clôture* had been tried and abandoned; and the Cape Legislature had come to the conclusion that it was better to trust to the good sense of the House than to resort to unconstitutional methods of *clôture*. He believed that there had been a real re-action in that House against Obstruction, and that it would require only a little more patience to bring all sections of this House to the conviction that it was neither wise nor dignified, nor likely, in the long run, to prevail. He considered that the country was over-legislated for; but even if more legislation were desired it should be remembered that for centuries they had got on very well without any unnatural *clôture.* Suppose some measures did take more than a month or even a Session to pass, was it such a very desperate state of things after all? There was no country which resembled more the political life of England than Hungary, and there *clôture* did not prevail; and many countries which had adopted the *clôture* allowed Members, when it was submitted to the House, to vote by ballot, and this, of course, made a great deal of difference. He had little doubt that if this *clôture* by a bare majority were carried it must tend to demoralize the public life of this country, to degenerate the Office of Speaker, and to destroy freedom of speech and fulness of discussion. Therefore, he welcomed the Amendment as the lesser of two evils. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had taken a leaf out of the book of the Prime Minister, and had learnt to prefer ingenuity and sophistry to genuine arguments. The noble Lord had argued from a Party point of view, and he was sorry there appeared to be a general idea prevalent that this *clôture* would be generally enforced as a Party weapon. He was afraid that the prediction of the noble Lord was only too likely to be realized, and that the *clôture* would be put into frequent operation. He protested against the Conservative party looking forward to the exercise of a bare majority *clôture.* But if the Front Benches were agreed on a particular application of the Rule there would be no doubt that the Rule ought to be applied. The second argument of the noble Lord was that he would never be a party to the suppression of Irish national feeling in that House. He did not believe there was any desire in any Party to do so. But the question was whether the Party which had been guilty of Obstruction did represent a genuine national feeling. He imagined that many speeches of the noble Lord might be quoted which took a very different view from that which he had expressed on Wednesday. But he certainly did not believe that Irish national feeling would be so likely to be suppressed under a two-thirds' or a five-eights' as under a bare majority; and on these grounds he should vote for the Amendment.

Mr. DALY failed to conceive how any useful purpose could be served by discussing the Amendment, after the rejection of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). An hour and a-half of the time of the House had already been wasted, and that waste of time, to some extent, constituted a breach of the Privileges of the House. The *raison d'être* of the Rule and of the Amendment was to put down Irish Obstruction. But what was called Obstruction by English Members was rightful resistance not only for freedom of speech in that House, but for the liberties of Ireland. He had voted with the Government last night, not for any love of the Government, but because he saw that the Conservatives voted from a mean desire to save themselves from *clôture,* and a strong desire to suppress the Irish Party. But Irishmen were not to be led into the trap. The Government had put on a semblance of respect for the rights of minorities; but whenever Irish Members made themselves obnoxious, a House of the requisite number would soon be found to suppress them. He believed the Rule would tend to the degradation of Speakers, and that the present occupant of the Chair would be the last high-minded and impartial official who would sit there. At the present moment the screw from Birmingham was being put on Members opposite. Pressure from the Caucus was being exercised. In the face of all this, the duty of Irish Members was clear. He would rather have voted against the Government, if the Conservative Party, instead of making a miserable compromise to shelter themselves, had met the question in a proper stand-up fashion, with a decided negative. [Mr. Warton: So we shall.] Yes; but it would have become them better if they had done so at first, and have had some regard for the feelings of the Irish Members, on whom, however, after all, the *clôture* would be found to press less heavily than on themselves. He was a determined opponent of the *clôture* in any form; but they had voted with the Government because they objected to the attitude of the Conservative Party. Their object was, he believed, to retain for themselves freedom of speech while they crushed the Irish section.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he would not have addressed the House but for the speech on the previous evening of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). He desired to deny that in the action of the Conservative Party there was any desire to burke the Irish National Party. Whenever he had spoken on the subject he had always declared that their objections were to the *clôture* as a whole, and that they were determined by every means in their power to oppose the steps that were being taken to silence the Conservative Party. That such was the intention of the Government it was impossible to doubt, for it had been let out as clearly as possible. They did not care whether they damaged the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as their only aim and object in introducing the *clôture* was to pass those measures which Liberal Caucuses had determined should be passed, by providing a weapon by means of which these might be forced down the throats of the Conservative Party. As regarded the Irish Party, he had always felt that it was their right to make known their views with regard to the country they represented, and he thought that Party had erred in taking the course they had done on the previous evening, instead of trusting the Conservative Party. They would find that in trusting to the so-called safeguards of the *clôture* they were leaning on a broken reed, as when it came to the point all those safeguards would be swept away, and it would turn out that the *clôture* was a weapon forged at the expense of Ireland as well as of this great country.

Mr. SEXTON said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) made a mistake if he imagined that the Irish Party trusted the Government. They trusted no Party in the House. Both Parties, one after the other, had governed Ireland during the past 80 years, and the misfortunes of the country were as much due to one as to the other. He was ready to acknowledge the consideration shown personally by the hon. and gallant Gentleman towards Irish Members; but when creditable intentions were claimed for the Conservative Party towards the Irish Party, he could only say that he judged Conservatives by the rational inference to be drawn from their acts. The Government had proposed a Rule of *clôture* which would undoubtedly enable the Party in power to put to silence at any time either the regular or irregular Opposition. The Conservative Party had, however, proposed a *clôture* which would allow freedom of speech on their part, but would put Irish Members to silence. The *clôture* which they proposed would put in the hands of the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) the practical control of the House. Therefore, the attitude of the Conservative Party was an attitude cynical, selfish, and atrocious. The Irish Members in the House had the moral rights of a small party of men struggling for their rights, and the right of speaking, and it would not be denied them by honest men in the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was leading the English Tory Party on a false and evil path. He was there as the advocate and champion of the landlord class who had endeavoured to keep the people of Ireland under their feet; and it was in the interest of that class that he had misled the English Tory Party by the adoption of a Rule which had alienated from them the support of the Irish Party. They had no choice, as honourable men, but to give the vote they gave last night. They were sufficiently Christian to desire to extend to the Conservative Party the salutary discipline which that Party were so willing to give them. When the time came for considering the policy of the Government on its own merits, they would be prepared to show that sentiment which he believed was in the heart of every Irish Member of the House, that they trusted neither Party, but longed for the time when they should be emancipated from both.

Mr. GIBSON said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had given the House reasons for his supporting the Government, and the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), determined not to be out-done, turned upon him (Mr. Gibson), and tried to destroy him. He desired to evidence as plainly as he could that there were still some remnants of life left in his possession. It was nothing short of a misreading of the whole position to assume that in proposing the two-thirds' majority he had in his mind an idea so absurd as to interfere in the slightest degree with anyone in the House. He was fighting what he conceived to be a battle on the part of the liberty of free discussion and free debate, and he advocated that in the interests of all parts of the House alike. When the hon. Member suggested that he (Mr. Gibson) was speaking as the spokesman of a minority in Ireland, he desired to point out that that was not a controversy in the slightest degree involved. But if it was to be gone into at all, he desired to indicate that the hon. Member himself was not particularly strong on that subject; because they were credibly informed by all the organs of public information that it was only by the casting vote of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who had forgiven a great deal to the present Government, that the accident was brought about that the United National Irish Party supported the Government. Supposing the vote of those who opposed the action of the hon. Member for the City of Cork was taken into account, he did not think it would be found that the hon. Member for Sligo was entitled to pose as the Representative of a united Irish Nation.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he fully concurred with the right hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. Gibson's) remarks in respect to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as regarded that hon. Member's attack upon the Conservative Party. He also thought the hon. Member was not entitled to take so much credit to the Irish Party for voting, as they were compelled to vote by their present Leader; because, when the debate closed last night, an hon. Member below him (Mr. Callan) stood up and——

Mr. SPEAKER said, he would remind the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) that the Question before the House was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt). The hon. Member must confine himself to it.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he was only following the example which had been shown him. But if no answer was to be given to the allegation that the Conservative Party was constantly treading the Irish Party down, of course, he would not persue that subject farther, but would say a few words on the Amendment.. He agreed with the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz) that the effect of the Rule would be to crush the small minorities, while letting the large ones go free. It was a remarkable fact that under the Resolution, as it stood, the same majority of 201 was required to put to silence a minority of 200, that was required to put to silence a minority of 40. The prevailing impression seemed to be that if the Resolution were adopted, no opposition would be silenced by the Government if there were 40 Members in it, and that the power would be exercised by the Speaker alone, of his own motion, without any suggestion being offered by anybody else. That, however, was a mistake. Anyone who had seen the practice abroad, as he (Mr. Macartney) had, would know that in foreign Assemblies, where the *clôture* existed, it was never brought about by the President of the Assembly, but was always initiated by some Member of the House; and, in some instances, from 20 to 40 Members were required to rise in their places and demand that it should be put into operation before it could be enforced. The country had been greatly misled with regard to the subject; for the fact was that this Resolution was proposed with the view not of putting down Obstruction, but of facilitating Government Business, and the sooner the country understood that fact the better.

Mr. HICKS said, that new matter was continually cropping up in the course of this discussion, and it was the duty of hon. Members to let the country know what were the real objects of this measure. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said, the other night, that this proposal would have met with but very little support from hon. Members opposite had it been introduced by the Leaders of the Tory Party; but the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in reply, had treated that as an argument which he met with what he perhaps thought a novel and convincing style of answer, and he thereupon asked how many of those sitting on the Opposition side would have opposed it had it been brought forward by the last Government? This mode of argument reminded him (Mr. Hicks) of his school days. But the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin had used no such argument, but had simply challenged those on the Government side. That challenge had not been met. But he would meet the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. For his own part, and on behalf of those who sat near him, he (Mr. Hicks) was convinced that had the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition brought forward such a proposal when his Party was in power, those sitting below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House would have been the first to oppose it. If he should have the honour of having a seat in that House when next the Conservative Party came into Office, he would be one of the first to vote for the immediate repeal of this most tyrannical Rule. Hon. Members on that side had been censured for supporting these Amendments to protect themselves, whilst they were not ready to protect small minorities. He denied the charge. The fact was, the Opposition was placed at a disadvantage. They had to deal with a Resolution instead of a Bill, and so had not had any opportunity of opposing the principle, as in a second reading, but were now dealing with it as in Committee. It was their duty to try and make it less objectionable; but, whether they succeeded or not, when the time came they would oppose it upon principle.

MR. SPEAKER said, he must remind the hon. Member that he must confine his remarks to the Amendment before the House.

MR. HICKS said, that, whether the Amendment were adopted or not, the Resolution ought never to be permitted to be used for the purpose of putting a stop to legitimate discussion. He supported the Amendment, as one of the means of minimizing the evil effects of the *clôture*, after the attempt to obtain a two-thirds' majority had failed. It was the duty of the Conservative Party to endeavour to effect that.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 70; Noes 146: Majority 76. — (Div. List, No. 357.)

MR. MACFARLANE, in moving, as an Amendment, to leave out, in line 9 of the Resolution, the words "to have been supported by more than 200 Members," in order to insert—

> "That the number of Members voting in the affirmative exceeds 200, and that it has been opposed by less than 200,"

said, it was intended to make more clearly what the meaning of the 1st Resolution was. As regarded it, he had found in the Lobby no less than six different interpretations of what the Resolution really meant. He supposed it conceivable, and the fact was, that many people believed the meaning of the latter part of the Resolution to be that if a Motion for the *clôture* should be supported by 200 Members, it would be carried in spite of the fact that it had been opposed by more than 200, say, for instance, 300.

Amendment proposed,

> In line 9, to leave out the words "to have been supported by more than two hundred Members," and insert "that the number of Members voting in the affirmative exceeds two hundred,"—(*Mr. Macfarlane,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'to have been supported by more than' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not believe that the words of the Resolution presented any difficulty whatever, or that they were at all ambiguous as they stood. The hon. Member (Mr. Macfarlane) was apprehensive that, under the wording of the Rule, the *clôture* might be passed by 200 Members, although a still larger number should vote against it. There was, of course, no foundation for such an apprehension, for the statement in the Resolution was, that the Question should not be declared to have been decided in the affirmative, unless it should have been supported by 200 Members. If more than 200 Members should have voted against it, of course, it could not have been decided in the affirmative. If it were supported by 200 Members, it would then come under the general law of the House, and would be declared in the affirmative if the number was a majority, and would be negatived if it was a minority.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. ASHTON DILKE moved, as an Amendment, in line 9, to leave out everything after "more than," and to insert

"150 Members." The hon. Member said, its effect would be to strike out the provisions of the Government as to Houses of under 200 and 100 Members respectively, and simply to give the power of closing a debate if 150 Members gave consent to it. He thought the Government would find it to their advantage to have, instead of what was called an arithmetical puzzle, some clear and intelligible proposition which could be understood at first sight. By adopting some such number as he proposed, they would get rid of the proportional vote.

Amendment proposed,

In line 9, to leave out from the word "than," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "one hundred and fifty Members,"—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'two hundred' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would submit that there was something in the nature of a principle in the distinction they had drawn. The Government thought the name of "small minorities" must be justly held to include numbers greater than 40; because the number of 40 was not a number of itself competent to transact Business at all, and, that being so, they thought it fair to give it no further protection than was required by having 100 constituting the majority against it. If the House was constituted with a number competent to do Business, they provided the number of 200. That was the reason for the two-fold division. Every number of a minority, from 40 up to 149, would stand in a position of much worse protection if the Amendment were carried than would be the case by the recommendation of the Government. His hon. Friend would give more protection to a minority under 40, which had got enough already, while it diminished for all minorities between 40 and 150 the protection which the Government had given, and which they did not think excessive. He admitted the Amendment possessed the advantage of simplicity; but thought, on the whole, the Government proposal was the more equitable.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SALT moved, as an Amendment, in line 9, to substitute "300" for "200" as the number of Members who should be required to vote in the majority before the Rule should be put in force. While admitting the strength of the argument that questions should be decided by a simple majority, he thought it a very serious departure from the usual custom of the House to fix any particular number at all; but, since a number was to be fixed, he thought that 300 would be more useful than 200. It was said that the *clôture* would never be put in force by a mere Party vote. Now, 200 might often represent a mere Party Vote, while 300, while it might do so occasionally, would always represent a definite and careful expression of "the sense of the House," for such a number of Members could not be brought together without thought and care and considerable trouble; and it might be better to rely on a simple number than on a proportion, such as two-thirds. Again, the limit of 200 would not be sufficient to meet the demands of the case. If the larger number were adopted, it would clear away many of the difficulties and some of the seeming injustice connected with the aplication of the *clôture.* It would probably be needless to retain the complicated provisions in the latter portion of the Resolution. He did not entertain much hope of persuading the Prime Minister to accept the Amendment; but he thought that if the safeguard were put at 300, it would afford enough protection to minorities without the complicated figures that followed.

Amendment proposed, in line 9, to leave out the word "two," in order to insert the word "three,"—(*Mr. Salt,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he had listened with some curiosity to the speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Salt), because, under the name of an Amendment of detail, he had proposed to sweep away practically—for every practical purpose — nearly the whole fabric they had been building up at such extraordinary length. To require a vote of 300 before the *clôture* was put in operation was to require that a number should be gathered together, for the purpose of putting it in operation, which was not gathered together for voting purposes, he believed, upon the average five times in the course of the whole Session. It was not that the hon. Member meant to determine that the closing power should be put in operation during the whole of a Session; but what he meant was that the House would be in a state of impotence to apply it upon all occasions except those very rare ones. The Government had pushed things very far indeed in the Resolution, in the way of protection to small minorities, by extending that protection so far as to require in support of the Resolution 200 Members. If 300 Members were required, that would give absolute immunity, in almost all circumstances, for small minorities of 6, 8, or 10; because these minorities, in 19 cases out of 20, were formed in the Houses that never could, by any possibility, reach 300. In point of fact, it was cutting at the roots of the whole matter; and while the proposal had the aspect of an Amendment of detail, it would really stultify everything they had done and had voted. On the other hand, this was by no means protection of certain cases where a small minority ought to be protected, because there were cases requiring it. Take a case like that of Mr. O'Connell, when he proposed the Repeal of the Union, and had a long debate upon it in 1830. He (Mr. Gladstone) supposed everyone would admit that it would have been an extremely wrong thing prematurely to close that debate; but there were 300 men on the ground, and more than 300, for the division against him was more than 500. The Amendment would not only not protect the minority in cases where it required to be protected, but it would give protection where it ought not to be given, and make the whole *clôture* proposal unworkable in 19 cases out of 20.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he failed to see how the Resolution as it stood would protect a minority; but he would show how that minority would be protected by this Amendment. In the instance alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, Mr. O'Connell moved a Resolution of great importance, but failed to obtain any support, except from an insignificant portion of the House of Commons. But the right hon. Gentleman said it would have been a hardship if the minority had not been allowed a hearing. How did the right hon. Gentleman himself propose to protect the minority? The right hon. Gentleman admitted that it would have been an act of hardship and injustice if so small a minority as that obtained by Mr. O'Connell had been suppressed while urging a question of great importance. The right hon. Gentleman in making that admission had gone more than half-way in justifying the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), though, at the same time, he (Mr. J. Lowther) was bound to say that hon. Members on that side of the House felt it their duty to go further and support the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), which proposed the rejection of the Resolution altogether. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman's own arguments had afforded most material support to the present Amendment, upon which he hoped his hon. Friend would take the sense of the House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was free to confess that in this matter of the *clôture* he was inclined to put his conscience in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. The more, however, he heard of the discussion, and the more he examined the subject, as regarded the practice of other countries, the more he felt that the Government were right in pressing their proposal. If they were to have a *clôture* at all, it ought to be a real *clôture;* but it was quite clear that if the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Salt) were adopted, the *clôture* would be a sham, and could only be exercised on very rare occasions indeed. He was afraid that even the limit of 200 Members would restrict the operation of the *clôture* too much.

MR. WARTON said, he was one who refused to place his conscience in anybody's hands, but claimed to exercise his own judgment. He supported the Amendment as being in the nature of a last appeal to the good feeling of their opponents on the part of hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House; and he warned the Government that they would incur a heavy responsibility if they declined to accept the co-operation of the Opposition in revising the Rules of Procedure, and insisted on crushing them by a mere Party majority. He saw no reason why the Government should oppose the Amendment, for on all important occasions a Government was not worthy of the name if they could not get together 300 Members in a House which numbered some 658 Members.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he must point out that, if the Government would not accept that Amendment, or one of a similar character, some attempt must be made to define what was meant by the "evident sense of the House," because, on that point, the Resolution as it stood was perfectly absurd and hypocritical. It began by talking of the "evident sense of the House"—for the Government had insisted on retaining those words—and yet did not give any definition of what that "evident sense of the House" was to be. The House of Commons differed from foreign Legislative Assemblies, among other things, by sitting longer, and, consequently, many Members were absent. A certain proportion were generally in the House, another proportion were in its precincts, and could be summoned by the Division Bell, while a number more were at a distance. What, under those circumstances, was meant by the "evident sense of the House?" Did it include the hon. Gentlemen who had not heard the debate, but who rushed in at the sound of the Bell? If the present Amendment were adopted, it would be quite clear that when so important a Motion as the *clôture* was carried, it had been sanctioned by what was generally understood to be the "evident sense of the House." It would be ridiculous to say 41 Members represented the "sense of the House," when 199 voted against *clôture* being declared. If the Government rejected this Amendment, they would have to give their serious attention to the Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie)—namely, that before declaring that it was the "evident sense of the House or Committee" that the Question should be put, the Speaker or Chairman must have satisfied himself that such "evident sense" was not confined to one side of the House or Committee.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not think the noble Lord's (Lord George Hamilton's) solicitude with regard to the "evident sense of the House" would be met by the Amendment, because the presence of 300 Members did not at all secure the "evident sense of the House" that the debate should be closed. Supposing the House consisted of 600 Members, and the question rested on the casting vote of the Speaker, they could not say that 300, under those circumstances, represented the "evident sense of the House." The noble Lord opposite seemed to argue as if they could not have the "evident sense of the House" ascertained unless the House consisted of more than 300 Members; but the House often transacted Business, indeed, the greater part of its Business was got through, with a much smaller attendance than that. Hitherto it had been the practice to require a quorum of 40 Members; but, in introducing the *clôture*, the Government thought that 40 was too small a number, and that it ought to be increased. They had, therefore, taken a number which was consistent with forwarding the Business of the House in what was its ordinary state. It seemed to him if they had 250 Members present after a long debate, and the Speaker supposed the matter to be adequately discussed, that the matter might be put to a vote, and that that would be a much more "evident sense of the House" than if there were 301 on one side and 300 on the other. The Rules at present furnished no means of preventing a small minority from indefinitely protracting debates; and it was felt that the block arising from that cause, and from which the country had suffered so long, must be removed. But it would not be consistent, with their experience of the House, to require 300 Members to be summoned, in order to overcome the resistance offered by a very small section. The House which the Government had in contemplation by the higher scale was a House of 250 Members—a number quite sufficient to transact the ordinary, or, indeed, the important Business of the House. They knew perfectly well that Business of the most important character was constantly dealt with by a House not larger than that, and they thought they were taking a reasonable security when they secured what might be called a minimum House of 250 Members.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he was surprised that the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) had argued that, while 10 or 12 Members might block the Business of the House, it might be necessary for the Whips to bring down 300 Members in order to carry on the work of the country. If he would complete his labour of love, and read a little further, he would see that that case was provided for, as it only required 100 Members to defeat a minority of less than 40.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had been answering the argument of an hon. Member who had spoken previously, and had purposely omitted to refer to the subsequent portion of the Rule.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he was not aware that that was the case. The great evil, however, contained in the Government's proposal was that, by its evident insincerity, it robbed the foundations of public morality, for it said one thing in decorous words, and meant another in the evident sense and intention of its authors. It would be the duty of the Speaker to gather something to be the evident sense of the House; but that, in reality, would be an impossible task, according to the natural and honest sense of the words. He would really have to consult the wishes of the Ministry, and all that he would believe was that the Ministry was supported by a bare majority. He (Mr. Beresford Hope) foresaw that hereafter, in place of Parliament guided by Ministers—hitherto technically servants of the Crown, but really of Parliament—they were to have a Cæsarean form of government, with a Dictator and a legislative, so-called, Body to register decrees. When the Speaker was reduced to the position of determining the falsely-named "evident sense of the House" according to the wishes and promptings of another person, and that other person probably a Minister, a great shock would be caused to public morality by the exhibition of the tenant of so great a dignity tied to an occupation so evidently hypocritical. The Government, by leaving to the Speaker the decision to be pronounced, were casting on a man of honour and discernment a duty which could only be performed perfunctorily and in a technical sense.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 72; Noes 35: Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 358.)

MR. BRODRICK, in moving an Amendment requiring that the Motion to close a debate supported by more than 200 Members should have been opposed by less than 150 Members, explained that his Amendment had been particularly designed with the view of obviating those difficulties which were chiefly urged by hon. Gentlemen opposite against accepting a two-thirds' majority. There was evidently a feeling that if a two-thirds' majority were passed it would always be open to some individual Member of the House to upset the arrangements which had been made between the two Front Benches to bring a debate to a close, and the figure which he had adopted in that Amendment was chosen in order to prevent the possibility of such a disturbing force. He asked, before it was too late, that the Government should take back that portion of their programme which involved the entire exclusion of the Leader of the Opposition from any participation in an action which was to be for the good, not merely of the Government, but of the country at large. He maintained that large minorities had been too much ignored in this matter, and it was assumed that a large minority needed no protection. But that it was not so was shown on the occasion when Urgency was refused. Besides, it ought not to be forgotten that, on a large number of questions, the constituencies had never been consulted. He would undertake to say that three-fourths of the measures passed by the present Government were measures of which the constituencies knew nothing. Certainly, they were, for the most part, entirely ignorant of the great majority of the Amendments on the Irish Land Bill. The very instance of the Urgency Rule to which he had referred, when the division was 296 against 212, ought to induce Members to vote for his Amendment, which was not influenced in any way by the two-thirds' majority question. He intended to press it to the fullest extent, and if he were defeated, it would be by a majority voting not according to conviction, but under the pressure of Party. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 9, after the word "Members," to insert the words "and to have been opposed by less than one hundred and fifty Members."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DODSON said, he respected the gallantry of the hon. Member (Mr. Brodrick) in moving such an Amendment after the division which had taken place on the previous night; but the Government could not accept the Amendment, when a less stringent one had been negatived by the proceedings of the night before. One-third of the House amounted to 216 or 217 Members, and now they were asked to accept an Amendment enabling an even smaller portion of the House to veto *clôture,* for the effect of this Amendment would be that a debate could not be closed if it were opposed by 150 Members. It ought not to be forgotten that there was an essential difference between a voluntary arrangement, by which hitherto an end had been fixed for debate, and a legal Rule for the compulsory closing of debate. Under the old practice, there was a concurrence between both sides of the House as to the time when a debate should terminate; but, owing to changes which had recently come over the House, the Government found it necessary to make legal provision for the purpose, and the action could not be left to depend upon voluntary concurrence. This was not an unqualified *clôture,* because it required—first, the interposition of the Speaker; and, secondly, that it should be supported by a substantial number of votes. These safeguards the Government considered fair and reasonable; and, looking to the decision which had been come to last night, they must decline to accept the hon. Member's Amendment.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he thought that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Dodson) was a little remarkable, and showed a strange change of front on the part of the Government. Whereas it appeared at first that the "evident sense of the House" was to be that of the Whole House, now it seemed as if that term was to be applied to a majority of the Liberal Party only. It was really remakable how the language of the Government seemed to have changed, for it appeared now that what the Government meant was the sense of the majority of their own side. If his hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick) went to a division, he should support the Amendment.

Mr. WARTON said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Dodson) had said that, owing to altered circumstances, the arrangements between Parties as to closing debates could not now be come to. He (Mr. Warton) should like to ask what those altered circumstances were? They on that side of the House had not changed. He could, therefore, see no reason why the two Front Benches should not be able, when necessary, to make an arrangement for putting down Obstruction, unless it was the determination of a domineering and tyrannical Government to oppress their opponents.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he was glad the Prime Minister had returned, as when he was absent the House seemed to be without intelligent leadership. He looked upon his hon. Friend's (Mr. Brodrick's) Amendment to fix the number at 100 or 150—he was not sure of the number — as a *locus penitentiæ* for the right hon. Gentleman. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would accept it; for, if he did so, as a matter of course the whole of the Members behind him would immediately give their adhesion to it. He would not say the right hon. Gentleman's whole career had been one of inconsistency; but the right hon. Gentleman had always shown that he could look back and retrace his steps. Here, then, was an opportunity afforded him of exercising the virtue of repentance. The effect of carrying that Resolution, without some such compromise as that now proposed, would be to take away from minorities their responsibilities as well as their rights. The Party in power would be in a position to pass whatever measures they liked in the form in which they were introduced. The maxim of the majority was "*Magna est veritas, sed non valet.*" The practice of the House had been for centuries to allow the minority a right of veto. Only in the Long Parliament and in the days of the Tudors that tradition was broken. And now, again, the minority were once more to be treated as the "Delinquents" and "Malignants" of those days. From that day forth compromise would be got rid of. "*Sic volo sic jubeo*" would be the principle of the future. The Prime Minister had already become like an Eastern Nabob surrounded by flatterers. He (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was shocked at the grossness of the flattery exhibited towards the right hon. Gentleman by some of his Colleagues in their speeches outside the House. Under the principle of compromise, the minority had always accepted some responsibility for the legislation of the country. Under the new system, after Bills had been introduced with two or three long speeches by the Ministers, an organization of silence would be established on the Government side of the House. After a one-sided debate, at length the *clôture* would be applied, and the measure passed in its integrity without the slightest amendment. How could the Opposition take any responsibility for measures which they were not allowed in any way to shape? Then an agitation would begin in the constituencies, and the power of the House of Commons would be shaken. The Tory Democracy might at length be inclined to get rid of the sleek, self-seeking Radicals, the mummies of Brooks's, and the Representatives of all those antique, corrupt, pocket boroughs, one of which was represented by the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice). The tendency would be more and more to throw absolute power into the hands of the Ministers, and as soon as absolute power was given to men they were sure to abuse it. The Prime Minister gave his opponents no quarter now; perhaps the time would come when they would give him or his Successors no quarter. Surely the Prime Minister might be content, for never was there a Minister backed by so large a following, and faced by so gentle an Opposition. The Prime Minister did not appear to have fully measured the intensity of the dislike entertained to this measure, or the country to have yet fully grasped the fact that the right hon. Gentleman was trying to put down something more than Obstruction, and to lay his heavy hand upon Parliament itself. He lauded and magnified the attributes of the majority. He could well imagine the right hon. Gentleman saying, when he looked into the glass in the morning—" I am the majority, the brains, the voice, the heart of the majority. Without me the majority is a vain, fugitive, unsubstantial thing." And then the right hon. Gentleman walked down to the House, and found that his imagination had not told him a flattering tale, for there were some 350 hon., right hon., and independent Gentlemen falling down upon their faces and worshipping the image of clay, the reflection of which in the glass pleased him so much in the morning.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, it seemed to him that the more the House progressed in the discussion of that Resolution, the more puzzled were they on that (the Opposition) side to find the position in which they were placed. They were puzzled more especially by the variety of reasons given for urging this very strong and tyrannical measure. One day they were informed that the Resolution was to arrest Obstruction, another day they were told by many of the supporters of the Government, with a candour which did them all possible credit, that the only possible reason why they could support the Resolution was because they saw, in the not very distant future, the power of using it as an engine for forcing Radical and Democratic measures against the will of the minority through the House. But what was still more puzzling was the fact that not only did the reasons vary from time to time, but they were still more bewildered by the variety of arguments adduced in support of the Resolution itself. Arguing against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said that there was one very fatal objection to it—namely, that 300 Members could not be assembled in the House on one side more than four or five times in the Session. But in replying to his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department tried to upset his argument by saying—" What would you do with 600 Members in the House?" Then they were told that people out-of-doors had made up their minds upon the question, that the Prime Minister had the country at his back, and that hon. Gentlemen on the other side must swallow the dose with as good a grace as they might. No doubt, the country had made up its mind that something must be done to put down the system of Obstruction which had prevailed. They were all agreed on that point; but with regard to the question the House was now discussing, whether it would be a good thing for England in the future, or for that Assembly in particular, that any Government should be able by a bare majority to stop debate, he maintained that the country was as ignorant as a child six years of age. He denied that the Opposition pressed this point for the purpose of obstructing the Resolution; but they had a right to demand that such an Amendment as the present should be fairly discussed in the House, so that people outside might hear both sides of the question. If that was done, he believed that, before long, the Opposition would be able to show how those who supported the Resolution were shifting their arguments from time to time, and how very unstable was the position Her Majesty's Government were taking up in seeking to pass the whole of this Resolution. He would state frankly that he supported the present Amendment in this sense alone, that he considered half a loaf better than no bread. He supported it because he believed it to be a good one, which, if carried to its legitimate conclusion, would enable them to avoid an evil which many hon. Members opposite were as anxious to avoid as themselves—the evil of the spirit of Party conflict entering into their debates and divisions; and this Amendment of his hon. Friend, if carried, would certainly have that effect. They were told that these matters should not be made the subject of Party debate. They on that (the Opposition) side were not responsible for that state of things. No one more regretted than he did to see the House divided into hostile camps, or to hear the speeches of hon. Members who avowed their intention of working this Resolution in a Party sense, thus degrading the House into an arbitrary machine. But the course of the Opposition was a simple one, not by illegitimate Obstruction, but by the force of fair argument on fair Amendments, to endeavour to show as clearly as they could to people out-of-doors who had not studied the question what the effect of the Resolution was likely to be. If they took such a course, he believed, before very long, there would be a strong revulsion of feeling among our fellow-countrymen with regard to this proposal. He disliked using threats; but he was strongly of opinion, as one who loved the House as much as anyone in it, as one who had received much kindness from all quarters in the performance of duties always difficult and often impossible, that if the Resolution was not to undergo some such Amendment as that now proposed, and was to be pressed to the bitter end, he feared that when the first Party conflict occurred under this Rule it would be the most evil day that had ever happened in that House. Knowing what the spirit of Englishmen was, he was certain that anything like dictation or unjust treatment at the hands of a majority would result in grievous evils. The question of injustice did not rest with the majority, but with the minority; and when they had been unjustly treated by a majority—and there it was where the pinch would be felt—then an evil day would assuredly come upon the House. He used those words in no spirit of threat, but of friendly warning; and he hoped the Government would see their way to modify the Resolution in the manner proposed, otherwise he felt assured that there were many troublous days in store for that Assembly.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that since the Speaker had directed the officer of the House to read the Order of the Day, they had passed through an evening somewhat amusing, and, perhaps, from an arithmetical point of view, somewhat instructive. It was like those prolonged festivities of which they sometimes read, which, in the beginning of the week, were very brilliant, but after a few days became a little wearisome as they proceeded from their repetition. That had been the characteristic of the present week's discussion. They had had, in the course of the evening, explanations from some Members why they had voted yesterday; from others why they had not; but the extraordinary thing was that no one thought it necessary to speak to the Amendment before the House. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to think that what occurred yesterday was the matter to which they should address themselves, and that, having prepared speeches for yesterday, they ought to deliver them to-day. Not one of the speeches which had been delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite was pertinent to the Amendment before the House. It was very difficult to say when the speech of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was intended to be delivered, but probably for the previous day. Most certainly it was not for that evening, and not upon the Amendment, because the hon. Gentleman said he did not know whether the

Amendment was for 100 or 150; but what he had to say he would say. The hon. Member seemed to think that because there had been compromises in past times, the Government ought to compromise itself that evening, though the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had been so decisively defeated. So far as there had been any argument in the speech of the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down (Sir William Hart Dyke), it was that a minority ought not to be oppressed by a majority. That was precisely what had always been said by the small minority of the Irish Members; but if that were accepted as valid, no suspension of an individual Member, and no enforcement of the *clôture,* however great the majority, would ever be justifiable. There had been so much digression that he doubted whether Members who had not the Amendment Paper in their hands had the slightest notion as to what Amendment was before the House. He would, therefore, point out that the Amendment was concerned with one of those arithmetical problems which had recalled to their minds their early struggles with simple fractions. On Thursday the House had discussed the question whether one-third of those having the right to vote should be given the power to veto the closure. That proposition having been negatived, on the proposition of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt), they had discussed whether, instead of one-third, three-eighths — a difference of one-twenty-fourth—should have the power to veto; and, that also having been negatived, they were now discussing whether two-ninths should have the power. No one could suppose that such debates constituted earnest Business. The discussions that had taken place that evening were nothing more than attempts to "keep the question going." Much had been said about the hostility which the Government were alleged to feel towards hon. Members opposite, and they had been warned not to divide the House into two hostile camps. Such allegations were, of course, groundless; but if hon. Members should continue to charge men who had spent a great part of their lives in that House with having sacrificed their honour and the honour of the House to Party motives, it would, indeed, become difficult for them not to manifest feelings of hostility. The discussion of the Amendment had not, in his opinion, been serious, and it was impossible for the Government to accept it.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he must confess to a feeling of some surprise that, after the somewhat unaccountable delay which had been imposed upon the hon. and learned Gentleman, who always spoke with great ability and practical knowledge of matters affecting the House, he should have kept them so very much in the dark as to the grounds on which these Resolutions should be supported. The hon. and learned Gentleman complained that, during the whole of that evening, the House had been occupied with the consideration of mere arithmetical calculations, which he appeared to think beneath the notice of Members of that Assembly. But the hon. and learned Member should bear in mind that the necessity for a recurrence to their early knowledge of simple fractions had not originated with those who opposed the Resolution. Calculations had been forced upon them by the author of the Resolution himself. The hon. and learned Gentleman was difficult to please, for he objected to details, and still more to any discussion of the general principle involved. The fact was that the hon. and learned Gentleman and those around him did not desire that the question should be discussed at all. They seemed to consider that, as a majority had expressed its opinion upon one branch of the question, therefore even important details should be left alone. The hon. and learned Gentleman was wrong in stating that the proposal of the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) merely reproduced an issue already decided. As a matter of fact, it was as widely separated from the point decided on the previous day as the poles were asunder, for the Amendment now before them dealt with a reasonable-sized minority, and not with the case of a large minority. They had been told that the evident sense of the House no longer meant the sense of the House, but only of a section of it. The Prime Minister generally spoke as if Parliament consisted of but one Chamber; and now, apparently, the House of Commons was to consist of one side only. He (Mr. J. Lowther) trusted, however, that the House would remember that it had traditions and privileges which were common to all its Members, and that they would maintain that the "evident sense of the House" meant the evident sense of the House as constituted; and he hoped that the discussion would not be allowed to terminate before they received some really authoritative explanation of the real meaning of a phrase which was of such vital importance to every Member of the House.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 45; Noes 84: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 359.)

Mr. SPEAKER asked if any other Member had an Amendment to propose?

Mr. WARTON thereupon rose to move an Amendment.

Mr. E. STANHOPE rose to a point of Order, and asked whether it was not the duty of the Chairman to call upon Members having Amendments on the Paper?

Mr. SPEAKER said, it was not customary for the Chairman to call upon Members, and all through this debate he had waited for hon. Members to rise on their own account. If any hon. Member had an Amendment to propose, it was his duty to rise.

Mr. WARTON moved to omit the word "less" in line 10 of the 1st Resolution, and to insert "fewer" in place thereof. He suggested the alteration for the purpose of improving the phraseology of the Rule, which would be more intelligible if it spoke of not "fewer" instead of not "less" than 200 Members. The word "less" was generally used with regard to quantity, and "fewer" with regard to numbers.

Amendment proposed, in line 10, to leave out the word "less," in order to insert the word "fewer."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the word 'less' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. CHAPLIN beged to move an Amendment providing that the *clôture* should not be put in force if 40 Members voted against it. His reason for doing so was that 40 was the quorum of the House, and he contended that, whatever the quorum might be, the *clôture* ought not to be put in force against its will. Whether the number of the quorum should be altered was another question.

Amendment proposed, in line 10, to leave out the word "Members" to the end of the Question."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE opposed the Amendment, observing that proposals were brought forward on the other side of the House on the principle on which the Sibylline books were tendered; as their quantity decreased, their price increased. Last night the House declined to give one-third the power to arrest the exercise of the closing power; but hon. Gentlemen opposite had to-night, with the exception, he must say, of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt), made not smaller but greater demands; and the Government had been called upon successively to permit smaller and smaller minorities to arrest the exercise of the power. But the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had attained what he thought was the climax; he had fairly distanced all his competitors in imitating the tactics of the Sibyl by asking that one-sixteenth of the House should have the power of arresting the action of fifteen-sixteenths.

Mr. CHAPLIN: It is a quorum.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. W. H. SMITH proposed, as an Amendment, to add at the end of the Resolution the following Proviso:—

> "Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding ten who shall be dissatisfied with such decision shall be entitled at the next sitting of the House to make a protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House."

If the action of the Speaker or the Chairman in closing the debate, pursuant to what he considered to be the evident sense of the House, was taken against a considerable minority of the House, it was impossible but that great dissatisfaction would prevail in consequence of the majority having tyrannically closed the mouths of the minority. Instead, therefore, of driving the minority to the country or the Press for the ventilation of their grievances, he proposed that the minority should in such cases have the power of recording the grounds of their dissatisfaction by a protest to be recorded in the Journals of the House, as was the case in the House of Lords. He could not conceive anything more dangerous to the House than that there should be no means of stating the grounds of dissatisfaction; and he thought it would be a far more Constitutional course to allow that dissatisfaction to find expression in the Journals of the House than elsewhere. He believed that this would appear to be a moderate and reasonable course to the country at large. He wished to preserve the power of the House to deal with its own Business, so that its Members might not find a mode of giving expression to their wrongs elsewhere than in that House. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would consent to this addendum to the Resolution. He did not disguise the fact that he was opposed to the Resolution altogether; but if it passed, he wished it should do so with the least possible danger to the House, and he thought his Amendment would mitigate the evils which a very large section of the House felt were attendant upon the Resolution.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding ten who shall be dissatisfied with such decision shall be entitled at the next sitting of the House to make a protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought the argument of the right hon. Gentleman went further than his Amendment. What he understood from his argument was that a minority, when aggrieved by a decision of the House, ought to have the power of recording their dissatisfaction in writing with the course the House had taken, so that the dissatisfaction would find expression in that House rather than outside. But why should he stop there? The right hon. Gentleman and his Friends had been parties to a Resolution that professed to deal with grievances which interrupted the Business of the House, and had introduced a Rule by which the Speaker, with the support of the House, could, in the course of a debate, suspend a Member; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman thought it necessary that that Member should be entitled to record on the Journals of the House his opinion of his own suspension. If that were allowed, there would be some danger of the Journals of the House becoming a document which might lead to the institution of legal proceedings; for hon. Members, in the heat of discomfiture, might make remarks concerning the authorities of that House not of the most complimentary character. As regarded protests in the House of Lords, he believed they had diminished in modern times, for there were other means of a more effective character for making sentiments known than by a record in the Journals of the House. He thought the practice might lead to serious evils. If any man thought fit to say what he liked about the Speaker or the Chairman in a moment of exasperation or temper, there would be no means of preventing him from doing so. He did not believe that the right hon. Gentleman, when on a former occasion he was a consenting party to the closing of debate, would have supported such a proposal as this. For the reasons he had stated the Government could not accept the Amendment.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he wished to point out that the question of personal insults to which the Home Secretary had referred was entirely different from the question now before the House. Those who offended against the Rules of the House by insulting its authorities would be dealt with under Rules framed to meet cases of that nature, and which had nothing whatever to do with the question now under discussion. What mischief could possibly arise through allowing persons suffering from closure of debate to put their complaints in writing on the Records of the House? Supposing the Speaker stated that, in his opinion, the debate should be closed, having been adequately discussed, and that he had acted upon what he thought was the evident sense of the House, but that when the division came it turned out that it was not the evident sense of the House, there being only a majority of 1, why should it not be recorded that under such circumstances it was not the evident or general sense of the House that the debate should be closed? He could not see what conceivable objection there could be to the responsible

Leaders of the Opposition being allowed to record their opinions in the Journals of the House that the question had been wrongly decided. The protest would not be entered, as the Home Secretary supposed, at the moment when those who made it were smarting under a sense of defeat, but on the next day, after time had been given for reflection. They might depend upon it that such a protest would never be recorded without some practical reason for it; and if the right to record it were now refused it would only tend still further to show that the Prime Minister desired to overrule the House of Commons and to make his will law. He would remind the Home Secretary of a speech which he had made in 1879, in which he said that majorities would in time become minorities; and nothing that was not accepted by the general sense of the House, when they were altering its ancient Rules, could be expected to work satisfactorily.

Mr. GLADSTONE wished to point out that the Amendment itself said nothing whatever about the protest which it contemplated emanating from responsible Leaders of the Opposition. Was it to be considered impossible that, under any circumstances, any 10 Members of the Opposition should desire to enter a protest on the Journals unless it was prompted, or at least approved, by their responsible Leaders? His right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary had never argued that the punishment of Members who were noted by the Speaker for wilful and persistent Obstruction was one and the same question with the application of the *clôture* by the House; but he had argued that there was an analogy between them, and also circumstances of resemblance in them on a vital point. If it was a hard thing for a minority to have to submit to the *clôture*, and when defeated not to be able to enter a protest on the Journals of the House, surely it would be little less hard for those who were punished by suspension, undeservedly, as they might think, not to be allowed to record their protest also. The principal arguments of the Mover of the Amendment was that in that case, unlike the ordinary decisions of the House, there had been no opportunity of discussion, and that, therefore, there should be a subsequent opportunity for a protest. Well, but that was precisely the case of any Gentleman or number of Gentlemen who might be suspended by vote of the House for wilful and persistent Obstruction. They might plead that they were generally weaker and more in need of defence and protection, and that they had suffered in their own person. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said there was no conceivable objection to that proposed right of protest. Now, the right of protest which had existed in the House of Lords was totally different from that which was now proposed, because in the House of Lords it had been a protest upon the merits of public measures and public proceedings. He had never heard of a right of protest on a matter of discipline under the Rules of Procedure of the House of Lords. He did not believe that any precedent of that kind existed. The proposed right would be attended with the greatest practical inconvenience. The Speaker or the Chairman of Committees must be the direct subject of attack. The Speaker must give his responsible opinion that the question had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should be closed. The protest, he presumed, would deny that the question had been adequately discussed. The protest would contest the judgment and the action of the Speaker. Was it desirable or tolerable, or at any rate expedient, that Members of the House should have the right of inscribing on the Journals of the House lengthened arguments, questioning the judgment of the Speaker, and attempting to show that he had acted on insufficient grounds? Such protest could not fail to assume a very personal character. The Speaker was the organ and the highest authority of the House; and was he to make any reply, or was he to remain under any imputation which any 10 Members chose to cast upon him? They must surely prepare the means for a regular defence of the Speaker from the attacks which might be made upon him. Therefore, although there might be at first sight some considerations to recommend that proposal, he thought that when it was looked into that it could not be made workable.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he thought that the objections of the Home Secretary to the Amendment were remarkably weak, and those of the Prime Minister did not appear to be much stronger.

The Home Secretary said it was very inconsistent for Gentlemen on the Opposition side to claim that right of protest, because they had brought forward a Resolution providing for the suspension of an individual Member, and had given that individual Member no such protection. But the House would see that there was a vital difference between the two cases. The contention was that if free discussion was to be checked there must be some further safeguard provided. The Home Secretary had made a reference to the Law of Libel. He never heard of such a thing. Protests were common enough in the House of Lords, and they had never heard the Law of Libel mentioned there. Of course, he agreed with the Prime Minister that the protests of the House of Lords were different; indeed, it appeared to him that the House of Lords would shortly be the only Assembly in which freedom of discussion would be allowed. In that House they were going to be gagged; and, therefore, they contended that they had a right to enter their protest in order that the country might know, and, at any rate, future times might judge of the course they had adopted. He was afraid they must criticize the Speaker's acts; the only alternative was to agitate upon public platforms. It was perfectly absurd to say because a respectful protest was recorded, that, therefore, the Speaker was made the subject of attack. They knew that Notices had been placed on the Paper impugning the conduct of the Chairman, and, if he remembered rightly, of the Speaker also; but no one had ever suggested that in doing so hon. Members were in any way going beyond what they were perfectly entitled to do.

MR. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Gentleman has admitted that there is great difference between the proposition now before the House and the protests in the House of Lords. But the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) quoted the House of Lords, who have had this practice for many years, as in some sort an argument in favour of introducing the practice into this House. The protests of the House of Lords go back for about 300 years, and there have been Sessions in which as many as 20 protests have been entered in the Journals of that House. Some Members have tried to perpetuate their memory by incessantly protesting, and I am not at all certain that we might not find Members of that character in this House. That mode of protest has latterly fallen into disuse, for reasons which must be obvious to everyone who thinks for a moment on the matter. In those days there was no Press to report the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament to the public; and, therefore, so far as the public goes, no public opinion and no power that could in the slightest degree correct or influence any action which took place in either House of Parliament. All this is changed now. Hon. Members have their protests in the Division List next day in the newspapers. The 238, who, at 1 o'clock this morning, voted against this dreadful Resolution, or rather in favour of one brought forward by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) which the House considered still more dreadful, they have their protest now before the whole public of the United Kingdom in the newspapers, and they have had 20, 30, or 40 speeches in support of their view. There can be no kind of reason why they should appeal to the public, as if they had not been heard. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced this Amendment made one serious mistake. He seems to think that when the House has decided that a subject has been adequately discussed, and that as he sees the mouths of Members are stopped, there will be great discontent. I never saw any sign of discontent during the nearly 40 years I have been a Member of this House at any decision at which the House arrived. Men in this House have sense enough upon that question, if some of them are wanting it on others, to know that, as far as that particular debate might go, the decision of the House is final, and they snbmit. No man is simple enough to go to the public and complain of the decision of the House, that the discussion has proceeded to an adequate length, and a decision has been taken when everybody expects it. It would be a preposterous idea to say that after the decision has taken place—and it is the action of the House and not of the Speaker that decides—the public of the United Kingdom would not accept the decision as a final and just judgment. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and his Friends claim to be the Conservative Party; they rest not only upon law, but upon tradition. They are anxious to object to almost everything new that is proposed from this side of the House. ["No, no!"] More than one Member has protested in this debate against the Resolution, because they said, and said it most untruly —[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Withdraw!"] Well, if the hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) objects, I will say that they said it labouring under a gross mistake. They said that the main object of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was to get some machinery by which he might pass Bills to which they were opposed. It may be that measures to which they are greatly opposed will pass. I have never known any measure that the public wished for that they did not oppose. But if they are thus Conservative, why is it that they introduce these new-fangled propositions? The proposition last night was that two-thirds of the House should be required to do something, when in all other cases only a majority of the House is required; and now they propose to introduce into this House a system which had its rise 300 years ago in the House of Lords, which that House itself has almost entirely abandoned. On the Records of that House there are many records that are protests of wisdom; but there are not a few that are protests of folly, and the posterity of those who uttered those protests would wish that they should be obliterated from the Records of the House of Lords. I advise hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their anxiety to find something to do, at least not to bring forward the novel, absurd, and in this case very childish proposition which has been offered to the House. I do not like to use that expression in reference to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), because he is not generally absurd or childish; but I think, in the difficulty in which he and his Friends find themselves in fighting this matter, they have really dropped upon a proposition which deserves the words which I have applied to it. I am quite certain that the whole idea of a protest is one which the House will not accept. I am sure that if we accept it we should sink very much in the estimation of the public. All our proceedings are reported in the Press, and every Member—the humblest—every Party—the smallest—has a full opportunity of making its protest, and nothing on the Journals of the House would be of greater advantage than the means now at his disposal.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman consisted, as usual, of two parts, the first being an attack upon the policy of the Conservative Party, and the second a liberal tender of advice to them. He was sure that they would be greatly indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for his watchfulness on behalf of their Party. When, however, they came to examine his arguments they were not found to be quite so satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that this practice of minorities entering protests had been in existence for 300 years, and yet he taunted his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) with having proposed in the House of Commons a new-fangled mode of procedure. How could it be new-fangled when the right hon. Gentleman admitted that it was a very old established practice in the House of Lords? Many of those protests which used to be applied in the House of Lords were admirable specimens of argument and English, and not very long ago a Member of that side of the House had thought it worth while to preserve them as a record for future generations. But the right hon. Gentleman had said not only were those protests antiquated and useless, but that every Member of the House would have a full opportunity of expressing his views before the division was taken. But that was precisely what would not take place; and, in order to convince them that it would not take place, the right hon. Gentleman illustrated his position by what occurred last night. What had occurred? There had been a full and ample discussion of the question at issue, and when, with the full consent of both sides of the House, a division was taken, there was no further need of any protest. But it was precisely because there would not be that full and ample discussion in future that they asked for this power. It might be that Parties in that House would be discontented at the discussion having been prematurely cut short, and his right hon. Friend asked that they should recur to this old-established instead of new-fangled practice, and place a protest on the Journals of the House. The illustration which the right hon. Gentleman brought forward to prove the validity of his argument completely upset and reversed it, and the position taken by his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster held good. None of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite had adduced any reason why, after the introduction of those new-fangled Regulations, a Member should not be allowed to have recourse to the system of dignified and harmless protest.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the noble Lord had referred to the advice which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) had often given to the Conservative Party; and it must have been a sad reckoning to him how much better the fortunes of that Party would have been if that advice had been more frequently followed. The right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) asked why the Amendment should be objected to, as recourse would only be had to the protest after consultation with the Leaders of the Opposition, who would use language of extreme courtesy and take care that what they said would add to, rather than detract from, the dignity of the Speaker. But what would that protest be? It would not be an expression of the opinion of that House; but any ingenious person might frame a statement of facts wholly erroneous and enter them upon the Journals of the House. No one could contradict that statement, and there would be no remedy except a Motion to expunge it from the Journals. Thus that which had been devised to put an end to unnecessary debate would be the means of giving rise to a debate. A studied insult to the House and the Chair might be inserted in the Journals, and the only way of getting rid of it would be by a Motion, which would give rise to a debate in which there would have to be the fullest discussion. And the Speaker, whom the House was so rightly earnest in shielding from Party warfare, would be the object of general attack. Such an Amendment, therefore, would greatly detract from his position. He hoped, therefore, that, having regard to the position of their President, whether Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means, and the dignity of the House of Commons, the Amendment would not meet with support.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, he rose with great diffidence after so many champions of debate. He was surprised that the Attorney General should have thought it worth while to reproduce an argument so weak that it would not stand the test of a brief criticism. He wanted to know why the Attorney General, looking at the clear and unmistakable meaning of these words, talked about this Amendment constituting a censure on the Speaker? There was not a single syllable in this Amendment which could be tortured into any such sense, or a syllable which referred to the original action of the Speaker. They were told in this Amendment that any number of Members who were dissatisfied with "such decision"—what decision? It was not the Speaker who determined the matter; and, therefore, it was not against his decision that the proposed protest was to be made. Subsequent to his decision that the evident sense of the House was opposed to prolongation of any debate, the House proceeded to a division; and if the minority were dissatisfied with the result of that division all his right hon. Friend asked was that they should have the right to make a protest, and to cause its entry on the Records of the House. The decision of the Chair in declaring the evident sense of the House to be favourable to the curtailment of debate was vindicated by the majority on a division; but what his right hon. Friend contended for was that when a minority exceeding 10 Members felt dissatisfied with the result arrived at, they should be allowed to record a protest. What was the use of trying to confound and mystify so plain a proposition? He must, however, express his dissatisfaction with the Amendment, for he thought there was something to be said as to the inconvenience which might arise from every Member of a dissatisfied minority having the power to record his individual protest. He would, therefore, suggest that the Amendment should be so altered that the protest must be of a collective character. Again, he did not see why a minority of 10 should not have a right of recording a collective protest as well as a larger minority. In his opinion, the occasions on which the Resolution would be used harshly against a large minority would be very rare, because a large minority would have a considerable amount of public opinion to which they could appeal out-of-doors. But a minority of 10 could not successfully make such an appeal; and he confessed he was surprised that the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) should have qualified his Amendment. He thought the Conservative Party had shown a want of sympathy with small minorities. They were told that Members would avail themselves of the right of protest in order that they might make use of insulting and uncomplimentary language; but how could a Gentleman who did not possess that power, when addressing the House, acquire it the moment he took a pen in his hand? He maintained that a protest might be useful in acquainting the public outside with the reasons which induced a minority to ask the House for a fuller hearing. These Resolutions were intended to facilitate the despatch of Public Business, which certainly could not be in the slightest degree hindered or obstructed by a protest written in the Journals of the House. In conclusion, he begged to move to amend the Amendment by omitting the words "exceeding ten," and inserting before "protests" the word "collective."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "exceeding ten."—(*Mr. O'Connor Power.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'exceeding ten' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, he thought the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had done good service by bringing this subject forward. He (Mr. Thorold Rogers) was not one of those who thought they should have a partizan Speaker in the House of Commons, nor did he believe that any 10 Members would be at all likely to make a protest the vehicle for insulting the Speaker. He was surprised and sorry to hear the language of the Attorney General, for he did not think that in the other House, where Party feeling had been sometimes very strong, there was a single instance in which a protest had been made the vehicle for attacking the institutions of the country or the discipline of the House. Why, then, was the right of protesting refused to the House of Commons? The long series of the protests of Peers which he had had the honour of collecting were, in his opinion, among the most valuable State Papers in existence. Statements made by way of protest by minorities in the House of Lords had been full of practical wisdom and suggestive of future action, and they were part of a remarkable history of progress in the direction of liberty. Protesting began in the House of Lords with the Long Parliament, and it had been of the greatest assistance to English liberty. Almost all who protested were the leaders of public liberty against the arbitrary Government of Charles I. An attempt was made to introduce into the House of Commons the power of protesting, not, however, for the purpose of promoting liberty, but for that of stifling it, as the grand remonstrance would have been marked by the King; and, therefore, the Commons refused what the Lords had granted. The case was now entirely reversed, and there were occasions when it would be well if protests were allowed in the Commons. If the custom were adopted it would furnish many valuable records on subjects in which minorities had failed to produce conviction. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Bright), who had criticized this practice, would have found it useful, during his experience of the anti-Corn Law struggle, if, after defeats in the House, he could have put on record in the Journals the conclusive arguments by which that beneficent economic reform was advocated. In his (Mr. Thorold Rogers') opinion, the opportunity of placing on record the reasons for their not acquiescing in the judgment of the majority would be used with the full conviction that that judgment would be weighed, and that it would then be approved or condemned by the country.

Mr. DODSON said, there was some confusion which it would be well to clear up. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) had started by assuming that, according to the Resolution, the Speaker was to declare it was the evident sense of the House that a subject had been adequately discussed, and also that the Question be now put; but the former declaration was to be made by the Speaker or the Chairman on his own exclusive responsibility.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER: Whose is the decision referred to in the Amendment? That is the point.

MR. DODSON said, the decision referred to in the Amendment was the decision of the House upon the question submitted to it by the Speaker upon a judgment formed on his own responsibility. It was scarcely possible that a protest entered on this decision should not take the form of a protest against the Speaker's initiative. His hon. Friend the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) spoke as if the proposal were *in pari materiâ* with the protests of the House of Lords. But that was not so. Those in the House of Lords were protests against the subject-matter under discussion; but that would not be the case with those in this House. The protests referred to in the Amendment would not be *in rem*, but *in personam*—["No, no!"]—and the person protested against would be no other than the occupant of the Chair. ["No!"] Hon. Members said "No;" but any such vote must be given on a Question submitted by the Speaker on a judgment formed on his own responsibility; and, therefore, any such protest as that proposed would be a censure on him. The hon. Member also said that such protests would be entered in guarded and well-balanced language; but was that likely to be so when the protesters were to be, according to the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, in the position of gagged men smarting under the application of the Rule in that particular case, and who would probably compose their protests in the ecstacy of the moment? His hon. Friend also said that these protests would facilitate the Business of the House. On the contrary, he apprehended that, impugning, as they would do, the conduct of the Chair, they would be likely to impede rather than facilitate the passage of Business through the House. Whichever way he looked at it, he considered the Amendment most objectionable, and he trusted the House would not accept it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, it appeared to him that every new development given by the Government of the state of their position gave the House a new surprise, and every new surprise was an unpleasant surprise. When, at the earlier stages of the debate, hon. Members on that side of the House expressed their fears lest the power of the *clôture* should be abused by a tyrannical majority, they were told, especially by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), whose opinion had since been echoed by his Colleagues, that there would soon be an appeal to the country, so strong that no Government could resist it. What was the answer which hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House gave to that statement? They said that by giving the Speaker the initiative they would confer upon the Government of the day the power of sheltering themselves under the authority of the Speaker, and of saying that as the Speaker had declared that the subject had been sufficiently discussed, the Opposition, in disputing the decision arrived at, were not attacking the authority of the House, but were directly attacking the authority of the Speaker in the Chair. It would now appear that the fears they originally entertained were not altogether illusory, for the Government were advancing, in support of their present position, arguments altogether inconsistent with their former one. What was the whole case of the Government on the Amendment, whether that case was argued by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, or by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Dodson)? Their case was that the minority could not attack the decision of the majority of the House without, by the very same act, bringing into contempt the authority of the Chair. He wished to know from the Government, once for all, whether, when this Rule was passed and put in action, they did or did not mean to shelter themselves under the authority of the Speaker of the day? If they did not mean to shelter themselves under that authority, then let them adopt the Amendment proposed by his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). If they did propose to shelter themselves under that authority, then let them explain to the House of what value was the security which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had offered them that a tyrannical majority would not abuse the power intrusted to them.

MR. HUGH SHIELD said, he thought the question before the House was practically this—Could a protest be put in any form without reflecting upon the

Speaker and the authorities of the House? He ventured to say that it was demonstrable that such a protest must reflect, and must reflect most injuriously, upon the action of the occupant of the Chair. He confessed that he had heard the statement that the recording of such a protest upon the Journals of the House would not have such an effect with absolute astonishment; and he did not think it could be the outcome of serious argument. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said the value of this protest would be that it would enable the Members who protested to inform the public of the reasons why they desired further discussion. That was the argument of his hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. O'Connor Power). [Mr. O'CONNOR POWER: It was a portion of it.] He (Mr. Hugh Shield) would put this alternative—either the protesting Members would have had sufficient opportunity for bringing forward the reasons why they desired further discussion, or the matter would not have been adequately discussed. But, by the hypothesis, the Speaker had decided that the matter had been adequately discussed. It was impossible, therefore, that any body of hon. Members could place before the public the reasons why, under such circumstances, they wished to continue a discussion, without at the same time reflecting on the Speaker's decision, which was the first step of the process which culminated in the closure of the debate. What was the matter that was to be the subject of protest? It was nothing that could bear the slightest analogy to the subjects which had been usefully made matters of protest on the Journals of the House of Lords. What was to be allowed to be protested against was the decision of the House under this Resolution. It was the whole process described in the Resolution, and what was that? It commenced with the Speaker in the Chair, who formed in his own mind a conclusion that the subject under the consideration of the House had been adequately discussed. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair then rose, interposed in the debate, and voluntarily declared to the House his opinion that the matter had been adequately discussed, and also his opinion as to the evident sense of the House. Then followed the vote, and the result of that vote was the decision which was to be protested against. Now, a protest meant a complaint; but was it the complaint that the majority of 250, or whatever the number might be which carried the day against the 40 or 50 who formed the minority, had acted improperly? Nothing of the sort. They could not protest against the vote of the majority, nor could they enter into the mere arithmetical matters of the calculation. What they must protest against, and the only debatable matter upon which there could be any difference of opinion was, whether the Speaker had acted rightly in first declaring that the matter had been adequately discussed, and then in declaring that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should be put. He (Mr. Shield) submitted that in the remarks that the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had made, evidently without having heard the speech of the Prime Minister and other Members upon the matter, the hon. Member had discussed questions that were as wide apart as the poles from the real matter which it was proposed to make the subject of protest. He (Mr. Shield) contended that it was impossible to concede the right of protest asked for by the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) without incurring the grave inconvenience of placing upon the Journals of the House reflections upon the highest authority of the House. It was for the House to say whether that was a desirable consummation. For his own part he did not think it was, and he should, therefore, vote against the Amendment.

MR. DALRYMPLE said, the hon. Member who had just spoken, and others who had preceded him, were determined to assert that the protest must necessarily be a reflection upon the Chair. Now, neither in the terms of the Amendment itself, nor in the speeches in which it had been commended, was there any indication of the sort. The protest would be a protest against the decision of the House after a Motion made, and only after, as it were in the third place, the Speaker had recognized what he considered to be the evident sense of the House. It was only a far-fetched suggestion of the Attorney General, followed up by other hon. Members, that there would be any reflection upon the occupant of the Chair. He could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local

Government Board (Mr. Dodson) upon the success he had achieved in delivering the House from the confusion in which he said it had been left by the speeches of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) and the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers). The speech of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo was a most valuable one; and he thought, with the hon. and learned Member, that it would be better to have a collective protest than one which proceeded from eight or ten individual Members. In regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Southwark, it must be true, as the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Shield) said, that the hon. Member had not heard the speech of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), because the proposal which the hon. Member for Southwark now supported, with full knowledge of the subject, was a proposal which the right hon. Member for Birmingham had described as newfangled, absurd, and childish. He (Mr. Dalrymple) sometimes thought the proposals which were made on that side of the House might be commended to hon. Gentlemen opposite a little more, if they could imagine themselves for a moment in the position occupied by the Opposition. It was possible that at some time or other the Conservative Party would be in power, and he did not know that that was so very remote a possibility when he thought of the capacity for fatiguing and disgusting the country which the Liberal Party possessed. He would ask them to imagine the Conservative Party in power and the *clôture* being put in force. What would be said then? Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, whenever that time came, would highly value the opportunity of making a protest; and it would be better to make a protest on the Journals of the House than to make protests which were recommended to them in the pages of the public newspapers. Certainly he thought it would be far better to enter a protest upon the Journals of the House than in the pages of a well-paid magazine. In August, 1879, the first article of one of these well-paid magazines was an article entitled "The Government and the Country," which, to the best of his belief, was called "A Protest," and it was an article written by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. He would not at this moment venture to quote the language of the article; but he remembered that it contained words to this effect—that so far as any good to the human race or to the cause of humanity was concerned, during the years the Conservative Party had been in power, this country might almost better not have existed at all. His (Mr. Dalrymple's) opinion was, that a protest, entered upon the Journals of the House—and certainly not in any degree reflecting upon the occupant of the Chair—would be far better than the violent articles which now appeared in the newspapers and magazines.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he was anxious to say a few words on the subject before the House divided. It appeared to him that any sensible protest to be made against the closing of a debate must be one of two things. It must either be a protest against the debate being closed because the question had not been adequately discussed, or it must be a protest against the right of a majority to close the debate when the question had been adequately discussed. If it were the latter, it would be a protest against the legislation now going on in the House; and if the former, then it would be a direct protest against the action of the Speaker. He would ask any hon. Member on the Opposition side of the House who still desired to address the House to be kind enough to answer these remarks, and to answer them satisfactorily. There could be no sensible protest except the one or the other. The one alternative would lead to an absurdity, and the other would be an attack upon the Speaker for his action in the Chair.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he could not help thinking that the argument which had been used against the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had been, to use the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), childish and absurd. They had heard from the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Shield) that any protest against the decision of the Speaker would be very wrong and very improper on the part of a minority; but, however unwilling to attack the right hon. Gentleman, and however desirous the minority might be to support him or his Successors in the Chair in any decision the

Chair might arrive at, he did not think that was a matter that was called in question in any way except by the Resolution of the Government. The Resolution of the Government was that the decision of the Speaker, declaring the subject to have been adequately discussed, and that the Question might be put, could only be put to the vote after a direct Motion had been made. He would remind hon. Members that there must be two sides to the vote, and those who voted in the minority must necessarily be protesting against the decision of the Speaker in the most distinct manner possible. How, then, could it be urged that a protest in words and a protest in fact could convey a different reflection on the Chair? Those who voted with the minority would declare that they did not agree in the decision which the Speaker had arrived at; and it was but reasonable that they should be allowed, after the vote had been given, to state the reasons which had induced them to take that course. All that was asked now was that, when hon. Members did differ from such a high authority as the Speaker, they should have the option of explaining, in reasonable and courteous language, the reasons which induced them to differ. Hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on the Liberal side of the House, and especially the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), seemed unfairly to argue that the Speaker closed the debate by having come to the conclusion, in his own mind, that the subject had been adequately discussed, and that, therefore, the Question ought to be put, and that by that decision the discussion would have been there and then closed. It was no such thing; but the closing of the debate was left to the decision of the House, and it was against that decision that hon. Members who supported the Amendment wished to protest. Then, again, it was urged that the decision was simply the decision of the *clôture;* and the hon. Gentleman who last spoke (Mr. Morgan Lloyd), if he had caught the hon. Member's words aright, seemed to think that they wanted to protest against what was being passed by these Rules of Procedure. It must not be forgotten that, after the Speaker had declared his opinion, the Question then put would be that the debate be closed and the Original Question put. The two things must be taken together, and the protest would take this form—that there were reasons which might be given why the discussion should not be closed, because certain statements or certain other speeches connected with the Main Question had not been adequately put before the House. The two things must be taken together. It was absurd to say that the fact of one Question being put before the other, after a brief interval in which hon. Members had been engaged in marching through the Lobbies, should invalidate the power to enter a protest in the Journals of the House, giving reasons for the view entertained by the minority that the debate had not been adequately discussed. He denied that such a protest could either be an insult or an attack upon the Speaker.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he thought the question should be discussed purely as one of utility, and discussed as a matter of taste. Whether a protest would be insulting to the Chair must be left to the taste of hon. Gentlemen who protested; and he ventured to think that the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) was asking too much when he called upon them to take up as a new experiment in the House of Commons that which had become obsolete in the House of Lords. What questions were the protest to deal with if it were allowed to find its way upon the Journals of the House? Nothing in regard to the subject of debate or of the material question which had been before the House could be contained in it. The only advantage would be to hon. Members who had not had the opportunity of firing off their speeches, by affording them an opportunity of expressing their disappointment that others had said before them all that was necessary to be said. It would be patent to everybody that the Speaker had declared, in the first instance, that the subject had been adequately discussed, and that, in his opinion, it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. This view of the Speaker must also have been confirmed by the majority of the House; and, therefore, there would be nothing left for these hon. Gentlemen to protest against except that, in their view, they might have used something in the debate which, according to the majority of the House, had already been stated by others, and probably better than they could have stated it. Such a protest would be of so shallow a character, and so indirect in its operations, that there was no Party in the House, whether large or small, who could regard it as of the slightest advantage in the way of instructing the country. There had been past debates, during the time he had been in Parliament, upon the Irish Question, in which a good deal of feeling had been aroused that was adverse to the views entertained by the Irish Representatives; but what had been the course pursued by the Irish Party? Would anybody say that they had not had ample opportunities of making the Irish people perfectly aware, in the course of a very few hours, of all that had passed in the House the night before. Therefore, what was really asked by this Amendment was that they should open the Journals of the House for the purpose of satisfying some disappointed speaker on the one hand or on the other—of affording an opportunity to hon. Members, who were not in the most amiable frame of mind, for conveying reflections upon the Chair which it was not desirable to indulge in.

MR. SEXTON said, the real objects of this scheme of *clôture* were becoming more clear as they proceeded. He dare say they would soon begin to understand them. Up to the present time the contention of the Government was that the Speaker would not be responsible for the application of the *cloture,* that it would be the act of the House; and when hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House said that the result of the proposal would be to degrade the Speaker into the position of a partizan, they were told that the Speaker would hold an independent position, and that the act would be the act of the House itself. But now, when the other side of the argument was taken, and when, accepting the independence and irresponsibility of the Speaker, hon. Gentlemen on that side said—"Allow us to question the act of the majority," the Government replied—"No; for by questioning the act of the majority you proceed to insult the Speaker and to attack his authority." Was there not a radical irreconcilability between the two arguments? If the Speaker and the majority had their identity and their responsibility so irreconcilably bound up with one another, what was the use of this intricate scheme, which would simply be hypocritical in its effect? Why did not the Government simply, at once, instead of erecting before the Speaker the fence of a majority which they themselves confessed to be illusory, frankly proceed to legislate that the Speaker should declare a question adequately discussed, and that on the announcement of his decision the debate should be closed? That would be a much more frank and honest way of proceeding than the course now adopted. He ventured humbly to submit that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) was much too childlike in his frankness to hold the position of a Cabinet Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had risen at the Table, and, by way of enforcing his argument that a protest entered upon the Journals of the House might embody an insult to the Speaker, he drew a vivid picture of the feeling of excitement and discontent under which the gagged men might act in drawing up their protest. He (Mr. Sexton) had no doubt that the Prime Minister, who was a much more deft artificer in words than the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, already considered that "gagged men" was a vile phrase. Hitherto the House had been familiar with two Parties only in the House of Commons—the Ministerialists and the Opposition. He ventured to think that, thanks to the enlarged vocabulary of the right hon. Gentleman, the divisions in future would be simplified into "the gaggers and the gagged." The right hon. Gentleman, by way of further enforcing the argument that to allow a protest against the *clôture* might lead to insults to the Chair, referred to a debate which had been conducted by the Irish Party. He (Mr. Sexton) ventured to suggest that there was no parity in that case and any case which might arise under the scheme of the *clôture,* because in that case the Speaker, without any order, or real authority, or Resolution, or formal warrant of any kind, but in the exercise of his own discretion, interposed his own will between the Irish Party and the exercise of free speech in that House; and that extraordinary occasion, never known before in the Parliamentary history of the country, and never likely again to arise, was not to be quoted as a referential precedent. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the confusion of the debate. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman who sat near him (Mr. Dalrymple) that the right hon. Gentleman had only made confusion worse confounded; for, on looking at the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and reading it by the light of the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, he failed to see how the collective protest of discontented Members could be an attack upon the action of the Speaker. What was the Speaker to do under the 1st Resolution? He was to declare to the House his impression that the subject under consideration had been adequately discussed, and that it was time to close the debate. He simply declared an impression, and communicated certain information to the House. He made no decision upon that information, but the House proceeded to act upon his information; and the first mention they had of any decision in the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister occurred in line 9—

> "And if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith."

Therefore, the decision would result upon the division, and not upon the action of the Speaker; and he would remind those who talked of insult to the Speaker or to his Successor in the Chair, that he was in danger of a worse insult than any that could be levelled against him by a protest; because if, on any occasion, the right hon. Gentleman declared that the question had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question ought to be put, and the majority decided against him, a much greater indignity would be flung upon his word and judgment by the majority than any that could be conveyed by a protest placed by the minority upon the Journals of the House. It was, therefore, perfectly plain that a protest would not touch the authority of the Speaker, because the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had wisely and prudently interposed the fence—the wide and impassable fence of the vote of the House between the protest and the Chair; and he invited the right hon. Gentleman to say whether, under these circumstances, any protest by the minority could be considered an insult to the Speaker? But, as to insult, was not the Speaker the Editor of the Journals of the House? Was he not the authority, one of whose functions it was to guard the Journals of the House against being made the medium of insult, either to himself or to the House? From day to day the Speaker took upon himself the duty of altering, correcting, and revising the terms of Questions and Motions, and of expunging altogether from the Journals and Papers of the House anything he might deem an insult. He wished to know if the discretion and functions of the Speaker, as Editor of the Journals, were to disappear altogether under the new scheme of *clôture*, or if any 10 Members of the House, or even a smaller number, were to hand to the right hon. Gentleman a protest couched in offensive or indecent terms, the same power would not rest with him, as now, of guarding the dignity of the House? He had not had the pleasure of hearing the entire speech of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright); but what he did hear seemed to him to consist of an assumption and a fallacy. The assumption was unfounded, and the fallacy was patent. The fallacy was that because the House of Lords had had the faculty of exercising a protest for 300 years, and because it had not used it always prudently and wisely, that, therefore, it should not be given to the House of Commons. He failed to recognize the sufficiency of the argument that, because the power might have been misused in past times in the House of Lords, it ought not to be conceded to the House of Commons.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Member has entirely misconceived what I said. I said nothing about the misuse of protests in the House of Lords. I do not believe that there has been any misuse of protests. I did say that some wise and some very unwise things had been said, and that the privilege which was given to the House of Lords is scarcely ever used now. I, therefore, objected to the proposal to use them now for the first time in this House.

Mr. SEXTON said, he was glad that he had elicited this explanation from the right hon. Gentleman. He had heard the right hon. Gentleman say that there were many protests on the pages of the Journals of the House of Lords which the descendants of the Peers who made them wished had never been placed there. If that was not a condemnation of the use of protests by the House of Lords, he did not know the meaning of language. The assumption of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that the Members of the House of Commons having had an opportunity of expressing their opinion, there was no need of the further superfluous opportunity of expressing it by protest. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to forget that they were considering a scheme which would deprive the Members of the House of the opportunity of expressing their opinion at all. The scheme of the Prime Minister had never been clearly understood until last night, when it was outlined in lines of light by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington). It was now perfectly plain that what the Government meant was this—they meant to arrange their programme at the beginning of the Session; to consider how many Bills they could pass during the Session; to do a sum in simple division, and decide the number of hours in the Session they would devote to the consideration of each particular Bill. If any Party wished to be heard, they would be required to select two or three spokesmen from their side, or else remain silent. Hon. Members who had hitherto come there each man for himself, to speak for himself the opinion of his constituents, would hereafter find themselves not the spokesmen of the people, but each political Party would be a College of electors with the right of nominating two or three Gentlemen to speak for them. The assumption of the right hon. Gentleman that speech would be allowed to each Member had been sufficiently shown not to be the case; and he was surprised, when he considered the professions of the Government in bringing forward this scheme of *clôture*, at the manner in which they had received the Amendment. They professed to exercise these drastic powers with tender regard for the rights of Members; but he found them refusing in any case in which the *clôture* was applied to allow any number of Members of the House who considered themselves to have been improperly put to silence to use the limited safety-valve of a protest which might serve to assuage discontent and allay political excitement.

Mr. RAMSAY said, he had listened with attention to the debate, and he thought the difference of opinion which existed on the two sides of the House had arisen in consequence of a misunderstanding as to the object of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) said that the effect of a protest against the decision of the House would be a reflection and an insult upon the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means. Now, he thought it would be a most invidious thing to place any protest upon the Journals of the House against the proceedings of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees. But he did not understand that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) intended that that should be the case. The right hon. Gentleman had already disclaimed any such intention, and there was evidently a misunderstanding between the Government and the right hon. Gentleman opposite as to the object they had in view. As to the Amendment itself, he should like to say a word upon it. It seemed to him that the misapprehension arose from the language of the Resolution itself, and it arose in this way. In the first place, the Speaker was to inform the House that, in his opinion, it was the evident sense of the House that the subject had been adequately discussed. Having informed the House on that point, a Motion would immediately be made "That the Question be now put," and there would be a division taken thereupon. The division of the House would either affirm the opinion expressed by the Speaker, or deny the accuracy of his conclusion. In the next place, the Resolution went on to provide that, if the House affirmed the judgment of the Speaker, then the Main Question under discussion was to be put forthwith. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), the protest was to be made against the decision arrived at by the House on the

Main Question under discussion; and if that were the case—and he felt that it was the obvious meaning of the language of the Amendment—it was not necessary for the Government to proceed upon the assumption that the protest would be a protest against the decision of the Speaker, or of the Chairman of Ways and Means. He thought that some explanation might be allowed. If he misapprehended the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the protest, and if the protest was to be taken against the decision of the Speaker as to the adequate discussion of the subject before the House, then he thought the House and all sides would agree in refusing to allow a protest on that ground to be put on the Journals of the House. But if the protest was to be against the decision of the House upon the subject which had been under discussion, he did not see why it should be necessary for the Government to object to it.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. Member for Falkirk (Mr. Ramsay) had accurately and thoroughly realized the object he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had in view. It had never entered into his mind, and nothing he had said and no words he had put upon the Paper justified the assumption that he desired to cast any imputation upon the decision of the Speaker, or of the Chairman of Ways and Means. If the Government would read their own Resolution, they would find that after the Speaker had made his statement to the House it would become necessary that a Motion should be made. That Motion would be made on the Ministerial side of the House, and the whole responsibility would rest on the right hon. Gentleman who made it. The evident sense of the House would have been conveyed to the Speaker—the Speaker or Chairman would state what his view was, and then the Minister, rising in his place, would move, "That the Question be now put." It would thereupon be put without question and without debate. It was because he believed that there ought to be the opportunity of recording a protest—it might be from a discontented body of Members, such as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had described—composed of gagged men.

Mr. DODSON said, the statement was not his.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he had taken down the words of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. DODSON begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He had simply quoted language which had been used on the other side of the House.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked who used it? Who did the right hon. Gentleman quote?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was not aware that the words had been used on that side of the House. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman—and he was sure the whole House understood the right hon. Gentleman—to express his own appreciation of the sentiment which would agitate and move the minority, if subjected to the process now sought to be put upon them. The words of the right hon. Gentleman were that a minority composed of gagged men, in the hour of smarting, would, in the ecstacy of the moment, retire to the Library and put on record a protest which was not to be presented to the Speaker or the Clerk at the Table until 4 o'clock the next day. It was contrary to their experience of human nature that anything of the kind should be done; and he said, positively, that if this power of recording a respectful protest on the Journals of the House were refused, a protest, composed in the ecstacy of the moment, would be made, and would be transmitted and appear in the newspapers the next morning; and then, indeed, it would partake of the character which had been attributed to it by some hon. Gentlemen, and repeated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Dodson)—namely, that of having been composed by gagged men in the hour of smarting. He earnestly desired to afford dissenting Members what had been justly described by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as a safety-valve for their feelings. If this power must be applied, if this pressure must be inflicted on a minority in the House of Commons, it was, at all events, better that their dissent should find expression in respectful terms in the Journals of the House than that they should give vent to their dissatisfaction out-of-doors. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), he (Mr. W. H. Smith) regretted that the hon. and learned Member should have attributed to him the motive of preventing minorities of 11 recording their protests, because it never entered his mind that less than that number would consider it necessary seriously to dissent from the decision. But he had no objection to make a provision in the sense which the hon. and learned Gentleman indicated. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) believed it was apparent that this power ought to exist, and up to the present he had heard no argument against it, except that it did not now exist. But hon. Members would recollect that this idea of the *clôture* was a new one; as, indeed, were all the Resolutions on Procedure now proposed by Her Majesty's Government. There was, therefore, nothing unreasonable in the proposition he had laid before the House, which was intended to relieve pressure and enable Members to justify to their constituents the course they might feel it their duty to pursue.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he would remind the House that the question to be considered was not what the right hon. Gentleman intended by his proposal, but what would be possible and even probable if it were adopted. The objection of the Government was that the power of entering a protest was not likely to be of practical use, and, at the same time, that it would be open to grave abuse. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the protest would be a protest against the decision of the House; but surely, so far as a mere protest against that decision went, Members would have already protested against it in the most complete manner by voting against it. How could the decision be more emphatically protested against than by this? But then it was urged that something more than a protest was wanted; reasons were to be recorded, which meant that the proceeding was to be criticized. Now it was obvious, if this were done, Members who protested would adopt their own form of criticism, and the objection of the Government was that this might take a form offensive and derogatory to the Officers of the House. It was suggested that the Speaker had a certain control over the record of the proceedings of the House; but was it seriously meant that he would exercise this power by expunging criticisms consisting of reflections upon himself? ["No, no!"] He was arguing against the position taken up by the hon. Member for Sligo, who said, in effect, that there was complete protection against the abuse of the power of protesting, because the Speaker could prevent a protest remaining on the Journals of the House. But surely that was not a desirable position in which to place the highest authority in the House. No doubt, any protest made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) would be couched in perfectly respectful language; but then he would be unable to answer for the language used by any 10 Members who desired to protest. The right hon. Gentleman said that the adoption of his proposal would afford a kind of safety-valve, and that it would be better that these protests should be made within the House than out-of-doors. But did he think that they would not be made elsewhere as well as in the Journals of the House of Commons? For his own part, he was certain that the mere entry in the Journals of the House would not for one moment prevent a single Member from protesting elsewhere. The Government, therefore, saw no use in this proposal, which, if it were adopted, would, as he had shown, be liable to abuse. No doubt, in some cases it would be perfectly harmless; but they considered that in others it would be productive of considerable mischief. For these reasons Her Majesty's Government were unable to accede to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that the more the Government arguments were unfolded the more they had the effect of mystifying the question at issue. They, however, went far to refute certain other arguments which had been adduced more than once in the course of the debates which had taken place on these Resolutions. The hon. and learned Solicitor General told them that he could not consider the intention of the Amendment, but that he felt himself obliged to look at the possible result if it were carried. But when the Conservative Party submitted to Her Majesty's Government that they were unable entirely to pin their faith upon their good intentions in introducing the *cloture* into the Procedure of the House of Commons, and when they pointed to the possible and probable results that would ensue, these arguments were laughed to scorn, and they were told they should not prophecy unless they knew. The hon. and learned Gentleman proceeded to say that the right of protesting was not wanted, because the most complete protest would already have been recorded in the votes given by Members. But in the House of Lords, where the right of protest existed, those Peers who protested had already recorded their votes; and they protested because they wished to record the reasons for their votes in the most formal and distinct manner. Hon. Members, then, on those Benches wished the same practice to be followed in the House of Commons. It was very easy for the Solicitor General to say that the practice would be open to very grave abuse; but, surely, the right hon. Gentleman at his side (Mr. Dodson), who for so many years sat at the Table with great honour to himself and credit to the House, ought still to be sufficiently jealous of the character of their proceedings not to allow it to be attributed to Members of the House that they would be guilty of conduct of which, as the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had stated, there had been no instance in the House of Lords. "But," said the Solicitor General, "think what a dreadful thing it would be that it should rest with the Speaker to have the unpleasant responsibility of erasing from the Journals of the House a protest which might be directed against his own action." He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) humbly suggested, however, that this would not rest with the Speaker at all. The work which he held in his hand said—

> "Any protest or reason, or part thereof, if considered by the House to be unbecoming or otherwise irregular, may be ordered to be expunged;"

and that, he contended, was a sufficient and conclusive answer to the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman. He hoped that the debate, if it were not closed that night, might be enriched with some additional argument from Her Majesty's Government, because the more they argued the more they disproved that bold assertion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), that this Motion was childish and absurd, and the more clearly they showed that they had not considered the full effects of the *clôture* they were forcing upon the House—that Her Majesty's Government felt the force of the arguments adduced on that side of the House; but that, with reference to the Main Question, they dare not admit it, because they knew that would be fatal to their policy.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he had listened to the debate on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and was obliged to confess that the opinions which had been expressed as to its probable effects were somewhat mixed. Some hon. Members thought that if the right to protest were conceded, the effect of the protests made would be reflections upon the Speaker as the first Officer of the House; while others were of opinion that they would reflect upon the Government or the majority which put the *clôture* into operation. But he did not believe, no matter from whomsoever they came, that these protests would operate as a reflection upon the Speaker, nor that the right of protesting would be improperly used by any Member of the House. He was fortified in that opinion by the argument of the hon. Member for Southwark, whom, if he were in his place, he should heartily thank for having so ably shown that there was still some amount of proper feeling inherent in the House of Commons. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman now before the House had been supported by the argument that protests were in use in the House of Lords, and that they were sanctioned by ancient usage. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), however, when he rose, stigmatized the practice of protesting as being quite obsolete at the present day. The right hon. Gentleman was, to a certain extent, supported by the hon. Member for Southwark, who said protests had been used on a few occasions in the House of Lords—the last protest being made on the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. Having heard that statement questioned by hon. Members near him, he went to the Library and examined the Journals of the House of Lords, and finding that no protests had been made in the years 1876, 1877, and 1878, he began to think the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in his argument; but it occurred to him that during those years a Conservative Government was in power, and he then turned to 1880, in which year two protests were made in the House of Lords. That showed that, any rate, the practice of making protests was in existence. Then he came to 1881, and he found that in that year there were no less than six protests made, that being one of the years in which the Liberals were in power. One of those protests was against the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, and another against the Charitable Trusts Bill. The Land Law (Ireland) Bill was also protested against, as were also the Law of Libel Bill, the Solicitors' Remuneration Bill, and the Supreme Court of Judicature Bill. The use of protests might have become obsolete in the House of Lords at one time, but was being revived at the very time when it was proposed to introduce this practice into the House of Commons; but if the Government would leave to the House of Commons that freedom of debate which was permitted in the House of Lords, the House of Commons could very well dispense with the necessity of protests. He should most heartily support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, and he was very glad to think that the right hon. Gentleman had so cordially accepted the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member behind him (Mr. O'Connor Power), because he thought that that was a decided improvement.

LORD BURGHLEY said, he should be very happy to support his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) upon his Amendment, which, however, he thought would be greatly improved by the Amendment proposed to that Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment further amended, by inserting, before the word "protest," the word "collective."

Question put, "That the words 'Provided also, That any number of Members who shall be dissatisfied with such decision shall be entitled at the next sitting of the House to make a collective protest in writing which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House' be there added."

The House *divided:* Ayes 67; Noes 98: Majority 31.—(Div. List, No. 360.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House at its rising do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at One o'clock
till Monday next.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 6*th November*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Samuel Danks Waddy, esquire, *for* the City of Edinburgh.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to give Notice that, on as early a day as I can obtain, I shall call attention to the present employment of a portion of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt, and move—

> "That this House is entitled to a fuller explanation of the nature and proposed duration of the employment of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt, and of the estimated cost thereof, than it has yet received."

I shall also take an early opportunity of asking the Prime Minister whether he can afford a day for the discussion of that Motion.

QUESTIONS.

THE CRIMEAN WAR—THE BRITISH MILITARY CEMETERY AT ABYDOS.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the British Military Cemetery at Abydos has recently been disturbed and the remains of the dead exhumed; and, if it be true, whether steps will be taken to insure the reburying of the dead and proper precautions taken to prevent any similar act of desecration?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The British Vice Consul at the Dardanelles reports that the French authorities, in removing the remains of their dead from their Military Cemetery at Abydos to Gallipoli, by mistake began excavating in the English cemetery. On the error being pointed out, they ceased, and restored the ground to its previous state. We have only telegraphic information on this subject; and I think it better to wait until we get the Vice Consul's Report before stating anything as to future precautions for preventing desecration.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GRAVES OF THE SLAIN AT TEL-EL-KEBIR.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take to protect from violation the graves of the officers and men of the Army and Navy who fell in the battle of Tel-el-Kebir?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir Edward Malet has been instructed to express to the Egyptian Government the anxiety of Her Majesty's Government that all necessary measures should be taken to protect the graves of those who fell at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND), ACT —THE EMIGRATION CLAUSES.

SIR JAMES LAWRENCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps have been taken to carry out the Emigration Clauses in the Land Act (Ireland) and the Arrears Act?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have a report from Dublin on this subject; but I find it contains almost entirely the information I gave to the House about 10 days ago. I have sent several heads to Dublin on which I require information, and I expect to be able to give the hon. Gentleman an answer on Thursday.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—RETURN OF APPLICATIONS.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table at an early date a Return, under suitable headings, of the number of applications made under the Arrears Act up to the end of October, with the results then arrived at?

Sir Charles W. Dilke

MR. TREVELYAN: I have just laid upon the Table a Return under the Arrears Act of the number of applications lodged and disposed of in the Court of the Irish Land Commission up to and including the 31st day of October, 1882.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE APPROACHES TO THE PEABODY'S BUILDINGS, WESTMINSTER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the honourable and gallant Member for Truro, If he is aware of the state of the road and approaches to the new Peabody's Buildings, St. Anne Street, Westminster, the tenants having to wade through a perfect sea of water and mud in wet weather; that the water is getting into the foundations, and causes the buildings to be very damp in consequence; and, if he will take some steps to have the same remedied as soon as possible?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to inform him that the specification for the paving works in the road and approaches referred to was prepared some months ago; but its approval was unavoidably postponed, owing to difficulties with regard to the level of one of the roads, and also in consequence of the construction of a sewer by the local authorities. These hindrances have now been removed, and I hope the Board will be able to put the works in hand almost immediately. I may add that, though the present condition of the road and approaches is not satisfactory, I am not aware that it is so bad as described by the hon. Member, or that the water has penetrated the foundations of the buildings.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—ROYAL UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any of the Inspectors or other persons in the direct service of the Commissioners of National Education attended any of the Royal University examinations; and, if so, whether salary was invariably deducted from these as in the case of the ordinary National School teachers who attended the first matriculation examination of the same University?

MR. TREVELYAN: Officers in the direct service of the Commissioners of National Education—namely, one Inspector, three Inspector's Assistants, and a clerk, attended the Royal University examinations and obtained full pay while doing so, as their absence was during the time of their recognized holidays. Payment was also made in the cases of two Model School teachers who attended the examinations; but it was made in error, as they absented themselves from their duties to do so, and they will be required to refund the amounts overpaid.

RAILWAYS—FIRE IN A PULLMAN CAR —INQUEST ON DR. ARTHUR.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been directed to the evidence taken before the coroner at the inquest now being held on the body of the late Dr. Arthur, who was burnt to death in a Pullman's Car attached to the Midland Northern Express Train; more especially to the evidence of the engine driver, who stated that, acting according to his instructions, he did not immediately stop the train when requested to do so by repeated signals from some one pulling the communication cord, because, upon looking back, he could not discover there was anything amiss with the train; and, whether he will direct immediate inquiries to be made of other Railway Companies as to the instructions issued by them to their engine drivers how to act on receiving a signal to stop the train, from some one pulling the communication cord?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have communicated with my hon. Friend, but I am afraid he has not received my letter. I asked him to postpone his Question until I had received the Report of the judicial inquiry which is now going on, and the Report of Colonel Yolland, the Government Inspector of Railways, to the Board of Trade.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF THOMAS RYAN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to his statement in the case of Thomas Ryan, charged with assaulting Mr. Frizell, junior, to the effect that the prosecution was not brought under the Prevention of Crimes Act, Whether he has observed the following passage in the published report of the trial—

> "Acting Constable Byrne said he was directed to bring this prosecution under the Prevention of Crimes Act;"

and, whether he will make further inquiry on the subject, and also ascertain under whose direction Acting Constable Byrne proceeded?

MR. TREVELYAN: There is nothing inconsistent in my statement in reply to the previous Question on this subject put to me by the hon. Member and the statement made by the constable. The Prevention of Crime Act, 1871, which applies to the United Kingdom, was the Act under which the constable proceeded in the charge of assault upon the police, and, in doing so, he proceeded under the direction of his officer.

CHILI—MURDER OF DR. M'LEAN.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether anything definite has yet been done in the way of advancing or securing a settlement of the claim against the Chilian Government for compensation for the murder of Dr. MacLean, the physician to the British Legation, by Chilian soldiery, at Chorillos, in January last?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Representative at Santiago was instructed on July 28 to include the claim of Dr. M'Lean's relatives among those already presented by him to the Chilian Government. He has also been instructed to call the attention of the Chilian Government to the injustice which the continued delay is causing to the numerous claimants, and to urge upon them the necessity for taking such steps as will insure a settlement of these claims within a reasonable time.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MANOR HAMILTON UNION—CASE OF ALLAN NIXON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the report of an inquiry held at Manor Hamilton regarding the conduct of Allan Nixon, one of the rate collectors for that Union; whether, under the facts proved, namely, that the said Nixon did, on several occasions, take legal proceedings against persons who had already paid their rates, and, at least in one case, was forced by legal proceedings to refund money he had received in excess of what was due; also that he threatened electors if they voted for a particular candidate at an election of Poor Law Guardians against his wish, he will consider whether Nixon should not be dismissed from his position as Poor Rate Collector; and, whether he proposes to make any inquiry into the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I find that an inquiry was held by one of the Local Government Board Inspectors into the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member, and it was apparent that Mr. Nixon had committed some serious mistakes in the steps taken by him to enforce the collection of the rates, and that he had solicited votes for one of the candidates at the election of Guardians; but it did not appear that he was guilty of any attempt at fraud. Mr. Nixon had been a meritorious officer of about 32 years' service; and, under the circumstances, the Local Government Board considered it sufficient to caution him to be more accurate and careful in the discharge of his duty in future, and they pointed out to him that no paid officer of the Union could be permitted to interfere with the election of Guardians beyond the exercise of his right, if a ratepayer, to vote or nominate. The subject also came before a large meeting of the Guardians convened to consider a notice of motion given by one of their body adverse to the retention of Mr. Nixon's services as a collector; but by a majority of 13 to 4 the Guardians passed a resolution declining to consider the motion. I do not propose to take any further action in the matter.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LIST OF CASES IN SUB-COMMISSION COURT, MAYO.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state how many cases under the Land Law Act have been listed for hearing, and how many have been heard in the Civil Bill Court of Mayo, and in the Sub-Commission Court of the same county, since the passing of the Act, specifying the number of cases listed for hearing, and the number of cases heard in each court respectively?

The hon. Member said that, in putting the Question, he desired to explain that in referring to the Sub-Commission Court of Mayo he did not intend to make any reflection on the gentleman who presided in that Court. On the contrary, he desired to express his satisfaction at the manner in which the business was conducted in that Court.

Mr. TREVELYAN: In the Civil Bill Court of Mayo 1,920 cases have been listed for hearing. In 721 cases fair rents have been fixed, and 282 have been dismissed, withdrawn, or struck out. In the Sub-Commission Court 1,571 cases have been listed for hearing. In 744 cases fair rents have been fixed, and 429 cases have been dismissed, withdrawn, or struck out.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked if the right hon. Gentleman could state the proportionate expense incurred in arriving at this conclusion?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he would put a Question on the subject on a future day to the First Lord of the Treasury, and would ask him, Whether, having in view the disparity in the results, and the expenditure involved under each of these Courts respectively, some steps should not be taken to transfer the business of the Sub-Commission Court to the County Court?

CRIME (IRELAND)—MURDER OF CONSTABLE KAVANAGH.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he would state who the persons were that received the reward in the case of Constable Kavanagh's murder; in what proportion the £1,000 will be distributed amongst them; and, whether it will be paid out of the Secret Service Fund or become a charge on the Estimates; and, if the latter, whether it will be set down as a separate item or be included under the head of Law Charges and Prosecutions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I must claim the indulgence of the House and respectfully decline to answer the first portion of this Question, as I feel that I could not give the information asked for without danger, and certainly great inconvenience and discomfort, to the persons on whose evidence a conviction was obtained. With regard to the final portion of the Question, I beg to say that expenses of this kind are properly chargeable to the Vote for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions, and will not form a separate item in the Estimates.

Mr. HEALY explained that his reason for putting the Question was this. He desired at a future Sitting of the House—next Session, perhaps—to call attention to the evidence upon which this man was hung, and contrast the evidence of the paid witnesses with the evidence of unpaid witnesses.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—ARMY RAILWAY CORPS.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that it is proposed to establish permanently an Army Railway Corps?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; I am considering the feasibility of converting one or more Companies of Royal Engineers into a Railway Corps, with permanent *cadres*, which could be rapidly expanded when required on active service; but the details have not yet been worked out.

INDIA (RAILWAYS)—RANGOON AND IRRAWADDY RAILWAY.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for India, If it is true that proposals have been made by a private firm to the Indian Government for the purchase of the Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley Railway; if these proposals have received the approval of the Local Government of Burmah; and, if he will undertake that before the India Council is committed to the policy of the purchase of State Railways by private individuals, he will not only lay upon the Table of the House the exact nature of the present proposals, but also allow the policy of the whole subject to be discussed?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Proposals have been made by a private firm to the Government of India for the purchase of the Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley Railway, and the Commissioner of Burmah has expressed himself in favour of the transfer of the Railway to a Company on certain terms; but the consideration of the question has been postponed for the present in order that the views of the Government of India may be fully expressed on the general policy involved in such a proposal. I could not undertake to lay on the Table Papers relating to any particular proposal before a decision has been arrived at by the Government; but as soon as any decision has been come to I will give full information to the House.

MASTER AND SERVANT—BREACH OF CONTRACT—"GENGE v. SYMES."

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that, in the case of Genge v. Symes, tried at Bridport on 25th September, and in which defendant was fined £5 for alleged breach of contract in absenting himself from his work, there was a complaint that the first breach was committed by the complainant in not supplying a suitable cottage, in accordance with the agreement; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will, if he has the power to do so, remit the fine; and, if he has not the power, that he will use his influence with the magistrates who tried the case to remit the fine?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the case was that of a breach of a civil contract, and, therefore, one in which he had no authority to interfere.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF AGNES MALCOLMSON.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a letter published in the "Belfast Daily News," of 1st instant, and signed by C. E. Greene, P.L.G., in which it is stated that a lunatic woman named Malcolmson, who had resided twenty-five years in Scotland, had been removed from a lunatic asylum at Bothwell to Downpatrick Workhouse; also of a letter from the Parochial Board Office, Cambuslang, denying the truth of Mr. Greene's statement; and, whether he will inquire into the case; and, if the letter of the Downpatrick Guardian is correct, he will use the proper means to prevent the recurrence of such an outrage?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The attention of the Local Government Board had already been directed by the Guardians of the Downpatrick Union to the removal of Agnes Malcolmson from Scotland to their Union; but they made no complaints as to the alleged ill-treatment of the poor woman by the female warders. The Local Government Board will now make inquiries on this point, and I will let the hon. Member know the result.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that great distress occurs annually amongst the labouring population of the town of Arklow, county Wicklow, from the want of employment in the winter season; whether he is aware that the harbour works, for which an Act of Parliament was obtained last Session, have not yet been commenced; and, whether he will communicate with the Board of Public Works (Ireland) with a view to their being started at once?

MR. COURTNEY (for Mr. TREVELYAN): The Government are quite alive to the desirability of commencing the Arklow Harbour works as soon as possible. The only delay which has occurred was due to a request that the plans might be examined by a local committee. This has now been done; tenders have been called for and received; the selection will be made in a few days, and the work will then be commenced very shortly.

ARMY (INDIA)—INDIAN "LOCAL" CAVALRY OFFICERS.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, If he will state whether any Memorials from "Local" Officers on the Cadres of the late Bengal, Madras, or Bombay Cavalry have been received at the India Office in England, or by the authorities in India, for submission to Parliament; whether he is now prepared to announce what remedial measures he has suggested for the alleviation of the depressed position of the "Local" Cavalry Officers in the junior grades; and, whether any hope of their early promulgation may be entertained by the Officers concerned?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Many Memorials from officers of the local Cavalry lists of the three Presidencies, representing the slowness of their actual promotion, have been received through the Government of India; but I am not aware that any have been addressed to Parliament. In September the Government of India were authorized to give effect to their proposals for ameliorating the position of the officers of the local Cavalry suffering from retarded promotion. I believe these measures will remove all legitimate grounds of complaint. They are, briefly, to give to all the officers on the lists the option of coming prospectively under the Staff Corps Rules of substantive promotion, with Staff Corps rate of pay and the attainment of colonels' allowances at Staff Corps officers' rates — namely, £1,124 yearly after 38 years' service. Should all the officers concerned—61 in number—accept these terms, which are, of course, optional, the additional cost will not fall short of £70,000 yearly. The Government of India will, doubtless, lose no time in promulgating the terms thus authorized.

CRIME (IRELAND)—ATTEMPTED MURDER OF MR. CARTER IN MAYO CO.—COST OF ATTENDANCE OF SURGEON WHEELER.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Surgeon William Ireland Wheeler, Vice President of the Royal College of Surgeons, at the request of the Irish Government, attended Mr. Thomas Shaen Carter, who was in the month of March last fired at and dangerously wounded in the county of Mayo; whether Surgeon Wheeler paid many visits to Mr. Carter in Mayo, leaving his large practice in Dublin for the purpose, and reported the result of each visit to the Irish Government; whether Surgeon Wheeler duly furnished his account for such attendance to the Irish Government, and has not been paid; and, when the Irish Government intend to pay this claim?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Morony, Resident Magistrate, reported to the late Under Secretary that Mr. Carter, who was fired at and dangerously wounded on the 15th of March last in the County Mayo, expressed a wish to have the professional aid of Surgeon Wheeler, who had previously attended him. Mr. Burke thereupon intimated to Surgeon Wheeler that if he visited Mr. Carter, and if that gentleman was unable to pay his fees for such attendance, he might submit a claim for the consideration of Government. Surgeon Wheeler paid many visits to Mr. Carter, and I believe reported the result of each to the late Under Secretary. He has since furnished an account to Government for £1,147 18s. for his own services, and for fees of 50 guineas and 25 guineas respectively for two assistants who accompanied him. Mr. Carter states that he is unable to pay for this medical attendance, but has made a claim for compensation under the 19th section of the Prevention of Crime Act; and pending the result of that claim the Government cannot come to any decision on Surgeon Wheeler's demand.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Who is responsible for the framing of the charges against Arabi Pasha; and, is the British Government, to whose officers he surrendered, responsible for these accusations?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Egyptian Government are responsible for the framing of the charges and accusations against Arabi Pasha.

IRELAND — THE "ANNALS OF ULSTER."

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the cause of the delay in the publication of the important Irish chronicle known as the "Annals of Ulster," for which a grant was made by the Treasury more than five years ago; and, if there is any prospect of the early issue of this work, the publication of which has been so earnestly desired by historical inquirers in Great Britain as well as in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The following explanation has been received from Dean Reeves, who is the editor of *The Annals of Ulster*:—The understanding when the grant for the printing of *The Annals of Ulster* was made was that the work should be executed in four years; but unforeseen difficulties and delays have occurred in the meantime, and the editor has been unable to commence the printing until this year. The printing has now been begun, and it is hoped that the work will steadily progress. I may observe that none of the money voted by Parliament for the publication of these Annals has yet been expended.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT—CONDEMNED HOUSES AT BRISTOL.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been called to the action of the Sanitary Authority at Bristol in summoning the owners (chiefly working men) of seventy-four houses condemned by the medical officer of health; these houses having been erected on the strength of the official sanction to the plans; and, whether such proceedings, without compensation to the owners of the property, are approved by the Board?

Mr. DODSON: My attention had not been called to this matter until my hon. Friend gave Notice of his Question; but I have since communicated with the Sanitary Authority on the subject. I find that the Medical Officer of Health has reported a number of houses as being unfit for human habitation, because they are built on low lands, which are liable to be flooded whenever there is an excess of rain. It is true that the houses have been built in accordance with plans submitted to the Sanitary Authority in pursuance of their bye-laws; but when the plans were before the Sanitary Authority they had only to consider whether the requirements of the bye-laws were satisfied; and the bye-laws referred to the structure of the buildings and not to the fitness of the site. The Sanitary Authority, therefore, gave no approval to the site. The Local Government Board have no control over the Sanitary Authority in this matter; but the case will be brought before the Justices before the houses are closed, and it will, of course, be necessary to satisfy them that the houses are, in fact, unfit for habitation.

JAPAN—IMPORTATION OF DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, referring to the answer he gave on August 6th 1880, Her Majesty's Minister in Japan has been able to induce the Japanese Government to permit the importation of drugs and other chemicals into that country?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government are not aware that there has been any interference with the importation of drugs and other chemicals into Japan other than medicinal opium. Restrictions are placed by the laws of Japan on the sale of bad or spurious drugs, and they are submitted to an examination by the Board of Health before they can be sold to the Japanese. Complaints were made in 1879 that certain drugs had been unfairly condemned; but since that time no further complaints have been received.

ARMY—QUEEN'S CADETSHIPS AND ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Dr. LYONS asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the fact that under existing regulations the sons of medical officers of the Army are ineligible for nomination to honorary Queen's cadetships; and, if he will take steps to remedy this inequality in the position of the Medical Department which is felt as a slight to those who risk their lives in the service of the State?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to remind him that the sons of medical officers are eligible for Queen's cadetships. The arrangements as to Queen's honorary cadetships are under consideration; but I can give no assurance that I can extend this system, which is a delicate one to alter.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF NATIONAL LEAGUE PLACARDS, CO. LOUTH.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware of the fact that Acting Constable Glynn, of the Louth Constabulary Station, County Louth, accompanied by Sub-Constable Jebb, of the same station, tore down some placards giving public notice, as follows:—

> "Irish National League. In accordance with a Resolution adopted at a preliminary meeting held on Sunday last to consider the advisability of establishing a Branch of the above in the town of Louth, a public meeting will be held, immediately after last Mass, on Sunday next, 5th November 1882, for the purpose of forming a Branch of the Irish National League for Louth District. Men of Louth, assemble on Sunday, and show by your presence and by your subscriptions your desire and determination to take your place in the ranks of those who are labouring to make Ireland a Nation;"

whether the acting constable, on being questioned as to the legality of the placards, declared that the words "desire and determination" were "unconstitutional," and, when asked as to his authority for tearing down the placards, replied "Begone, and don't obstruct us in the discharge of our duty;" whether the acting constable exceeded his legal right in tearing down the placards, in giving a decision upon the legality of their language, and in threatening those who asked him to state his authority for his conduct; whether, as promised some time ago, the Irish Executive have issued instructions to the Police, cautioning them with reference to the tearing down of placards; and, whether the Executive will now take any steps to protect the right of public meeting, and guard against breaches of the peace, by restraining the tendency of individual members of the Constabulary Force to interfere unduly with the public?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No report of the occurrence mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member had reached the Inspector General up to the 4th instant. He therefore telegraphed the substance of the Question to the Sub-Inspector at Ardee, in which district Louth Station is situate; but I have not yet learnt the result. The hon. Member is under some misapprehension with regard to the issue of instructions to the police relative to placards. What I promised should be done was to issue instructions to them not to interfere with placards relating to the Labour League and Shepherds' Association, and this has been done. I think similar instructions may be requisite with regard to the placards of the Irish National League, and I will therefore give orders for their issue at once.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—DISTRIBUTION OF HONOURS — THE ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY.

Colonel MAKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the names of Colonel H. S. Jones, Royal Marines, and Colonel Tuson, Royal Marine Artillery, will be added to the list of Regimental Colonels who have been recommended to receive Companionships of the Bath, those two Officers having been specially mentioned for their zeal and ability by General Sir Garnet Wolseley?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, I hope I shall not be deemed discourteous if I venture to appeal to the hon. and gallant Member whether such a Question as this should be asked in this House—a Question, namely, as to the intention of the Government to recommend to Her Majesty for a certain honour two individual officers out of the whole number who served in Egypt. I feel compelled to add that I am sure the two gallant officers alluded to by the hon. and gallant Member would be the first to disclaim, on their own part and on that of the distinguished corps to which they belong, any desire to have their names brought in this way before the House.

COLONEL MAKINS: I assure the House I had no intention of doing anything that would seem invidious. I simply saw that a number of Army officers were recommended for promotion; and I wondered why the Marine officers, while they had been honourably mentioned by Sir Garnet Wolseley, were not mentioned as likely to be rewarded in the same way.

STATE OF IRELAND—RELIEF WORKS, ARKLOW, CO. WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the action of the county surveyor of Wicklow in putting a stop, at the request of Lord Carysfort, to the works for the improvement of the town of Arklow, which had been passed by the grand jury, fiated by the judge of assize, a contract duly entered into under bail bonds, and which had been actually commenced, If he can now state whether the county surveyor acted justifiably or within his powers on the occasion; and, if not, whether he will take any and what steps to have the works proceeded with at once?

MR. TREVELYAN: It has been stated to me that the Grand Jury who passed the presentment did so subject to the consent of the adjoining owners being obtained. The secretary to the Grand Jury has been asked to report specifically on this point; but I have not yet received his reply.

EGYPT — COMMAND OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY — APPOINTMENT OF BAKER PASHA.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any communications have at any time passed between Sir Garnet Wolseley and Baker Pacha in reference to the appointment of the latter to the command of the Egyptian Army; and, if so, whether the Government has been informed as to the nature of the communications; and, whether Sir Garnet Wolseley advised the Khedive to appoint Baker Pacha to the command of the Egyptian Army; and, if so, whether Sir Garnet Wolseley acted with the approval of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I have asked Sir Garnet Wolseley, and he tells me that no official communications of any sort have passed between him and Baker Pasha in reference to the command of the Egyptian Army; and, further, that he did not advise the Khedive to appoint Baker Pasha to that command.

SCOTLAND—DEER FORESTS IN THE HIGHLANDS—EVICTIONS.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to a case reported in the "Scotsman" of the 28th Oct. in which the plaintiff, Mr. Winans, sought to compel the defendant, Mr. Mackenzie, to evict shepherds "and other occupants" from a place rented as a deer forest; and, if he will grant a Return of the area of land converted into sheep walks and deer forests in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland since 1831, and the number of persons and families removed for that purpose?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no information on this subject of a character to enable me to pronounce upon the matter as to its merits, although I have been cognizant by common repute with what has been going on. With regard to the inquiry of the hon. Gentleman, I think it would be a very useful thing if, upon this contested question, there could be a Return to the effect he describes; but I believe it is wholly beyond our power to give it.

MR. MACFARLANE: I shall call attention to the subject, and move a Resolution.

LORD ELCHO: My impression is that there is some information upon the subject in the Report of a Committee in 1872.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think there is information on the subject in the Report of a Committee. At the same time, I have no doubt my hon. Friend is better acquainted with it than I am.

SCOTLAND—HARBOURS ON THE EAST COAST—BREAKWATER AT PETERHEAD.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the statement is correct that the Government has resolved to construct, by the aid of convict labour, an extensive breakwater at Peterhead; and, if so, whether, before undertaking so great a work, they will appoint a Royal Commission to inquire exhaustively into the deficient harbour accommodation on the East Coast of this country, and to report in what manner that deficiency may best be dealt with for the benefit of our seafaring population and the Nation at large?

Mr. COURTNEY: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question, which relates to a matter which has not yet come before him in a definite form. The question of the disposal of the convict labour which will shortly be set free is engaging the attention of Government; but no decision has as yet been arrived at upon it. Peterhead is among the places where it has been suggested that convict labour may with advantage be employed in the construction of a harbour of refuge. As the employment of the convicts is a matter that scarcely brooks delay, the appointment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry is highly undesirable, and it is believed to be unnecessary, as the information at the command of the Government is sufficient to enable a decision to be formed when that becomes imperative.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—BEER AND WINE LICENCES.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that persons licensed to sell beer and wine by retail for consumption off the premises formerly paid the Duty on wine licences in April and on beer licences in October; whether the collectors of Inland Revenue have in many cases recently noticed the holders of these licences to take out the new combined beer and wine licence which is payable in the month of October every year; whether the traders when paying for the combined licences applied for and were refused a rebate for the half-year's unexpired time of the wine licence paid for in the month of April previous; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will recommend the Commissioners of Revenue to refund the amount (£1 5*s.*) for the unexpired time of the wine licences to those persons who took out the combined licence referred to?

Mr. COURTNEY: I believe that the hon. Member has more than once raised this question before. It is quite optional whether to take out the new combined licence or to remain under the old system. If a trader chooses the former alternative, he obtains a permanent relief of 15*s.* a-year at the cost of sacrificing one half-year's user of the wine licence, which may be valued at 25*s.* This change is clearly to the benefit of the trader, and the Government have no intention of making it more so by allowing the refund suggested. But no pressure is put upon the trader to choose one course rather than the other.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. BOURKE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, Whether the Secretary of State for War ordered the rebels in Egypt to be treated according to the recognized rules of civilized warfare, including the exchange of prisoners; and, is the delivery of such prisoners to be tried by the civil authorities of their enemy in accordance with these instructions? At the same time I beg to ask him another Question—namely, Whether the following statement is a correct report of the surrender of Arabi Pasha:—A prefect of police was ordered by Colonel Stewart to invite Arabi to attend upon him. He came at once, accompanied by Toulba. He was received by General Drury Lowe. Arabi asked an officer of the Queen's Service what he was to do. He was told to surrender his sword. He was asked if he surrendered unconditionally, and he said, "Yes; that he surrendered to the clemency of England?" If this be a correct report, I should like to ask what justification there is for trying him by the Egyptian authorities?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I had better, perhaps, first take the second Question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman. He asks me whether a statement is accurate in respect to which, as far as I understand, I have to say that it is anonymous as well as unauthoritative, and not accurate at all, because it gives the impression that by a request of an optional character Arabi Pasha was invited to surrender himself, and in that way, by an act of his own free will, came into our possession as a prisoner. That is exactly the reverse of the case. The Prefect of Police was not commissioned by the Military Commander, Colonel Stewart, to invite Arabi Pasha; but he was ordered to bring in Arabi Pasha, and, I think, within a very narrow limit of time, and under penalties to himself that he knew were pretty severe — Arabi Pasha being within reach, as Colonel Stewart knew very well. It was a simple command to bring him in. That being so, the basis of the statement is, I think, in the main, taken away. It is quite true that he surrendered himself—that was his own language — unconditionally. With respect to the Question which the right hon. Gentleman has put on the Paper—namely,

> "Whether the Secretary of State for War ordered the rebels in Egypt to be treated according to the recognized rules of civilized warfare, including the exchange of prisoners; and, is the delivery of such prisoners to be tried by the civil authorities of their enemy in accordance with instructions?"

that raises a point of great importance on which I shall endeavour to give an answer. The direction that the rebels under Arabi Pasha should be treated by the General Commanding-in-Chief of the English Forces according to the rules of civilized warfare was given, in the first place, in the interests of humanity; and, in the second place, it was advantageous to the position of the English Army, and would be in accordance with usage and with authority. The men under Arabi Pasha's command were a disciplined force, controlled by their acknowledged officers; and, in order to subdue them, operations of regular warfare had to be undertaken. For the sake of humanity, and in order to avoid reprisals upon the British Force—on both the one ground and the other—such men, during the operations of war, had to be treated as soldiers in the field. About that we had no doubt whatever; and if a different doctrine were to prevail, the horrors of civil war would be increased a hundredfold. But as soon as those operations in arms against the Sovereign of the country—or against the Ruler of the country, as I had better call him—were subdued, the municipal rights of the Ruler of the country became capable of being enforced, notwithstanding that during the civil war the rights of belligerents had been acknowledged; for their belligerent rights were acknowledged within certain limits and for the special purposes of war. [Mr. BIGGAR: Oh!] The hon. Member will, perhaps, answer the Question himself. I say the rights of belligerents were acknowledged for certain purposes relative to the operations of war. But directly the military operations were brought to a close a new state of things supervened, and we then had to acknowledge the rights appertaining to the Government of the country. We were not there as conquerors; and, in our opinion, it would have been exceedingly wrong if we had not acknowledged the rights of the Government of the country. And those rebels who are left outside of the amnesty are liable to be proceeded against under the municipal law of Egypt.

MR. BOURKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether the act of Colonel Stewart was not one of the ordinary operations of war, carried on by one of Her Majesty's officers?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes; I consider it was. Taking prisoner of a rebel leader was an operation of war.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I understood the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to state a few days ago that the third charge against Arabi and three others was continuing war after peace was concluded. I have puzzled over these words, and I am still at a loss to know what they mean.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already stated in a previous answer that Her Majesty's Government are not responsible for any of the charges made against Arabi Pasha.

EGYPT—THE SUEZ CANAL.

MR. CHARLES PALMER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the attention of the Government is directed to the importance of utilising the opportunity afforded by the present state of affairs in Egypt to secure, in the interest of British trade and shipping, a greater share than it has hitherto possessed in the control and management of the Suez Canal, especially as respects the removal of vexatious regulations and a periodical revision of charges?

Mr. GLADSTONE: At this moment I am afraid I must request the indulgence of my hon. Friend, and only convey to him the assurance that this subject is now under consideration, and that the full and careful attention of the Government is being given to it. I hope no great time will elapse before I am able to make a more definite statement.

IRELAND—THE IRISH LABOURERS' QUESTION.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with any scheme for the settlement of the Irish Labourers' question during the next Session of Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not quite certain how much the hon. Member comprehends in the phrase "the Irish Labourers' question;" but, whatever may be its meaning, it certainly will be included in the reply which I have to give, and that is the same that I have to give to all Members on all subjects. The Government will announce no intention on the subject of important measures to be taken during the next Session until the House has placed them in a position to form a judgment on the question whether the House means to vindicate for itself the application of its own time, and what amount of that time will be available for legislative purposes. Until we know that, it is impossible for me to make any announcement or engagement on the part of the Government.

CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN—SIR C. RIVERS WILSON, COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether Sir Charles Rivers Wilson still holds the office of Comptroller-General of the National Debt; and, if so, whether the Lords of the Treasury approve of the exhibition of his name in all the journals of the Kingdom inviting the public to purchase $2,000,000 of bonds in the Eagle Pass and Air Line Railway of Texas, together with the announcement that the money is to be paid to his bankers, at his offices in the City, and to be expended upon the certificates of his engineer? I should have given longer Notice of this Question did not this extraordinary invitation close on Thursday next.

Mr. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend was kind enough to send me a note this forenoon, saying that he would put a Question on this subject; and I have taken advantage of the interval to ascertain the facts of the case. When he asks me whether Sir Charles Rivers Wilson continues to be Comptroller General of the National Debt, I must say that he does, and for the interests of the Office I have every reason to desire that he should continue to be, for he is a very efficient public officer. But that is no answer to my hon. Friend. My hon. Friend knows the general rules which prevail in the Public Service; but I must also prefix to my answer that this is a case in which I myself, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, am specially responsible; because the National Debt Office is, in strictness, more under the Chancellor of the Exchequer than under the Treasury. Sir Charles Rivers Wilson is the Trustee of the Association, of the objects of which I am totally and absolutely ignorant; but with respect to which he assures me of these two things—and I give to them the most implicit credence—first, that the duties of a Trustee, which I apprehend are different from those of a Director of the Institution, will in no way interfere with the efficient discharge of any of his duties as Comptroller General of the National Debt Office; and, secondly, that he certainly thought it his duty to satisfy himself, before assuming them, that the undertaking is one of a sound and solvent character. In my answer to the hon. Member I confined myself strictly to the dry facts of the case.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I will ask the Prime Minister, Whether, in his opinion, it is consonant with the rules of the Public Service, and consistent with the interests of the Public Service, that high officials, especially in financial positions, should become Trustees and guarantors of what appears to me to be a speculative undertaking? But, whether speculative or not, I beg to call attention to the fact that this scheme is mentioned in all the papers, and the public are advised to give entire confidence to it, seeing the high personal character of the two Trustees, Lord Sherbrooke and Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, who were personally responsible.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have stated before, and I repeat, that I confined myself in my answer to the dry facts of the case. I may add, however, that my right hon. Friend has used the expression "guarantors." These gentlemen are Trustees, and they do not give any guarantee in the matter.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that if he could find an opportunity on going into Committee of Supply he would call attention to the circumstances, and should move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the acceptance of such an appointment by a Government official connected with the Public Debt was in the highest degree improper and reprehensible."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Prime Minister, If the House was to understand that he had given any opinion or sanction as to the employment of Sir Rivers Wilson on this Company; or whether they were only to understand that he had received from that gentleman an explanation on the matter of fact?

MR. GLADSTONE: I thought it would be quite clear from my former answer that I had no knowledge whatever of this transaction, in any shape or form, until I received Notice of the Question of my hon. Friend, and I received that note and gave the dry facts which I have laid before the House.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

LORD ELCHO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question, of which he had not given him Notice, with reference to the trial of Arabi Pasha. He wished to know, Whether the Government had any information to give the House with respect to the letters which appeared in *The Times* of that morning purporting to be transcripts of his papers by Mr. Broadley, and being communications on behalf of the Sultan to Arabi Pasha?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, we have heard nothing whatever from Her Majesty's Consul at Cairo on the subject.

EGYPT—RESUMPTION OF MUNICIPAL RIGHTS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister, in connection with the Question of the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the date at which the usages and laws of war ended in Egypt, and the date at which the municipal rights of the Government began, was to be understood as the date of the surrender of Cairo or the surrender of Arabi?

MR. GLADSTONE: On a Question of that kind, relating to a matter of nicety which may or may not admit of some close definition, I would like the hon. Member to give Notice of his Question.

AFFAIRS OF BURMAH—PAPERS.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he was in a position to place any further Papers on the Table of the House with respect to affairs in Burmah?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Negotiations have been going on, and although they have not ended in the conclusion of a Treaty, the Envoys have drawn up a draft Treaty, which is open for completion until the 31st of December. I think it would not be desirable to place any further Papers on that subject before the House until the question of the Treaty has been finally decided; but any other Papers of general interest I will lay before the House. The draft Treaty, as the hon. Member is probably aware, has been published in the Indian papers.

MR. ONSLOW said, he would postpone his Motion for Papers until next Session.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES—THE CONDUCT OF THE OPPOSITION.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I beg to ask a Question of the Leader of the Opposition—[*Cries of* "Which?"]—of which I have given him private Notice—I mean the right hon. Member for North Devon. I beg to ask him, Whether he proposes to bring forward any Motion condemning the military position in Egypt, which in the country he declared to be unjustifiable and unnecessary?

MR. LEWIS: I rise to Order. I beg to call your attention to the fact that there is no Motion or Bill on the Paper to which this Question refers.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: At least, I might ask whether I am entitled to put the Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Strictly speaking, the hon. Baronet is not entitled to put the Question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not know whether I may be allowed to ask, as a matter of courtesy, whether the hon. Member received a note from me last week, in which I stated that I presumed I would not be allowed to answer the Question, but telling him what my answer would be, and that I would do nothing to compromise my freedom in the matter? I have already to-night given a Notice with reference to this Question.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I should not have asked the Question if the right hon. Gentleman had given any Notice concerning the war; but the Motion of which he has given Notice concerns the future policy of the Government.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FIFTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. Lewis

LORD JOHN MANNERS, in rising to move to add to the Resolution the words "Provided also, That in any such Division the Votes shall be taken by secret Ballot," said, that in the past they had had in that House every opportunity for fully and freely discussing every change that was proposed. The consequence was that great legislative changes, after a full discussion, were accepted by both sides of the House and both Houses of Parliament, and received the approbation of the country; and no one felt himself impelled to continue their discussion. He would remind the House that it was now many years since it had adopted the principle of the ballot with reference to the election of Members of that House, and on the occasion when that subject was debated it was most fully and completely, and some people were under the impression most exhaustively, discussed. Having been fully discussed and fairly carried, it was loyally accepted and carried out. Now, as one of those who had originally opposed the ballot when it was proposed in that House, but who had loyally accepted it, he claimed the right to inquire if its principles could not be carried further; and he thought it might well be applied to this totally novel form of Procedure for which Her Majesty's Government were seeking the sanction of the House. What were the main objects which the ballot was held to have in view, and what were the principal objections taken to it? It was hoped by those who supported it that the ballot would have a very great effect in preventing bribery and corruption. On the other hand, it was argued that it would have no effect in that direction. He was afraid that recent disclosuresbefore Election Judges and Commissions had shown that the anticipations of those who apprehended that the ballot would not put down bribery and corruption had been more nearly realized than those of the supporters of the measure. It was also contended by hon. Gentleman opposite that the ballot would have the effect of putting an end to intimidation and undue influence, while on his side of the House some doubts were expressed on that point. He was free to admit that in that respect it had had the effect which its promoters anticipated; at all events, they had no evidence to show that intimidation and undue influence prevailed in electoral struggles to any appreciable degree under the ballot. Under these circumstances, he asked himself whether there was any apprehension that, under this new system of procedure, bribery and corruption would be likely to take effect within those walls? He did not believe that such a thing was to be feared; but he could not say the same of some forms of intimidation and undue influence for which the ballot would be the most appropriate and effective remedy. During these debates, prolonged now over many months, they had had statements from various Gentlemen in different parts of the House that they apprehended intimidation and undue influence in carrying the *clôture;* and if it was carried by intimidation and undue influence, was it not most reasonable to suppose that it would be applied under similar influences and similar auspices? They had no disclaimers except from Gentlemen representing either county constituencies or very small boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) indignantly denied that any such influences had been brought to bear on him. Well, he was not acquainted with the borough of Ripon; but he doubted whether the elements of a Caucus were to be found within the entire constituency. But let them take the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), a far more representative Gentleman. He found, not in a speech in that House, which might have been delivered under the influence of excitement, but in a very carefully written letter, the following passage:—

> "That the Radical Party in the House of Commons should sit quietly by and see the Government deliberately forge the weapon whose chief force it is certain will in the future be used against the Party of Progress is, to my mind, amazing. It becomes, however, less annoying, though not less painful, when one becomes aware that not a few of the aforesaid Radicals are acting under the strongest pressure from without and in the teeth of their own convictions. A well-known Radical Member replied to my question as to whether it was possible he was going to support the *clôture* by saying—'I detest it; but I am no more free to vote against it than I should be to refuse my purse on a dark night to a man who held a revolver at my head.'"

That statement had never been qualified or contradicted by the hon. Member for Leicester. Struck by that statement, he (Lord John Manners) examined the Division Lists the other day to see on which side the name of the hon. Member for Leicester might be found, and, to his surprise, it was on neither. He could not conceive a more convincing proof of the necessity for the ballot than the letter from which he had read an extract, combined with the absence of the hon. Gentleman. Then there was another class, the Gentlemen below the Gangway—the Irish Party—who deserved some consideration, and to whom the Prime Minister alluded when, in a remarkable part of his speech the other night, he illustrated the necessity of *clôture* by a bare majority by pointing to the possibility of the Government and the Irish Members combining in a wish to close a debate, but being overruled by an irresponsible Opposition. It was, therefore, of some importance to consider under what conditions the Irish vote properly so-called was not unlikely to be had recourse to when the *clôture* was established. They had some curious statements from the hon. Member for the County of Louth (Mr. Callan) and the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) of the manner in which the Irish vote was given the other night. He did not want to lay too much stress upon those cases; but the fact was, that the Irish Members voted not as they wished or intended, but as they were compelled to vote by the action of their comrades. In his (Lord John Manners's) opinion, if the principle of the *clôture* were to be applied at all, it ought to be applied by every Member of the House, free from all fear or favour. The Prime Minister, in his speech the other night, also pointed out that when there was on both sides a general feeling that a debate ought to come to a close, some influences might be worked to prevent the Leaders of the Opposition from voting as they would like, and they would be compelled by Party spirit in support of their Friends to vote against the *clôture* when they would like to vote for it. He did not know what feelings might actuate the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends when they should be in Opposition; for himself and his Colleagues, he hoped such influences would not exist; but if right hon. Gentlemen opposite desired to vote according to their wishes, there ought to be no objection to the ballot in the pitiable case the right hon. Gentleman supposed, for that was their only remedy.

Now, in considering this question, he had naturally turned to the Papers which had been laid upon the Table, to see how the *clôture* was applied in those countries in which it existed; but, strange to say, there was hardly anything to be found in them on the subject. Without any disparagement to the intelligent and skilled gentlemen who prepared those Papers, he did think it odd that in the letter from the Foreign Office, asking for information on the subject, no request was made that the foreign Embassies would inform Her Majesty's Government and the House of Commons how the *clôture* was applied in different Legislative Assemblies. The consequence was that there was no authentic information on the subject. In the French Chambers, he believed, the voting usually took place by ballot; but he admitted that it was a curious exception in the case that when they came to apply the *clôture*—although there was no system of open voting, such as prevailed in the House of Commons—ballot was not resorted to. He made that admission freely. What happened was this—the President called upon the Members to decide, by what he would call a show of hands—that was, by some Members standing up and others sitting down—and when that operation had been performed twice, if the President, assisted by his secretaries, could not make up his mind on which side the evident sense of the House had manifested itself, the debate went on just as if nothing had happened. There was a reference, too, he thought, in these Papers to a similar system prevailing in Germany; but he could not make out from these Papers that in any one of the Representative Assemblies abroad there was any such system of applying the *clôture* in that form of division which the House of Commons had hitherto practised, and which the right hon. Gentleman asked them to continue. It was, he believed, altogether unknown; and by the system which prevailed both in Germany and France individual Members, it was clear, were not subjected to that pressure from their constituents or from those organized Associations of which so much was heard, and to which English Members would be subjected under this new system, unless the protection which he proposed was established. Whatever the right hon. Gentleman might think of the course of these debates, however well satisfied he might be with the arguments with which he and his Colleagues had recommended his Resolution, and with the fact that he had carried the great body of his Party with him, at all events, he must admit that the opposition to it was serious and sincere, that the objections to the *clôture* were truly and deeply felt by its opponents, and that he did not carry with him, irrespective of Party, the general sense of the House. Apprehensions were deeply felt that the new system, when established, would be applied under most severe outside pressure acting on the fears and ambitions of the supporters of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman could not be blind to those considerations. The Amendment was not proposed out of any hostility to this new system, because now, at any rate, was not the time further to contest it, but with a view, if possible of softening the asperities which he, for one, felt perfectly convinced must arise unless every safeguard were taken to prevent a constant sense of injustice arising from the belief that the debate had been closed, not by the free will of the great majority of the House, but by indirect influences from without being brought to bear upon individual action. It was for this purpose that he asked the Government and the House to assent to his proposal that, whenever a division was taken on the question that the *clôture* should be applied, it should be taken under a system of secret ballot. He believed that if the Government would adopt this Amendment, they would, at any rate, secure to the beaten minority the consolation of knowing themselves beaten by the free and unprejudiced decision of the House, and not in obedience to the pressure exercised on the majority by Democratic Caucuses and affiliated Clubs. The noble Lord then moved the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That in any such Division the Votes shall be taken by secret Ballot."—(*Lord John Manners.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he had cast a glance into those quarters of the House where the Members sat on whose behalf the noble Lord had shown such a generous and chivalrous feeling. It was, indeed, touching to see a Member of the High Tory Party, who had been a pretty stout Party man all his life, now, upon an occasion when, as he thought, great suffering was about to be endured by the Members of two other sections of the House the most remote from him, with unparalleled generosity, come forward to cast over them the shield of secrecy—the old phrase revived, "the protection of the Ballot." One would have thought that if the representative Radicals, who had so large a share in the sympathies, or, at all events, in the compassion of the noble Lord, and the Members of that portion of the Irish Representatives who sat below the Gangway on the other side, were likewise in apprehension of those evils, they would have been the best witnesses to their own case, and he (Mr. Gladstone) knew nothing to lead him to believe that they would not have been able and disposed to plead their own cause. The truth was, that the noble Lord, in order to get up and to build up his case—in order to manufacture with incredible ingenuity a speech of some length upon a question where he (Mr. Gladstone) really believed it to have been absolutely impossible—he had been led to interpret, out of the resources mainly of his own mind, coming events which were to affect severely certain Members of the House—these Members being apparently quite insensible to the mischiefs that were coming upon them, or quite incapable of stating those mischiefs to the House, and dependent on the mercy and compassion of the noble Lord to take up the cudgels on their behalf. That was a singular and very peculiar case. If there was going to be intimidation in voting of this kind—and he was not very much afraid of it—it appeared to him that it would come from another quarter. It appeared to him that all the vehement language and unmeasured epithets that were adopted on the other side of the House, with respect to which they on his (Mr. Gladstone's) side had hitherto been exceedingly sparing in their comments—all the dismal views that were conjured up about the suppression of liberty of speech, and the great schemes that were now on the carpet for gagging large portions of this House—that was the thing that was likely to stir up intimidation against those who were the supposed authors of those mischiefs. If the noble Lord wanted to suppress intimidation, let him recommend and let him observe a little moderation of language with regard to this Resolution, which had been described and which had been conceived in terms of such extravagance. One rag of evidence the noble Lord had brought into Court to support his contention, and it was the only rag he had brought forward. He had found somewhere or other a letter attributed to the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), in which he mentioned some anonymous Radical who expressed a great horror of the exercise of this closing power. He could only say it was a very singular circumstance; and whatever had been said of the Radicals in this House, he thought, speaking generally, they had been men who had the courage of their convictions, and who had often braved a great deal of unpopularity in this House and in the constituencies, and he could not, therefore, attach a great deal of importance to this anonymous Gentleman, who preferred the shadow of secrecy to the light of publicity, and who, if there had been no mistake on the part of the hon. Member for Leicester, was certainly an exception to his class. Therefore, he must say that the whole of this notion of intimidation, as likely to act upon the minds of Members, and induce them to vote in favour of closing debates, was, he thought, as visionary—he could not say more visionary—as the rest of the apprehensions which had produced so portentious an effect on the mind of the noble Lord and his Comrades. For his part, he saw very little likelihood of intimidation; but the likelihood he did see was exactly from the opposite quarter from that in which it was seen by the noble Lord. It was from the noble Lord, and from men who spoke like the noble Lord, that he (Mr. Gladstone) thought intimidation would proceed, because if courage was required in a case of that kind, courage was required to stand in the face of prejudice, and it was prejudice that raised these imaginary difficulties and dangers, and it was that prejudice that was most likely to be the cause and fountain of intimidation in these cases. The noble Lord said the Government could not deny that the opposition to this subject was of the most sincere character. Well, he subscribed to that doctrine. He admitted that the objections urged were truly and deeply felt. But was it the first time that the noble Lord and the Party opposite had had objections which were truly felt? Had not the objections to the repeal of the Corn Laws been truly and deeply felt? Had not the objections to Roman Catholic Emancipation been truly and deeply felt? Had not the objections to the admission of the Jews to Parliament and the un-Christianizing of the Constitution been deeply and truly felt? Had not the objections to the Reform Act and to the noble Lord's favourite Ballot been truly and deeply felt? Had not the repeal of the Navigation Laws been founded on the certain ruin of the country? And had not the country and the Constitution been ruined almost every year? And were they not met, under these circumstances, amidst the ashes not of the Constitution and of the country, but of all the prophecies which had been made with sincerity, with truth, and with deep feeling?—just as true and just as deeply felt as prophecies, he would venture to say, of the same flimsy character that the noble Lord and so many near him had been engaged for so many weeks and months inventing. That was the nature of the opposition to the Resolution; and if Governments, in the face of these and similar objections in the past, desisted from the prosecution of the measures they proposed, the history of this country would have been a melancholy record of timidity and want of statesmanship, and of subservience to prejudices perfectly honest and perfectly sincere, but in every case, without exception, completely falsified by the facts; and yet, notwithstanding their being thus defeated by the testimony of experience, they were renewed again, if possible, with even greater confidence, on every new occasion as it arose. The noble Lord had, of course, the right to form his own estimate of the future, and it was vain for him to contest the noble Lord's opinion; but even if all these evils were likely to be realized, he was surprised at the remedy which was proposed. The noble Lord's first argument, as they had seen, was that intimidation would arise; and his second argument was derived from foreign authority. He told them that in the French Assembly the general mode of voting was one of ballot; but that when there was a question of the exercise of the closing power, Members were called upon openly to rise or to sit, and thereby openly to testify their sentiments, and the noble Lord thought that was an example and an authority to induce the House, which never had secret voting, to adopt it on this question. But that was an argument, he (Mr. Gladstone) should have thought, for open voting, and an authority, as far as it went, directly running counter to the proposal of the noble Lord. But, in truth, the answer to the noble Lord's Motion was independent of reference to foreign authorities, and was independent of all these apprehensions. The House of Commons, between 40 and 50 years ago, gave effect upon principle to the method by which the personal responsibility of every Member of the House for every vote that he gave was established in the most formal manner. This was the doctrine of the Government. There were no irresponsible acts in the House. They wanted every man to act openly, and that the consequences of his act should be made known to the world, and he must abide by these consequences. He really hoped the noble Lord would divide the House on his Amendment. He should like to know who were the Members of the House who desired to give their votes on what was described as a subject of immense importance, covered by the shield of the ballot. He wanted to know who held the un-English doctrine on this occasion. But, apart from personal recrimination, the Motion of the noble Lord was radically and fundamentally opposed to the principle which he hoped, whatever else was altered or given up, they never should give up—the absolute and complete responsibility of every Member of the House for every act he did on behalf of the country. It was all very well to say that those who had absolute power, and were not responsible to anybody, should vote by ballot. But the Members of that House were responsible, and, in order that they might be accountable, it must be known what they had done. The noble Lord proposed that it should not be known what they had done. There was an inconsistency between the proposal and the general tone of the noble Lord's views in favour of publicity and of English methods. For these reasons, it was quite impossible for the

Government to accept upon any conditions the proposal of the noble Lord.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he cordially re-echoed the hope which had been expressed by the Prime Minister that his noble Friend would divide the House on this question, as, like the right hon. Gentleman, he should look forward with some curosity and interest to the result which would thereby be displayed. The right hon. Gentleman said that a great number of measures, including Parliamentary Reform, the Corn Laws, Vote by Ballot, Admission of Jews to Parliament, and other matters, respecting all of which foreboding had been expressed, had received the sanction of Parliament, without any injury resulting to the country; but he did not say what his own feelings had been respecting those measures, though he might in candour have been obliged to state that he had felt deeply on both sides of the majority of such questions. He ought to have taken a note of the fact that the reason why, perhaps, more than any other, these great fundamental changes were accepted by the country at large without any disaffection was because they were fairly and openly discussed by Members to the full extent of their desire. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the danger of undue influence. He had candidly admitted so much of the argument of the noble Lord, but had said that it would not come from the quarter indicated. He (Mr. Lowther) did not care from what quarter the danger might arise; he thought they might fairly ask the right hon. Gentleman, having admitted the danger, to be prepared to accept a remedy to deal with it. He had expressed his surprise that the noble Lord should be selected as the champion of oppressed minorities, and asked, "Why do not those Members get up and state the case themselves?" The reason was given in the letter quoted by the noble Lord, which was signed by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor). The right hon. Gentleman did not take any notice of that part of the letter which stated that a Radical Member detested the *clôture*, but he was no more free to vote against it than he was to withhold his purse from a man who demanded it, presenting a revolver. This statement was not anonymous. It was made respecting one Member of the House by another Member, whom they had no right to charge with falsehood. The right hon. Gentleman, when he referred to the Representatives from Ireland below the Gangway, surely could not have been in his place the other day, when the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) stated that, though personally in favour of voting for the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson), he was deterred by the casting vote of the Chairman of the Caucus or meeting which had been held among his political Friends. The Prime Minister had spoken of the incongruity and inconsistency of the noble Lord advocating secret voting and the departure from the traditions of the House of Commons with regard to the open recording of a vote; but the noble Lord distinctly pointed out that, although retaining his old objection to secret voting, that practice having been adopted for certain purposes in this country, after full discussion, and not by the application of any gag or other unconstitutional interference with debate, he was prepared loyally to acquiesce in those results. He thought the right hon. Gentleman on this occasion had recurred to his earlier opinions on the subject of the Ballot, and had exemplified what might be called dogged Conservatism, as he always did the moment a suggestion was made for the reform or amendment of any institution the working of which in its present shape might be considered advantageous to the interests of his Party. The noble Lord had shown, he thought, to the satisfaction of the House, that pressure had been exercised in the past; and on whatever side it existed—and he doubted its existence on his own side of the House—it was the duty of the House to endeavour to remove any ground of complaint. In his opinion, the noble Lord, therefore, had not in any way exaggerated the facts in regard to the feeling on this subject; and he hoped his noble Friend would not be discouraged by anything the Prime Minister had said from taking the sense of the House on his Amendment, for he believed that independent Members on both sides would be found to support his views.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had suggested a claim to the gratitude of his countrymen of which, up to this moment, he (Mr. Chamberlain) had been profoundly ignorant. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that the beneficial measures which were enumerated by the Prime Minister had been accepted by the country because of the fulness and length with which they had been discussed in the House of Commons. [Mr. J. LOWTHER: I said accepted without disaffection.] Well, without disaffection, because of the full and exhaustive character of the discussion of the measures when before Parliament. He (Mr. Chamberlain) remembered very well that on the question of voting by ballot, for instance, the discussion was exhausted very much indeed, in consequence of the efforts of the right hon. Gentleman. Those Members in the House who had watched his conduct on that occasion thought his object was to prevent legislation, and certainly the House did not think he wanted to secure its final acceptance by the country without disaffection. With reference to the charge of inconsistency urged against the noble Lord for supporting the ballot for Members of Parliament, after having opposed it for the electors, he could remind them that the argument against the ballot at elections was that an elector had a trust reposed in him, and that it was necessary he should be protected. Now, whether an elector had a trust or not might be doubtful; but there was no doubt that the Members of the House of Commons had a trust from their constituents; and it was very extraordinary that those who held this opinion a few years ago as to the proper way of performing trusts, should now wish hon. Members to exercise in darkness and concealment the most important trust conferred upon them. On what ground was the ballot to be applied to this particular Resolution? They were told there was a fear of great pressure being exerted—the right hon. Gentleman said "severe" pressure. They were told, further, that severe pressure had already been applied. Two proofs of that allegation were given. One could hardly be regarded as a proof, but only as an illustration. They were told that the Irish Party were subjected to pressure. Now, what was the case? From the newspapers they learnt that there had been a meeting of the Irish Party—that usual weekly meeting, just as occurred with the Conservative Party—and that at this Caucus meeting there was a division taken, which was not taken by ballot, but an open division as to what should be the action of the Members present, and the minority honourably yielded to the majority as they had promised to do. For what was the ballot, then, required? For the protection of what? Persons in this Irish Party? Was it to be insinuated that under the protection of the ballot the minority who agreed to vote in accord with the majority should come down to the House and falsify their pledges? That was not a very honourable insinuation to make against the Irish Party. The second proof of these allegations was taken from a letter written by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor). He Mr. Chamberlain) thought his hon. Friend, when he wrote that letter, was smarting a little under the representations which had been made to him by his constituency with reference to his vote on this subject. He spoke of the pressure placed upon him. Very well; what conceivable objection was there to pressure of that kind? Was there anyone in that House afraid of his constituents? Would anyone declare that he was unwilling to learn from his constituents what might be their views on important questions? "Oh!" said the noble Lord, "the pressure comes from the Caucus." Well, what of the Caucus? He would tell the House what the Caucus was, and what it professed to be. It professed to be an absolutely representative body—representative of the wishes of the whole of a Party in a constituency. Was that a false profession? If so, hon. Members might safely disregard the impertinent interference of a body which had no authority to speak for their constituents; but, if not, what objection could fairly be taken to the information which a really representative body was able to give of the wishes and opinions of the constituency? What Member would say that he had been injured or hurt by learning from such a body the opinions of his constituents? It was the greatest hypocrisy and nonsense to talk as some did of this matter. There were few of those who talked about the pressure of the constituencies who would tell the constituencies that they were absolutely indifferent to their opinions. If, therefore, the only pressure used was the legitimate representation of the opinion of the constituents, it appeared to him that the possibility of such pressure afforded no reason why they should change their practice in this case, and in this case alone, and apply the Ballot to the votes of Members of Parliament. From his knowledge, he could say that the constituencies cared more for their votes than for their speeches, and that they would gladly dispense with the one for the other. Again, if the Ballot was to be applied to the *clôture,* why was it not to be applied to every other vote? Was there no pressure in other matters? Was there no pressure when the question was one of peace or war? Was there no pressure when there was under discussion the question whether a lawfully-elected Member was to take his seat or not? If the Ballot were to be applied in the present case, they could not logically refuse to apply it to every vote in the House. In conclusion, all he could say was, that if any hon. Members thought to shelter themselves by this method of voting, they would not be likely to secure the approval of the constituencies for a course which would leave them in the dark as to the manner in which their Representatives performed their trust.

MR. SCHREIBER: In the course of his somewhat discursive, and, as I thought, rather inconsequent remarks, the Prime Minister spoke of the vehement language which had been heard upon these Benches. Now, that strikes me, Sir, as being not a little hard; for I see the complaint is made in certain quarters that, at this supreme crisis in the fortunes of the House of Commons, we do not speak out upon the Benches of the Opposition. Whether that complaint is justly made, I leave it to those who have heard the debates of the past fortnight to determine. Certainly, it is not the impression they have left upon my mind. But those of us who have hitherto been silent may perhaps take the hint; and, with the permission of the House, I intend to speak out in support of this Amendment. A variety of considerations, Mr. Speaker, seem to me to recommend for our adoption the proposal of the noble Lord. In the first place, as I read our Notice Paper, this is the last of the Sibylline Books—the last offer of conciliation and of compromise, before we knock the buttons from our foils, and finally discard—let there be no mistake about it—the present *modus vivendi* between the two sides of this House. In the next place, the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) corresponds only too well with the facts of the position in which too many hon. Members of this House now find themselves. By which, Sir, I mean this—it is impossible for one and the same person to be the creature of a Caucus and a Member of Parliament in the old sense and acceptation of the term. And just as a few years since, hon. Gentlemen opposite perambulated the country, telling the people of England—"You are weak and dependent beings, and need the protection of the ballot," so now, in the same spirit of kindly consideration, we say to hon. Gentlemen—"That your rights of private judgment be not invaded, let us shield them for you with the ballot." But that, important as it is, is a small part of the matter. We had it on Friday evening from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, that "gagged men"—I thank him for the phrase—will experience so much irritation that they cannot be permitted to protest in writing lest their protest should contain a censure on the Chair. Well, Sir, of all the successive admissions which Ministers have made in these debates about this Resolution, the latest is the most damning; because if "gagged men" cannot be trusted to protest in writing, what is likely to be the nature of their spoken communications to each other, and what will be their feelings, when they see, next morning on their breakfast table, a long list of the "howling nobodies" by whom they have been silenced? No, Sir, if this fatal Rule is put in motion, at least let it operate in the dark, that "gagged men" may not know their "gaggers." "Gagged men," Mr. Speaker, "gagged" Englishmen, "gagged" English Gentlemen are certain to meet a policy of exasperation with a policy of reprisals. If you silence us, we will not hear you. That will be only fair. So that if you do not wish to be silenced, either do not put this odious Rule in motion, or, if it is put in motion, let us not know by whom. Certainly, Sir, if the orators of this House, with the Prime Minister at their head, and the hon. Member for

Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) at their tail, think to put this Rule in motion against Her Majesty's Opposition, and ever again to have a hearing, I can tell them they are mistaken, and they had better retire from the oratorical business without more ado. Sir, when we assembled here a fortnight since, I, in my simplicity, thought that the object we all had in view was to restore the authority of the House of Commons in its collective capacity over individual Members, or groups of Members, who now defy it; but it has been impossible to listen to these debates without learning that we have been called together to forge fetters for Her Majesty's Opposition. And they may be forged; but the attempt to make us wear them will be met with such resistance as will go near to wreck the House of Commons. Therefore, Sir, I most earnestly hope that all who love this House as we have known it in the past and as we would have it in the future, will seek to prevent the application of this most disorderly and obstructive Rule, by voting for the Amendment of my noble Friend.

Mr. BRAND said, he was so glad to find the noble Lord a convert to the ballot that he did not find so much to object to in his remarks as would otherwise have been the case. He was weary of hearing that the Liberal Members did not vote for those Rules from conviction, but from fear of the consequences. It was stated that the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had said that there were 100 Liberal Members who would vote against the *clôture* if they voted from conviction. If the hon. Member said anything of the kind, he was labouring under a great mistake. He (Mr. Brand) knew of no such number, and he believed that, with the exception of those who had voted in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), there was no such sentiment on the Liberal Benches. Then the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) had been referred to; but he believed that that hon. Member was only quoting an opinion which had been expressed to him by an hon. Member who had said that he dared not vote against the *clôture*. But that remark only applied to a Dissolution, which many hon. Members undoubtedly dreaded. But the question had since been declared by the Government to be a completely open one, upon which, in case of defeat, the Government would take no action of any kind. He could answer for himself, and for many others on the same side, that they voted for the Rule cheerfully—not because they liked it in itself, but because they admitted its necessity—its absolute necessity—to effectually remedy the evils connected with the progress of Business. There was no doubt that the Liberal Party did wish to pass certain measures; but he denied that they wished to pass them without full and free discussion. They were sent to that House for the purpose of passing such measures as were required by the constituencies, and the only difference between the Opposition and the supporters of the Government was, that when a measure had been fully discussed the majority should have their way. There was one other reason, which was the strongest in his mind, why he voted with the Government, and that was to save the credit of the House. It was necessary to save the House from the discredit which had attached to it from the all-night Sittings and Obstruction of recent times. With respect to the Amendment of the noble Lord, he should strongly oppose it. He had always understood that Members were trustees for their constituencies, and he believed that the constituents had a right to know how their Members voted on every occasion. More particularly, indeed, had they a right to know how their Members voted in cases of the application of the *clôture*. Unless Members voted openly, it would be impossible for the constituents to know whether the majority had not abused their powers in the summary closing of a debate.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, that on the introduction of the Ballot Bill he had proposed that the voting in that House should be by ballot. The old Whig doctrine accepted by the Peelites was that the Members held a trust on behalf of the electors. If a Member did not know by whom he was elected, what right had the electors to know how the Member voted? If the vote of the elector had ceased to be a trust the Member must also have ceased to be a trustee for the electors. For this reason he supported the Amendment. The Prime Minister and the President of the Board of Trade and the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand) had denied that Members were intimidated to vote in favour of the *clôture.* But he would bring facts to bear against that statement. A leading case was that of the hon. Member for Plymouth (Mr. Macliver), who, when the gagging Resolutions of February last met his eye, rushed to the Library, and wrote a letter to *The Times* in which he denounced the whole project in the strongest terms, and expressed his belief that—

> "The Liberals would have fought to the last against the establishment of such a Rule had it been brought forward by Conservatives, and it was not surprising, therefore, that the Tories should oppose it."

These were brave words, and the hon. Member was, no doubt, sincere in his expressions; but his demonstration of independence was forthwith resented by the Plymouth Caucus, who came down upon him for venturing to question the will of the Prime Minister with such force and celerity that the hon. Member, within a week, was reduced to submission, and compelled to write to the local papers, eating his former words and promising his hearty support to the Government in every division. He (Mr. Bentinck) would also refer to the cases of the hon. and worthy Member for Lambeth (Sir James Lawrence) and the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens), who were lectured and scolded by their respective Caucuses, for merely absenting themselves from the divisions; and, to sum up, he would mention the case of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who, though he obediently voted with the Prime Minister on every occasion, was taken to task by the Kirkcaldy Caucus for daring to press Resolutions and asking Questions which retarded Government Business. The hon. Member was not in his place, but if he were present, he was sure the hon. Member would confirm all he had said, and perhaps explain the particular hardships of his case. It was quite clear that even the Brahmins of the Treasury Bench stood in great jeopardy of the attacks of the Pariahs. He denied, however, that there was anything like the Caucus on the Conservative side of the House. He hoped the noble Lord would press his Amendment to a division, which he would certainly support.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR said, that he should not have risen on that occasion had it not been that the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) had been good enough to account for a letter which he had written by saying that he was smarting under a communication which he had received from his constituents. He begged to assure his right hon. Friend that there was absolutely no foundation for the observation. His constituents and himself understood each other far too well for such to be the case. They never said anything that they meant to be unkind to him, and they were well aware that, whenever he failed to represent their opinions in that House, his resignation was always at their service. In these circumstances, therefore, he was neither afraid of his constituents nor of the threats of the Government. For his own part, he regarded the introduction of the *clôture* either by a bare or a proportionate majority into that Assembly with abhorrence. If anything, however, could add to his objections to the proposal of the Government, it would be the adoption of the Amendment of the noble Lord. He was not going to enter into the question as to how many hon. Members on the Government side of the House would, if left to themselves, oppose the *clôture.* Some time ago, the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) said that there were about 100; but he could say that if this proposition had emanated from the opposite Party, it would have been opposed by the full tale of every Liberal Member. In such a case, the great Liberal Party would have risen up in all its magnificent strength and have denounced this treason against the Constitution. He would not trouble the House by giving them his views upon the *clôture,* because it happened, fortunately, that the letter that he had written to his constituents, which had been very widely spread throughout the country, contained all that he had to say upon the subject. If, however, he might be permitted to give a word of advice to his Radical Friends, he would recommend them not to place too much reliance upon the alleged unanimity of the constituencies upon the subject of the *clôture.* The opinion of the constituencies on the question was by no means unanimous. At present, doubtless, the opinion of the majority of the constituencies was in favour of the Government proposal; but that opinion was not based upon sufficient knowledge of the forms of the House, or experience of their working, to be regarded as being mature and final. That opinion was based upon these grounds—first, in an unbounded faith in their great Leader, whose lead upon every point they followed with unwavering confidence; and, secondly, in a belief in their own Radical Representatives, whom they trusted to keep their great Leader straight if he should be inclined to go wrong—strong reasons both, but which had failed them in the present case; and, thirdly, their want of knowledge of the Forms of Procedure in that House. Nothing could tell more with the constituencies than to say that the great Liberal Party had great Liberal measures for the benefit of the country which they were prepared to bring forward, but could not carry in consequence of the Obstruction of their opponents; but the constituencies were never told of the evils and the danger to the principles of Constitutional liberty and progress that the Government proposal would involve. They were not told that the Government would be killing the goose for the sake of the golden eggs. He believed that if this Resolution were passed it would not be long before a strong reaction set in against those who ought to have instructed their constituents, and have been more bold in the assertion of their own views as upholders of the privilege of free speech, and that those would be called to severe account who had yielded up that privilege at the bidding of a strong and powerful Government, and had sacrificed to the interests of Party that liberty which was meant for the benefit of all mankind.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, that the Prime Minister had already made the admission that this measure was directed, not against hon. Members below the Gangway, but against the great Conservative Party. This proposal was forced upon the House by the great personal influence of the present Government. It was no secret what enormous pressure had been brought to bear upon Representatives of all parts of the country. Hon. Members opposite who had written letters denouncing the *clôture* had been compelled in violation of their opinions to record their votes on behalf of the Government on this question. He would be glad to know why the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had not risen in his place and stated his views upon the question. He was one from whom they differed, but whom they always listened to as an able exponent of Liberal views. He hoped, however, that the hon. Member would give his opinions before the Question was put from the Chair. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had received an admonition from his constituents, not in regard to this question in which he supported the Government, but not to speak on those Indian questions in which he was the highest authority in the House. The electors of Kirkcaldy ought to be proud of their distinguished Representative, and thus to attempt to shut his mouth was the most astounding piece of electoral arrogance he ever heard of. The power of the Caucus had been shown in the cases of several other hon. Members who had been obliged to vote against their own opinions. He thought, therefore, that the ballot should be applied to the *clôture* in that House, and he should vote for it. The truth was, that if this proposal were to be carried out to the bitter end, it would be better that that House should not exist at all, and that all proposals of the Governmant should be accepted in silence.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought he might appeal to the House whether hon. Members opposite had not selected in him a very unfortunate instance of one who had been coerced and made subservient. Hon. Members opposite said it was very sad that a Member should be silenced in this way. He appealed to the House to say whether he had been silenced. He did not think he had; and he did not think he should be. There had been a good deal of misapprehension upon this case, and a mountain had been made out of a mole-hill. As regarded what passed in his constituency, it was not true that his constituents had admonished him. It was true that, quite unexpectedly, in a very small meeting in one of the burghs he represented, a resolution was passed that he had not given a sufficiently generous support to the Government. He had inquired, and he did not know whether any influence of any kind was brought to bear to produce that resolution; but he had not the slightest idea that his constituents would subject him to any Caucus, whether inside or outside the constituency. He was quite willing to admit that there might have been some ground for that resolution. He did not take it altogether in good part; but, on the other hand, he had asserted his independence, and he thought his constituency and he pretty well understood one another. In spite of what had passed, he thought he might say his constituency was a model constituency, who thought sufficiently for themselves, and tried to control their Member to an adequate degree, and not, he was bound to say, to too great a degree. For his part, he tried to play the part, he would not say of a model Member, but to go as well as he could in the direction of that ideal. He had no squeamish horror of the name of delegate. There were a good many points that his constituents understood much better than he did, and upon those he would defer to their opinion. There were other subjects—the closure, for instance—which he thought Her Majesty's Government had studied better and understood better than he did; and, having paid the best attention to the subject, he had come to the independent opinion that Her Majesty's Government were right. There were other subjects relating to Egypt and India which he thought he knew better than Her Majesty's Government, regarding which he had expressed his independent opinion. Therefore he thought that he at least was not an instance in which an undue amount of coercion had been brought to bear with any success. He was still as independent as he ever had been, and he hoped he always should be. With regard to the immediate Question now before the House, he thought they must all feel that they were wasting time in discussing it, and that the noble Lord could not really seriously mean to press his Amendment upon the House.

SIR ANDREW FAIRBAIRN said, that he had volunteered to return from the South of France, expressly to vote for the *clôture*, before he received any communication from the Government Whips. After the division took place on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), he was surprised to find his name mentioned in the analysis of the division as one who really did not agree with the Government, and who had only voted under pressure. That was entirely false; and he wrote to *The Times* and *The Globe* the same letter, in which he explained his views on the subject. *The Times*, as usual, never published his letter. *The Globe* garbled his answer, and said that although he might be in favour of some *clôture*, he might probably not be in favour of a *clôture* by a bare majority. Considering that, the year before Her Majesty's Government brought forward this question, he had made up his mind that they ought to have the *clôture*, he could accept the challenge of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and say that, had a Conservative Government made the proposal, he should have felt bound to vote for it. In fact, he had, for the last 18 months, been of opinion that, unless they had some power of putting down Obstruction in that House, the Business of the country would be at an end. As a Yorkshire Member, he had received from his constituents resolution after resolution passed by them in favour of the *cloture*, and especially of *clôture* by a bare majority; and he had great pleasure in supporting the opinion of his constituents in these respects.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he would like to know how many signatures had been attached to those resolutions, as there had been a futile attempt to get up a bogus agitation in favour of the *clôture* by a bare majority. The country would read with the greatest interest the admirable protest of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) on this question. He believed with that hon. Gentleman that hon. Members who supported the *clôture* under the impression that their constituents were in favour of it would find that they were greatly mistaken. They had the independent feeling of the country on one side, and the wire-pulling organization, represented by the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), on the other. He hoped those who mistook that for the genuine opinion of the country would read the monstrous, tyrannical, and, he would even say, infamous Circular issued by the Birmingham Caucus, pressing hon. Members to vote for the *clôture*. He believed that at the next General Election the constituencies would express their opinion against this tyrannical and unnecessary pressure. The Amendment before the House would tend to very much diminish the evils of *clôture*, and, therefore, it would have his hearty support. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would remember that it applied not to any question of policy or reform, but simply to whether a debate should be there and then closed. This was a matter which might fairly be left to the impartial, unbiassed opinion of Members of that House, as it was not a question involving the responsibility of Members to their constituents. This was the third moderate and sensible proposal that the Government had rejected. The first was the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), who proposed that the operation of the *clôture* should be confined to cases of evident Obstruction. The second was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Lincoln (Mr. Hinde Palmer), who proposed that the judgment of the presiding officer should be reinforced by a certain number of Members rising in their places before the *clôture* vote could be put. Now the Government refused the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), which was intended to secure the Representatives of the people from the coercion of the Caucus. The evident intention of the Ministry to introduce the despotic and oppressive Caucus system into that House, as it had been introduced into constituencies, would inevitably produce a reaction. In the meantime great harm would be done. It was precisely this foreign cycle of violent evils, followed by violent reactions, which the opponents of the *clôture* wished to avoid.

Mr. WARTON said, he was of opinion that if the vote on the *clôture* were taken by ballot it would be rejected. But although he believed that under the ballot the *clôture* would have a very different effect from what the Liberals anticipated, yet so un-English and so unfair and cowardly was the ballot that he could not vote for its introduction into the House in any shape or form. Even to check the terrorism of the Prime Minister he would not vote to degrade the House of Commons to the level to which the ballot had degraded the constituencies by giving men who could not speak the truth the opportunity of telling a lie.

Sir HENRY TYLER said, it was a singular spectacle to see the ballot being supported on the Conservative side of the House and opposed on the Liberal. He could not agree with the previous speaker, for although he did not love the ballot more, he loved the *clôture* less. He should vote for the Amendment, because he thought it would, to some extent, tend to prevent the evils which would otherwise arise from the operation of the *clôture*.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 55; Noes 139: Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 361.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that the three next Amendments on the Paper, not being in order, cannot properly be put. The proposal of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) is inadmissible, as the House has already determined that the Question referred to in his Amendment be put forthwith by the Speaker, and the matter cannot now be re-opened. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. C. Seely) raises the important question of an official Report of the proceedings of the House, but cannot be put, as it is not germane to the Resolution under consideration. The Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) is inadmissible, as it would be irregular to go back to the earlier provisions of the Resolution relating to the declaration by the Speaker or Chairman of the evident sense of the House, which have already been determined by the House.

Mr. RITCHIE: In respect to your ruling, Sir, I ask to be permitted to make one or two remarks. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Yes!"] I quite understand that no Member has a right to move an Amendment that conflicts with any decision that the House has already arrived at, or which is the same as any Amendment that has been rejected; but I beg most respectfully to point out to you, Sir, that although the House has affirmed that the Speaker is to declare the evident sense of the House, it has not yet given any definition of what the evident sense of the House is. I also beg to point out that there is nothing in my Amendment which is in antagonism with any Amendment which has been considered by the House. It is no uncommon thing in a Bill passing through Committee for there to be an Interpretation Clause, by which certain definitions in the Bill are interpreted; and the only object which I had in putting this Amendment on the Paper was a similar one—namely, to define, as far as possible, in what way the evident sense of the House is to be arrived at. It appears to me it is absolutely essential that the House should arrive at some conclusion on this point, as two different definitions of the evident sense of the House have been given by Members of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesy's Government has described the evident sense of the House as being something different from the mere clamour of one side; but the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India said the evident sense of the House is to be declared by the opinion of the majority. I submit these two statements are in antagonism, and it is essential that a definition should be given. If you, Sir, remain of opinion that my Amendment cannot be put, I would respectfully ask you whether you can assist the House out of the dilemma which I submit it is in by giving an official declaration on your own responsibility of what is meant, in your opinion, by the evident sense of the House?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is in Order, after you have given a distinct decision, that your ruling should be challenged, and that a debate should be raised upon it—for the question of the hon. Gentleman will inevitably lead to a debate?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask whether there are not several precedents of the ruling of the Speaker having been challenged and debated at length in the House on various points of Order?

MR. SPEAKER: The observations of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) seem to me to refer mainly to expressions used in debate; but that is no ground for importing his Amendment in an irregular manner, because the House, it appears to me, has already settled the question about the evident sense of the House. That is a matter which has already been under the consideration of the House, and to re-open it would be out of Order. If the hon. Member desires me to define the evident sense of the House, I have to say that that is not my duty; that is a duty which the House itself has already discharged, and I am bound to carry out the orders of the House. With reference to the interpretations to be put on the expression "evident sense of the House, I have no hesitation in stating that, according to my construction of the Resolution, it will be the duty of the Speaker to ascertain, so far as he is able, the evident sense of the House at large.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: That is so very important a statement, that I will venture to ask the Prime Minister whether he will consent to introduce some words into the Resolution to make it clear?

MR. GLADSTONE: I feel very great difficulty in answering a question of this kind at a moment's notice. We have been regarding the Resolution as sufficient in itself; but the question is a question which the right hon. Gentleman has a perfect right to put, though I should certainly wish to reflect upon the question before I gave an answer. I am sorry if I have said anything in the course of debate that could have imported difficulty into this question. What I said was, not what the evident sense of the House would be, but what it would not be.

MR. GIBSON: I beg to suggest that the important statement which you, Mr. Speaker, have just made should be entered on the Journals for the instruction and guidance of the House hereafter.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I should like to know if it would be in Order to propose this as an addition to the Resolution?—

> "Provided that, in carrying out this Resolution, it shall be the duty of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to ascertain the evident sense of the House at large."

If so, I shall propose that Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: It is too late to make a proposal of this kind, because the House has already settled the point. It has given its decision already in regard to the earlier part of the Resolution, and it is too late to raise the question proposed by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. C. SEELY (*Nottingham*): With reference to my own Amendment, I venture to ask whether I shall be able to move it as a new additional Rule? If I can I will do so; but if not, I would express the strong hope that the Government would take the matter into their consideration. If a debate were closed at 3 in the morning, no report of the proceedings would be given.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: Assuming that the Prime Minister is going to give the matter brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition his consideration, I rise to ask in what way the House is to be in a position to profit by the result of the right hon. Gentleman's consideration? I think the right hon. Gentleman will see there is no opportunity for the House availing itself of the results of his consideration of the subject unless he either consents to an adjournment or announces now the decision he has arrived at.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have now to call on the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) to move the next Resolution.

Mr. GIBSON: May I ask for a ruling as to whether the decision of the Chair could be recorded on the Journals of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to state, in reply to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that it is not usual to enter on the Journals of the House observations which fall from the Chair. They will, I presume, be reported in the usual manner.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: I do not know whether it would be possible, in the event of the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman being favourable to the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon, to insert the declaration we have just heard with so much interest from the Chair in the form of a separate Resolution to be subsequently brought up.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In the first instance, I could not resist giving a moment or two's reflection to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman; but I see, now that the Speaker having given the interpretation or description he puts upon the matter, we are asked to introduce that description into the body of the Rule. Now, it appears to me, if Gentlemen opposite are pleased and satisfied with the interpretation, by all means let them note it as a fact and as an event in the history of these discussions; but I am not disposed to accede to the admission of the interpretation by the Speaker into the Rule, for if we begin upon that course I do not see where it is likely to lead.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Let me point out, as a point of Order, that the Prime Minister has not exactly apprehended the point. I understand that you, Sir, put a certain construction on this Resolution, and you, in consequence of that construction, ruled this Amendment out of Order. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, then, we are in this position—that you have put a construction on the words "evident sense of the House" which rules a certain Amendment out of Order. The construction which you put on that Amendment is not to be embodied in the Standing Orders of the House, and yet the Amendment we propose is not allowed to be put. It seems to me that this Amendment ought to be put, or else the ruling of the Chair ought to be embodied in the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the noble Lord that the ruling is not based at all on my interpretation. That ruling is based on the ordinary practice of the House. The House has dealt with the portion of the Resolution that the hon. Member wishes now to deal with, and it is too late. I must now, after this conversation, call upon the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER: I venture to call your attention to the question of the hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. Seely)—namely, in regard to his proposed Amendment. My hon. Friend wished to know whether he could introduce that Amendment as a separate Resolution at a subsequent stage of the discussion. In consequence of the decision of the House the other evening, preventing a dissatisfied minority from recording its protest, it will perceive that the proposal of my hon. Friend is of great importance. I hope we shall have the decision on that point.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not prepared to say that the hon. Member for Nottingham might not frame a Resolution that might be brought up after the other Resolutions have been discussed; but as an Amendment now it would be quite out of place.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Last year, Mr. Speaker framed certain Rules to regulate the conduct of Business during the period of Urgency. One of those Rules provided that, under certain circumstances, a Question should be put forthwith, and a subsequent Rule distinctly declared that by "forthwith" was meant without amendment, adjournment, or debate. I, therefore, wish to ask whether it would not be competent in the same way to move another Resolution, providing that the words "the evident sense of the House" should mean "the sense of the House at large?"

MR. SPEAKER: That is raising the same question. I have twice given my opinion that it is not competent.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Might I ask whether it would not be competent to move that the interpretation you have given be entered on the Journals of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I have already stated the point. If the hon. Member thinks proper to raise a question of that kind, it must be done by a substantive Motion, and not by interrupting the discussion.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he thought that, under the circumstances, the most convenient course he could now take was to move the adjournment of the debate. There could be no doubt that a question of immense importance had been raised. The Speaker had placed an interpretation on the 1st Resolution which appeared to Gentlemen on both sides of the House to be totally at variance with the interpretation put upon it by some Members of the Government. ["No!"] The Prime Minister had acknowledged himself unable, without time for reflection, to state his opinion on the points put to him by the Leader of the Opposition; and it was obvious that on so serious a matter connected with a Resolution of that kind they were entitled to ask that sufficient time should be given to the Government for making up their minds. He therefore moved that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: It is perfectly true I required a moment for reflection—the subject being absolutely new to me—before I could say "yes" or "no." Having had that moment's reflection, I stated that, in my opinion, it would not be wise that there should be introduced into the Resolution the words of description or interpretation used by the Speaker, because if we begin on that course I am not aware where it will end. Therefore, my answer was a distinct negative to the Question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman. I apprehend that anything said by me or any Member of the Government, although it may form an *argumentum ad hominem*, yet it can have no effect whatever in competition with anything that has fallen from the Chair.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that although the Speaker had announced the course which he intended to pursue, it would be in no way binding on anyone who succeeded him in the Chair or who presided over the Committees of the Whole House. The Prime Minister had not met the point raised by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. The right hon. Gentleman said he had had a moment for reflection and had availed himself of it; but he had not yet had time to consult his Colleagues, and the House could not be expected to be satisfied with the decision at which he had arrived thus hurriedly. The right hon. Gentleman asked them, without even engrafting on the Resolution the opinion he had so hastily formed, to accept his view of what was the possible duty of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees instead of having the meaning of the Rule distinctly embodied in the Resolution. The Government must realize that some clear and distinct definition ought to be inserted in the Resolution for the guidance of future Officers of the House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the right hon. Gentleman did not seem to observe that if the House were to adjourn nothing could be done in the direction he desired. The Speaker had already decided that Amendments about the evident sense of the House could not be put; therefore, any new Resolution the hon. Member might propose would come under the same censure. Under these circumstances, he trusted that the House would waste no more time, but would be allowed to proceed with the Business before it.

MR. GORST said, he did not think the Government were in the miserable and hopeless position the Home Secretary had described. Assuming that there was an adjournment and the Government withdrew this Resolution, they could begin again *de novo* and introduce a new Resolution embodying the excellent definition which Mr. Speaker had given from the Chair.

Mr. MONK felt quite certain that no other construction had been put upon the terms of the Resolution except that announced by the Speaker.

Mr. GIBSON said, he had noticed that the Prime Minister and other Members of the Government who had spoken had refrained from expressing one solitary syllable of concurrence in the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that, as a fact, great difference of opinion existed among hon. Members on the subject. The real point was whether or not the sense of the House was to be ascertained in the ordinary way by a mere majority. The Prime Minister said the Government were most anxious to exclude political pressure, and that they wished it to go for nothing. On the other hand, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India distinctly stated that the evident sense of the House was declared by the opinion of the majority. Those two opinions were in antagonism. [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] Surely, if the Prime Minister did not wish to use the Party majority that followed him and the noble Lord did, they could not be in accord. It was on this account that he desired to have some record of what was meant by the evident sense of the House.

Mr. GLADSTONE: After what has fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), I wish to explain. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says that no concurrence has been expressed by us as to the ruling of the Chair. It is not my business to stamp with my seal and my authority the ruling of the Chair. It is rather to accept the ruling of the Chair. I thought I had indicated clearly how heartily I accepted it when I said there did not appear to me to be any contrariety whatever in what has been said by my noble Friend and myself as to the ruling of the Chair; but, if there were, whatever has been already said must be completely swept away and treated as not of the smallest authority in competition with what has fallen from the Chair.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, it was curious to watch the manner in which the Government shifted their position. He could not conceive what objection the Government could have to allowing a definition coming from a Speaker of great experience and judicial penetration to be introduced into this Resolution. But if they felt a technical difficulty only, he would ask them to support a Motion introduced with that view subsequently. Their votes would then be the best test whether they meant what they had said or not.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT rose to address the House, when—

Mr. SPEAKER said: This conversation from first to last upon the matter now in discussion has been irregular. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) moved the adjournment of the debate, and in doing so he adverted to that which has been already discussed, adopted, and settled by the House. In taking that course he was certainly irregular. Except in so far as he spoke to a point of Order, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire was out of Order.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER wished to ask whether the adjournment of the House could be moved in order to raise the present question?

Mr. SPEAKER: The House has already settled certain points in its progress through this Resolution, and the House can by no method that I am aware of go back upon those points.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, in moving to add the words, "Provided that the Resolution does not come into operation during this Session of Parliament," said, he proposed this Amendment for the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who was precluded from moving it. He did not suppose that the Government desired to put the *clôture* into force for the purpose of carrying the rest of their Resolutions. In his opinion, such a method would not commend these New Rules to the House. This Resolution was the most stringent and drastic of the whole, and all that his hon. Friend asked was that the Government would pledge themselves not to use the power enforced upon them by the 1st Resolution, in order to carry the other Resolutions with undue haste.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That this Resolution does not come into operation during this Session of Parliament."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, his hon. Friend had proposed this Resolution in perfect good faith; but he could assure him it was an Amendment the Government found it impossible to accept. The hon. Member had said this was the most stringent and drastic Resolution of the whole. The view of the Government was that, so far from this being a drastic and stringent Resolution, it would be found by his hon. Friend very mild and gentle in its operation. If they were to accede to the Amendment they would be making the fatal admission that they were going to enforce drastic impediments to free, full, and ample discussion. The Government entirely and absolutely disclaimed any such intention. That being so, his hon. Friend would see that it was quite impossible for them to accept the Amendment, because if they did it would cast discredit upon their own assertions. He would suggest to his hon. Friend that if he were to allow this matter to go forward he would find the result most satisfactory, as all his dismal anticipations would be refuted by the event. His hon. Friend would feel how gently the Resolution would work, that he would have the same elbow-room and the same freedom of speech as before; and there would be this immense advantage—that the Rule would be tried, not under one of those dangerous Speakers of the future who would be the product of a new state of things, but under a safe and trustworthy Speaker of the present, who by universal admission was certain to work it in a spirit agreeable to the House, and consistent with full and free discussion.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he did not see why the right hon. Gentleman should not accept the Amendment, if the Resolution was to be so mild and gentle in its operation, and if there was to be the same freedom and the same licence under the New Rules as before. [Mr. Gladstone: I said the same for my hon. Friend.] But his hon. Friend had been accused of Obstruction. However, if the Rule was to prove so ineffective, he wondered why they had been called upon to spend so many weary hours in its discussion. His only object in putting on the Paper the Motion which had been proposed by his hon. Friend was to secure the full and free discussion of the remaining Resolutions. The Prime Minister told the House that it was impossible that the Government could assent to the Amendment, because that would be making an admission contrary to all the Government had said. But the Home Secretary told them the other night that there was no possible chance of the Rule being put into operation this Session.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that what he meant was that there was no chance of its being required to put down factious Obstruction.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he might be permitted to observe how very important many of the subsequent Resolutions were. The next Resolution was one by which, unless with the permission of the majority which the Government of the day might command, it would be absolutely impossible to move the adjournment of the House or raise questions upon that adjournment. That was a Resolution of so extreme a character that it would be impossible for the House to accept it in its present form. Then the 5th and the 12th were important Resolutions, and so was the 13th, by which it was proposed that the first seven and the last three Resolutions should be Standing Orders of the House. That was a state of things which Members could not reasonably be expected to agree to unless some concession were made to them.

Mr. HUGH SHIELD said, the acceptance of the Amendment would involve the admission that the Rule would unduly restrict debate, which was not admitted by those who supported it; and the suggestion that the Rule might be improperly used was inconsistent with the position that the Opposition had hitherto taken, for while they foretold innumerable evils as certain to flow from this 1st Resolution, they had always said that those evils would not be realized while the House had the security of the present Speaker's impartiality. Yet now they were showing distrust of the present Speaker.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, that he did not propose to enter upon the broad question of *clôture*, nor to discuss the other question to which the last speaker had referred, of the impartiality of the Speakers of the future. He was prepared to support this Amendment as one most reasonable and fair. At first sight the proposed delay in making this Resolution not take effect during the Session might seem unduly long; but it must be remembered that the Government had pledged themselves — and hitherto had very fairly kept that pledge —not to allow Private Business or any other public legislation to come on and be discussed this Session. The Amendment, therefore, in effect, only pointed to this—that this Resolution should not apply while the subsequent Resolutions were under consideration. Now, the Members of the Government had more than once spoken of these Resolutions as a Code, and that was a reasonable way of looking at them. But surely, in dealing with a proposed Code, one part of it ought not to be put in force while the rest of it was under discussion. And this would be still more incorrect, unfair, and without precedent, when the part that was passed was to affect the procedure of the discussion upon the following part. Did anyone ever hear of one part of a Bill before Parliament being passed, and then put in force to affect the discussion upon the subsequent clauses of the same Bill? He thought it was sufficient to state the case to show that the Amendment was a reasonable one and ought to be supported.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was surprised that the Government should not have attempted to make any concession. Despite what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, the fact stood out in bold relief that the Government said "No." The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department also spoke with a somewhat mild manner; but the House could not fail to plainly recognize the fact that, although the debates had now been going on for a fortnight, not one solitary concession had been made, and not one single word had been accepted by Her Majesty's Government. He desired to call attention to a matter to which the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) had already alluded, and that was that the Government themselves, in explaining the proposals before the House, had repeatedly and steadily called them a Code. Was it not utterly absurd to suggest—nay, would it not be ridiculous—that in an Act of Parliament they could apply as existing law a section as they passed it, without waiting for the passing of the entire Act, and until, at all events, every part of it had been considered? Of course, these Resolutions were not embodied in an Act of Parliament, though they constituted the most important proposals that had been submitted to the House for the purposes of legislation during, at all events, the last century. Availing themselves, however, of that fact, the Government were now seeking to utilise the 1st Resolution for the conduct of the subsequent ones. It might or might not be that that Resolution would be applied. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had assured them it was to the last degree improbable that the 1st Resolution could be applied to the later ones; but at the same time it was idle to suggest that they were not bound to be very careful and cautious before they allowed the 1st Resolution to pass in such a shape as to guide and control, and possibly mutilate the subsequent discussions. The 2nd Resolution was one that, if retained in its present form, would be strongly and hotly contested, and he, for one, should certainly fight it inch by inch. There were two other Resolutions that must necessarily occasion the greatest differences of opinion, and that might possibly be pressed resolutely by the Government, and be just as resolutely contested from that side of the House. Bearing in mind that the Government had not yet made any concessions, the result might be that warm feelings would be excited, strong language used, and, it might be, embittered expressions allowed to drop. Under those circumstances, it was unreasonable of the Government to ask to be entrusted with a strong and keen weapon, and trust to their good faith not to use it. He did not care to pry into the motives of any Government or any body of men. He was willing to take them at their own estimate; and, therefore, he believed that the Government was actuated by the very best intentions. But this was a case in which, in the words of the old proverb, "It was better to be sure than sorry." If it was not intended to use this weapon during the discussion of the rest of the Code, if it were improbable the necessity would arise owing to the admirable conduct of the Opposition, surely it would be a very small concession for the Government to accept the Amendment. There could be no reason for refusal, unless the Government felt bound to show the country that they were determined in no circumstances to make concessions to the Opposition.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) seemed to complain of the dulcet tones of the Prime Minister, and, at the same time, to threaten that there might be some strong language used on the other side. Well, he (Sir William Harcourt) did not complain of strong language. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman was wrong on one point. He said that the Government had accepted no Amendment; but the fact was, they had impartially accepted an important Amendment from the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), who was no supporter of theirs on this question, and another Amendment from, perhaps, the greatest master of the arts against which this Resolution was directed, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). There was no hon. Member who more thoroughly understood the whole subject. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last had given the Government credit for the best intentions, and he (Sir William Harcourt) was sure that was entirely reciprocated by Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman would, however, allow him (Sir William Harcourt) to return another proverb, and to say that they would rather "be sure than sorry." It was true that he (Sir William Harcourt) had, on a previous occasion, declared that he was quite sure, from the faith he had in the good conduct of the Opposition, that this Rule would never be employed in the discussion of the Rules which were to follow; but when he made that statement he did not think there would be anything like Obstruction on the part of the Opposition. That assurance had, however, been shaken by the revelations made during the last 24 hours. If the House accepted this Amendment they would condemn all the New Rules. Either there was to be Obstruction or there was not. If there was to be no Obstruction, the Rule would not apply; but if there was to be Obstruction, why should it not apply? If the Speaker should say that, in his opinion, any question, under this or any other Rule, had been adequately discussed, and that there was an "evident sense" for its being closed, why was a different Rule to be applied than would be applied to all the other questions which would come up in the future? To admit that this Rule was not to apply to the question following that now before the House would be to admit that the Rule would prevent fair discussion. But the Government did not admit that; and the Opposition could not ask them to admit it. So far from that, the Government asserted that the Rule would admit of fair discussion; and, if that was so, what case was there against the Rule being applied? With regard to the argument founded upon the Rules as a Code, he would point out that, although all the Resolutions dealt with one general question, each of them dealt with a separate branch of the subject, and would stand upon its own merits.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that when he listened to the dulcet tones of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) he could not but think that his speech was too pleasant, and that he (Mr. Beresford Hope) must be in the town of Derby. In fact, he fancied he was listening to the strains of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, and he feared where he might be led to. They must, however, look at the facts; and, that being so, they could not forget that these Resolutions had always been placed before them as a Code, in the common acceptation of the word, by the Prime Minister, and friends and foes had rivalled one another in attaching importance to their results as a whole, and as they hung together. They had been pressed forward on the ground that they made the greatest alteration ever known in Parliamentary Procedure. It was dinned into Members' ears that these Rules equalled in importance any Act of Parliament, and transcended very many; and yet an Act of Parliament never came into force until a fixed day, and sometimes, if it was a Welsh Closing Bill, not till 12 months after its promoters intended it to be operative. The argument in abatement of their being a Code was extremely ingenious;

but it was far from convincing to Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House, though, of course, on the other side it was duly accepted. His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had pertinently asked, what would be thought of an Act of Parliament of which each section was to become operative before the House discussed the next? Again, what objection could there be to declaring that, after the Code had been passed, it should not come into operation for a certain time? All Acts of Parliament had fixed upon them the time at which they should become operative. If they commenced to put sections of an Act of Parliament into operation before the whole Act was passed, it would be an absurdity and scandal which would raise the indignation of all sensible people. This was a Session in which, he contended, it was above all necessary that the Business for which Members were now called together should have a full and fair discussion. They had all left the delights of the country in order to come up to town, and show themselves good citizens by devoting themselves entirely to this great and solemn debate. There were no obtrusive Committees of Supply to intercept its majestic and continuous flow. Replying to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the borough of Cambridge (Mr. Shield), who had introduced into the debate the name of the Speaker, which he had no more right to do than that of Her Majesty, he (Mr. Beresford Hope) said they were afraid, not of the Speaker, but of those Gentlemen who would try to manufacture the "evident sense of the House" by acts in which there was more evidence than sense. Why could not the Government be content to allow the Resolutions to be dealt with in the usual manner? If, in February next, they were able to put upon the Table, alongside the Mace, the newly-forged gag of the old free Parliament of Great Britain, that would surely be a sufficient triumph without their endeavouring to humiliate their opponents by pressing this petty point.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, the attitude of the Government on this matter justified the fears of those who thought that the *clôture* was to be put in acting, living force as soon as possible. He thought, however, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had forgotten the fact that it was quite clear from the Rules themselves, as they stood on the Order Paper, that this was not an independent Resolution, but only one of several, and could not be put in force by itself, for they were numbered consecutively, and the first was referred to in the last, No. 13, which declared that the seven first and the three last Resolutions should be Standing Orders of the House; and his (Mr. Grantham's) contention was that until they came to the 13th Rule the discussion on the 1st was not completed. One portion, according to natural interpretation, could not be considered complete until the whole of the first 12 had been discussed, for it was not till the 13th had been reached that it was intended to decide whether this and the earlier ones were to be Standing Orders or not. He was, therefore, much surprised to find that the Government had intended to put this one Resolution in force at once. He further argued that, from the wording of the Resolutions, it was evident that those who framed them had not contemplated putting the 1st into operation until the whole had been passed. They were divided into two series, and the whole plan showed that they were originally intended to form a single scheme.

Captain AYLMER said, he had intended to make the same objections as had been urged by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham). He questioned whether a point of Order ought not to be raised to settle whether the 1st Resolution could be enforced on account of the reading of the 13th, which distinctly made the 1st a part of the whole. It was strange that the Government were so little in accord among themselves, for while the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India declared that the Rule was intended to apply not to Obstruction, but to foolish debates and unnecessary verbosity, the Secretary of State for the Home Department placed so much stress upon Obstruction that he had used the word no less than 10 times. In the conduct of Bills they were guarded against undue haste; but here was a Rule which, if passed in one day, would be law the next morning, a state of affairs which he characterized as undue, unseemly haste on the part of the Government. There were some of the Resolutions which followed to which he had at least as great, if not a greater, objection than he had to the 1st, especially to that which proposed to establish Grand Committees. If Obstruction were at any time justifiable, it would be to the Resolution which established those Grand Committees; and he thought any hon. Member who valued Constitutional government would be justified in using Obstruction to oppose them. It would appear, however, as if the Government wanted the remaining Resolutions passed under the gag.

MR. GREGORY said, he should not have interposed on the present occasion, but he could not but feel that the Motion before them was a just, relevant, and pertinent one for the consideration of the House. There was no doubt this was a great and serious innovation on the principle on which their Business had been hitherto conducted; and he ventured to suggest, while the other Rules were under consideration, it would be fair to suspend the operation of this 1st one. He must deny that the Opposition had in any way obstructed the progress of the Resolutions, and thought it would be unfair to the House and the Conservative Party to assume that there would be any hindrance to the discussion of the subsequent ones. As far as he was individually concerned, he had never, in the least degree, offered any Obstruction to the progress of Business, and as soon as these Resolutions were passed by the House he intended loyally to accept them; and he would be no party to, or co-operate in, anything like Obstruction, in consequence of the decision to which the House might come. Many of the subsequent Resolutions he cordially approved of, and he hoped to see them adopted by the House. He believed that a large number of those who sat near him entertained similar views, and failed to see what reason the Government had for refusing the Amendment.

MR. WARTON said, he thought that the Government, for the sake of their own character and honour, should agree to the Amendment, in order to disprove what appeared to be a very suspicious circumstance, and something bearing the appearance of a trick, that the Government had placed this Rule in the forefront and refused to exempt the others from its operation with the view of applying it, when it was passed, to all the subsequent Rules. If they did not do so he would be driven to the belief that the Government had done so for that unjust and iniquitous purpose. This Resolution, in fact, was the head and front of their offending. He hoped the country would distinctly understand the position. Some day the Radicals who now bowed down before the Birmingham idol would remember with chagrin, perhaps, that the Rules of Debate had been passed by means of the 1st Resolution. His own impression was that it would be used for the purpose of passing those revolutionary measures towards which the Prime Minister was hounded on by those infuriate and insatiate Radical Members behind him. The Prime Minister had no alternative. He (Mr. Warton) did not think the right hon. Gentleman himself wished to apply the Resolution in that way; but the right hon. Gentleman must feel that if he did not comply with the wishes of the Democracy, he would be devoured, like Antæus, by his own dogs. Moreover, they had absolutely no guarantee that Procedure would be the only Business during this Session; it was true they had the pledge of the Government, but that might go, as their pledges had gone before. Indeed, remembering the broken promises of the Government with regard to the Saturday Sittings last Session, he should not be at all surprised if fresh legislation were introduced. He hoped they would not find out that the 1st Resolution had been put forward for any tricky purpose.

MR. R. N. FOWLER while regarding this Resolution as the death-knell of freedom of discussion, and one which was strongly objected to by the Conservative Party and by many Ministerialists, said, that they were prepared to approach the subsequent Resolutions with every desire to give them a candid consideration. He, for one, was anxious to form his opinion on the subject of Grand Committees on what he heard from experienced Members of the House. It therefore ought not to be possible to apply the *clôture* until after the consideration of the remaining Resolutions to be proposed by the Government.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY contended that the proposals of the Government formed a Code, of which no part ought to be passed independently of the remainder. It would be one of the strongest measures ever adopted by any Ministry to take one part of the Code and enforce it against the other parts.

Mr. GORST said, he wished to point out that the Government were surrounding the House with trammels in such a manner as would gradually deprive the Opposition of all their powers of resistance, and that moment would probably be the last when they would be able to make use of the only means they had hitherto possessed of exercising any controlling influence over the action of the Government. It would be in the recollection of the House that in the early part of the Session he (Mr. Gorst) had asked the Prime Minister whether, when the 1st Resolution was passed, he intended putting it in force before passing the others? Although the Prime Minister had not on that occasion given an explicit reply, he had carefully avoided exciting the alarm of the House by admitting that the suspicion was well founded, and that it was the intention of the Government to use the 1st Resolution to pass the others. Now, however, on the strength of their majorities, they had thrown off the mask, and now announced that, as soon as they got this Resolution, they intended immediately to bring it into operation to force the other Resolutions through the House. He had no doubt the same tactics would be followed in regard to the other Resolutions. As soon as the new one was passed, the minority on his side of the House would find their powers of resistance crippled, and that power gradually taken from them, so that in a short time, if they felt disposed to offer determined resistance, they would find their Constitutional power to do so gone, and their attempt too late. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen cheered that statement; and, certainly, nothing could be more marked than the contrast between the conciliatory and apologetic tone with which the Resolutions had been first introduced, and the aggressive spirit that was now displayed. That tone would grow fiercer and fiercer; and, before arriving at the last, they would feel the whole power of the triumphant majority put in force, and those who formed the minority would be wholly powerless.

Sir Gabriel Goldney

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 52; Noes 97: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 362.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker, when the Notice was first given of these Resolutions, I at once announced that it was my intention to oppose the first of them. That is now a good many months ago, and much has happened, no doubt, since I gave that Notice; but I may say that never at any time during the course of this discussion have I seen any reason to change the opinion which I formed of this Resolution when I first heard it announced. We have heard debates, and Motions have been submitted to us, some of which, in my opinion, might have modified certain objections I take to the Resolution. I have supported the Amendments which have appeared to me to have had that bearing; but all through the discussions which have taken place, I have felt that we should be committing a worse error if we passed this 1st Resolution. Well, Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion, and I rise with no little feeling of embarrassment, because I cannot but be aware that if the rejection of the Resolution should be lost, and the result of my opposition to it should be such as recent divisions lead us to fear that it may be, this is probably the last debate that will take place in this House under our old conditions. I cannot but feel, Sir, that if the post which I am now occupying had been filled by one who had greater powers of addressing himself to questions of this kind than I have, he would have dwelt with great force upon the history of the great achievements which this House has effected under the old conditions, subject to which it has so long been conducted. Nothing can be more remarkable than the great advance which the House of Commons has made, since the early historical times, from the position of an Assembly charged with little more than the functions of granting Supplies to the Crown and calling attention to grievances within this Kingdom, to the highest position in the administration both of domestic and of foreign and Colonial affairs, and claiming and exercising a very large share in the Executive power of the country, and by which it has attained a position not only great in the eyes of this country, but great, incomparably great, in the eyes of the civilized world. The House of Commons has not attained that position without severe struggles, both external and internal. We have had to struggle against the encroachments of arbitrary power; sometimes against mob tyranny; and sometimes against lethargy, and even corruption. But, sooner or later, the House has cut its way through all these difficulties; it has purged itself of all its ill-humours, and it has defeated, at the same time, its external enemies by the use of the same weapon—its freedom of speech. It is that freedom of speech we are now called upon materially to modify and abridge. I am unable to conceal from myself that in taking such a step, whatever may be the grounds alleged for it, and whatever may be the consolation administered to us, we are taking one of a very serious character, and one which is threatening the very life and power of the House. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlow County (Mr. Macfarlane), the other day, in explaining why he voted, somewhat contrary to his own inclination and convictions, against the proposal for limiting the power of the House in this matter, said he did so on the same principle as that in which Samson is said to have pulled down the Temple of Dagon on himself. I almost feel inclined to borrow an illustration from the same story, and to say that we, who have shown we cannot be bound or holden by thongs and cords, are in danger of suffering through selling the very secret and true source of our strength. I do not wish to offer these observations to the House in a spirit merely of lamentation, or in a spirit of alarm; but I am anxious to take this opportunity of calling the attention of the House and of the country to the real position in which we stand; and I cannot but hope that even before these debates finally close, some effect may be produced upon the mind of the Government by them. After all, what I fear most is, that this is the first step in a wrong direction, and though its effect may not immediately be sensibly perceived, it will not be very long before it begins to manifest itself. I do not deny that we have a difficulty to deal with; I do not deny that the House is afflicted with a disease which demands our consideration; but what I say is, that my impression is that the remedy — the course we are asked to take—is worse than the disease. I am most anxious to call the attention of the House and the country to the consequences of the step which we are now invited to take. It is, at all events, a gratification to find that we have at last a clear issue before us. Early in the year — in the month of February — we discussed the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott); and, upon that occasion, the House by a majority—not a very large majority under the circumstances—came to a conclusion which may be shortly expressed in these words—it was a conclusion to give the majority the power, under certain circumstances, of closing a debate. Many who voted—certainly some—in the majority on that occasion, did so, I believe, with a reservation in their mind that they would still be able to restrict the power of the majority, by requiring one that should be larger than the mere numerical majority. Well, later on, after other Amendments had been disposed of, we came to an important decision on the Amendment proposed by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and then, by a larger majority than that which had spoken in February, the House rejected a proposal which would, in their opinion, have rendered it necessary for the majority and for the Minister to come to the Leaders of the Opposition, in order to put into effect the *clôture*, if it were desired. We have got rid of one of these complications. Hon. Gentlemen who may have voted on that occasion against the two-thirds' majority were—some of them — nevertheless opposed in their hearts, and will still be opposed, I hope, also in their voices, to the principle of the *clôture* as a whole. But now we have come to the question of the *clôture* in the form in which you, Sir, have put it from the Chair, and that is to permit the House to close the debate at any time, subject to two limitations. The first is a limitation with regard to the number of Members who may be present and take part in the vote. That is a limitation intended, as I understand it, to guard, not so much the rights of small minorities, as to guard against surprises. The second limitation is the initiative of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees. With regard to the limitation of Members, it is a misnomer to speak of it as being a protection to small minorities, because small minorities would find that, if they asserted their rights in a manner disagreeable to the majority, they would soon be swept out of the way by a large majority; and, if that were the view, I would say that it was an entire delusion, and that some hon. Gentlemen in a certain part of the House, who have been very much appealed to on the ground that the scheme of the Government was one intended to give them a protection which we should not have afforded to them, have been much mistaken and misled as to the real working and effect of what is called the protection of small minorities. But I admit that the provisions are valuable in another sense. They are valuable, because they prevent the closing of a debate by a surprise in a very thin House; and if that limitation can be preserved, no doubt it will have its value in the future on that account. Then as to the other limitation or safeguard—namely, that resting on the initiative of the Chair—I am sorry I cannot speak of it with the same satisfaction. Are we really to be guarded by the initiative of the Chair? [" No, no! "] That is the point about which I confess I have had great doubts throughout, and those doubts have been very much increased by the discussions which we have had within the last few days. I could hardly resist the logic of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), when he pressed upon us, the other day, that the effect of the words " evident sense of the House " must be such as practically to overrule any real decision or freedom of judgment on the part either of the Speaker or Chairman. Sure I am that if this principle is engrafted into a system of working, before very long it will be found impossible for any Speaker or Chairman — especially anyone elected hereafter under the *clôture*, and who may not have the former traditions of his great Office to sustain him — to stand up against a clearly-expressed opinion of a majority of the House. I do not at all fail to recognize the value of that little sentence which you, Sir, pronounced a few hours ago, and which, I hope, will be recorded and remembered in the House — that when " the evident sense of the House " is spoken of, the expression means " the evident sense of the House at large." I hope and trust that these words, which, no doubt, will always guide you, Sir, in the application of this Rule, will be of sufficient force to bind also your Successors and the Gentlemen who may occupy the Chair of our Committees. But, Sir, I cannot but feel that that is a very dangerous and unsafe ground to stand upon, and that when the times come to which the hon. Member for Northampton looks forward, the pressure exercised will be such that the initiative will fade away into thin air. I do not say it will be nominally abandoned, but that it will be really abandoned; and if it is nominally maintained, while it is really abandoned, we shall be in a worse plight than ever. For having to exercise such a power nominally and not really will weaken most materially the general position and foundation of the Chair, and will render the Speaker and Chairman less able to do what they are now able to do when removed from the field of Party strife. And, in my opinion, one curious circumstance, I venture to predict, will follow from such a state of things. Obstruction, instead of being put down, will be actually encouraged; and the power of putting down Obstruction, which now resides so largely in the Chair when the Chair is supported by the common feeling of both sides of the House, will be greatly limited and diminished. I am afraid that the Resolution will be unable to put down Obstruction; and I am not sure it will not have the opposite effect to what is intended, and will, to some extent, have the effect of stimulating it in two ways. I think that the irritation which would be caused among Members who are not disposed themselves to be obstructive, but who may feel themselves put down in a manner which is unsatisfactory to them, may lead them into something like a half-sympathy with Obstruction itself. I think also, in the next place, that relying upon the *clôture*, in order to put down Obstruction, will have the mischievous effect of diverting the attention of the Government, and of the Leaders of the House, from the real causes of the difficulties with which we are surrounded; for it appears to me that we are not now dealing with these evils with a proper diagnosis of their causes. I doubt very much if we have given sufficient attention to that which is one of the greatest causes of the difficulties in which we find ourselves. I mean the want of proper management on the part of those who arrange and conduct the Business of the House. If the Government are to have this power put into their hands in order that they may cut the Gordian knot instead of trying to untie it, I am afraid the effect will be one of a very mischievous character. It is impossible not to think sometimes of the strange destiny which seems to dog the footsteps of our present Government. First of all, their main doctrine at one time appeared to be that force was no remedy; and yet, in their administration in Ireland, in Egypt, in every part of their Administration, and in the Procedure of this House itself, they seem to have no other remedy but that of force. I cannot say that the prospect appears to me to be an encouraging one. I wish, however, to be allowed to put the question from another point of view. I see the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) is here, and I must really apologize to him for again referring to a speech of his, to which he gave us to understand that more than enough references had already been made; but I allude to it, because I do not very well see how I am to avoid it. Some time ago the noble Marquess told us that his great object was to provide for the closing of certain classes of debate without the necessity of having recourse to the violent and unpleasant measure of accusing a Member who might be carrying on such a debate for the purpose of Obstruction. The other day the noble Marquess said that he was quite right in the general opinion he then expressed; but he feared he might, perhaps, have been rash in giving the illustrations he did give. I do not think the noble Marquess was rash—at least, I think we are all very much obliged to him for giving those illustrations, because otherwise we should not so well have understood his meaning. The meaning of the noble Marquess I understand to be this—that his present object is not so much to put down Obstruction, as to put down what I may call pertinacity. He mentioned the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), and said that the hon. Member brings forward Motions about Central Asia, and that we do not want to listen to them, although we do not wish to sentence the hon. Member from exclusion from the House. The meaning of the noble Marquess is that if there is any matter brought forward by any Member of the House which is disagreeable to the Government, and which he thinks is disagreeable also to the majority of the House, he will be quite justified in exercising any influence he may have to get that Member silenced and the discussion put an end to; not because he is obstructing, for if the hon. Member for Eye brought forward his Motion, not for its own sake, but in order to stop some other Business, or to bring discredit on the House, he would justly come within the penalty of Obstruction, and we should have nothing to say. But if he brings it forward as a matter which he believes is well deserving consideration, and on which he feels that he ought to say something, who is to be the judge whether or not his pertinacity is justifiable? Who is to judge between the hon. Member for Eye, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), or the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), or any other Member who has at heart, and who wishes to bring forward before the notice of the House any subject on which the House has made up its mind and does not care to listen to any more? I say, therefore, you are introducing a principle which, if it has full play, will be found to be one of the greatest possible danger. We had, the other day, an interestingly lucid and candid speech from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). I am sorry that he is not in his place. I should have liked to ask him a question in regard to the system which has taken hold of his mind, and in the prospect of which he evidently revelled. The hon. Member said—

> "You may dispense with all debate on subjects on which the country has once made up its mind. When we have got our good Democratic Radical Millennium, we shall be in this condition—there will be frequent elections; at each election the country will return a majority pledged to certain measures; the Minister will receive an imperative mandate as to the measures he is to promote, and the Minister, having so received that mandate, will, of course, bring forward those measures, and it will be absurd for anyone to discuss them, because they will have been already decided upon."

Half-an-hour, I believe, is all that out of his extreme good humour—for he is a man of great good humour—he would allow the Opposition to make fools of themselves by attempting to oppose what has been decided. Now, let me take an illustration. I may be rash, like the noble Marquess opposite; but the question I want to ask the hon. Member is this—I have no doubt he has in his mind the possibility that a new House is thus elected, and a Minister receives an imperative mandate to bring forward a measure for the extension of the county franchise. That is, no doubt, one of the 100 measures to which the hon. Member for Northampton and others sitting opposite look forward. Well, according to his doctrine, the Minister will bring forward that measure, and we, after our half-hour, will be silenced in the way of saying anything further as regards criticism upon it. But what if the country did not return a Minister who was pledged to bring forward the extension of the county franchise? Suppose, instead, the country returned a House like that which was elected in 1874, with a mandate in a directly contrary direction. Would the hon. Gentleman then consider that his principle applied, and that under those circumstances half-an-hour only should be allowed to anybody to plead the cause of the county franchise, and that we should be at liberty to say—"We will shut you up, because the country has decided that this is not to be a part of the imperative mandate given to the Minister to be carried out by the House?" The matter, I think, would then assume a very different aspect in the minds of the hon. Member for Northampton and of those who support him; and they would be the first men to get up and say, if the *clôture* was proposed—"That is not a question which you have a right to put. We are here charged by our constituents, whatever the majority of the House may think, to put forward and express our views in favour of this measure for the extension of the county franchise, and you have no right to silence us by the voice of a brute majority." I do not see very well how, logically, you can escape from that conclusion. I can hardly mention the subject of an extension of the county franchise without asking you, who are so anxious to increase the franchise, and bring in a large number of electors—"Are you going to tell the people of these enlarged constituencies that you cannot trust their Members to discuss measures, but that there must be a power of stifling discussion and preventing their taking a proper part in debate?" The difficulty is in where you are to draw the line and to say where free debate is to close. The natural desire of the majority will, no doubt, be that of desiring to put an end to all Obstruction, as it is called, on the part of the minority. The tyranny of the majority is a very awkward thing, especially if the majority be democratic, as the history of the French Revolution shows. I dare say some hon. Gentlemen here may have met with the very elegant and pretty expression, "*La docilité du Républicain.*" It was much praised at the time by distinguished Members of the Republican Party in France. I am afraid that that is what we shall see here, and that there will be a readiness to accept the mandate of any power that may be strong enough to enforce its will. If we are to submit to such a tyranny, what will be the effect on the character of this House—what will be its effect on those who are desirous to express their own judgment and to speak their own thoughts? They will be to a very great extent stifled. There is nothing that is more required now, under the present circumstances of the country, than that we should foster and encourage individual courage among men in these matters. There is plenty of what may be called mock courage—that is, of men acting together and supporting one another in extreme measures. But what I mean is the courage of individuals who will, in small minorities, dare to stand up against the demand of a large body, or a mob, which is most valuable—that is the kind of courage in which, I fear, we shall be likely to be wanting, and which you will discourage by the measures you are taking. We shall, no doubt, find that there will be men who, whatever may be the discouragement they may meet with, will be ready to speak their minds in this House; but with regard to the more modest and more sensitive men, and those who have much in them, which it would be desirable to draw out, but who are easily repelled from bringing it forth, I am afraid you are doing all you can to discourage and silence them. I may be told that my apprehensions are very much exaggerated. I hope they are;

but although I do not believe that the immediate effect of this measure may be so bad as it may ultimately become, yet I am convinced you are taking a step which will be extremely difficult, and which, if not possible to retrace, will land us in a position in which we shall not be able to stand. We shall be obliged to fall, or to go forward. I look with uneasiness upon what I must consider the unfortunate auspices under which this measure is brought forward. It is not a measure adopted after calm consideration and the deliberate advice of leading and experienced Members of the House generally. It is brought forward and supported distinctly as a Party measure. Even if it were brought forward after calm and deliberate consideration, I should have felt myself very much indisposed to incur the risk which, I believe, attaches to it. It was asked the other day, from this side of the House—"Would you, the Gentlemen below the Gangway, have voted for such a measure if the Conservatives had brought it forward?" And the answer retorted was—"What would the Gentlemen on your side have done if a Conservative Ministry had proposed it?" There is much virtue in an "if;" but I may say that is exactly the thing we are not likely to have done. For myself, I can say that on several occasions during the last Session of Parliament, when I had, in concert with my Friends, to consider what we should do, I always stood firm in my refusal to bring forward such a measure. I know quite well there are those who have not scrupled to garble my words and have given them an exactly opposite meaning to that which they intended to convey. I stated, it is true, on one occasion, that unless certain steps were taken there was no other remedy left but *clôture* to stop Obstruction; but they stopped there, and represented me as approving of that measure, excluding altogether the fact that I went on in the next sentence to say that I hoped that was a measure that would never be adopted; and I retain the opinion which I held then, and held in common with hon. Gentlemen opposite high in authority, who have now come forward as supporters of the *clôture*. But it is a question how and in what spirit this proposal is made. I say it is made in a spirit of Party zeal, and it is made almost or quite avowedly, not for the purpose of putting down Obstruction, but for the purpose of promoting Liberal legislation. I cannot but feel that in adopting this Resolution we shall be placing ourselves in the position of promoting Party interests and Party faction; and I venture to say that an Assembly which makes itself the tool of faction, and which tramples on a minority indoors, will before long find itself the victim of a majority out-of-doors.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has addressed the House at the final stage of the debate upon this Resolution, with his usual moderation——

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg pardon for one moment—I am taking a very great liberty; but there was one other point which I think a very cardinal and vital point, and which I omitted to mention. I forgot to state that we have to consider the bearing of this Resolution on the other Resolutions. Some time ago I said—and I have stated it more than once—that the other Resolutions of the Government were Resolutions which, with some modification, might be accepted, and might do much to effect the object which the Government profess to have in view. In saying that, I do not refer to the second portion of the Resolutions, dealing with Grand Committees, which require special consideration; but I wish to say that with regard to the other Resolutions, their acceptability would be materially qualified, and must be materially qualified, by the passing of this Resolution. The general character of this Resolution is to limit the number of opportunities for debate. We might be prepared to limit those opportunities, if debate is to be full, and to adopt the other Resolutions, if it was not passed; but the case is materially altered if it be adopted. I thought it best to mention this, in order that there might be no misapprehension hereafter.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was about to say that in the tone of his speech the Government had no reason to complain of the right hon. Gentleman, who addressed the House with that moderation which always gives great weight to his remarks. He said that this measure was introduced as a Party measure. In one sense of the word that is true; but in another sense—that is, the malignant sense of the word—I entirely deny it. The Resolution was introduced as a Party measure in this sense—the Government introduced it on their own responsibility it is true. My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, at the very commencement of these discussions, explained why that was necessary. Many attempts have been made to improve the conduct of Business in this House by Committees and by other measures by which, without pledging the responsibility of the Government, something like a general arrangement was arrived at. All those attempts successively have failed; and feeling, as we did, that so serious a matter deserved an immediate and speedy decision, we felt it was the duty of the Government, upon their own responsibility, to make proposals to the House. When the Government makes proposals to the House on any subject, it is extremely likely they will be opposed by the Party opposite. No man has a right to complain of that. But if the right hon. Gentleman intends to say that this measure was introduced for the purpose of securing triumph to one particular Party, either in the present or the future, that is the greatest mistake, and I entirely deny it. I say that such never was our intention, and never could have been the effect, unless we are to assume that one Party is perpetually to occupy the place of power. It is quite plain that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) does not believe that; and, therefore, I again claim credit for the Government having made this proposal—whether it be a wise or an unwise proposal—in no partizan spirit, but from a deep conviction that it was the best and the only plan which could give back to the House due control over the proceedings of the House, and enable it to conduct the affairs of the country. We have been discussing the Motion that is now before the House many, many times, for, in point of fact, everyone must feel that, from the moment this Resolution was placed before the House, the whole question of the *clôture* has been at issue upon every Amendment. Now, Sir, I do not say that in any impatience of debate upon this proposal. I say it rather to apologize for having very little myself to add to the discussion. Indeed, everything, I think, that can be said upon this subject has been said over and over again. I think that, well and clearly as the right hon. Gentleman put the position of himself and his Friends, we must all acknowledge that the arguments which he adduced were not novel at all in this debate. Therefore, I do not intend to occupy the time of the House at any length. I should like to answer a challenge which the right hon. Gentleman threw out the other day, when he said he did not think I had my heart very much in these Resolutions. He was good enough to say that I had a pride and pleasure in debates in this House. So I have; but it is because I have a pride and pleasure in them that I wish the debates in this House to be restored to what I recollect them, when discussion really was free, and when small minorities did not usurp the whole time of the House, so that, in point of fact, freedom of discussion had become impossible. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) spoke of the House as having "grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength." I wish I thought it was so; but within my experience of the House I have not observed that. It seems to me that the influence of the House is being dwarfed by our growth and enfeebled by our weakness, and that the country has recognized that its influence is falling with the nation. Then the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was good enough to tell a story of mine again. I frankly admit that there are difficulties in dealing with a Highland stream, with a lady, or the House of Commons, to the extent that it is absolutely necessary that we should take some measure to control them. It has been said sometimes that we on this side of the House have not been opposed to Obstruction, and that we have not aided in putting it down. Well, Sir, on that subject at least my "withers are unwrung." [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] I am glad that is recognized by Gentlemen opposite, who are great authorities upon the subject. Well, the right hon. Gentleman, finding himself in difficulties some three or four years ago in conducting the Business of the House, difficulties for which he now charges us for being more or less responsible, came down to the House with remedies which he proposed; and I criticized those remedies, thinking they were too feeble. I remember that the proposal was to suspend a Gentleman who had offended twice for a single day and so on. I said I thought that a Gentleman who defied the authority of the Chair three times ought to be suspended for the rest of the Session. The real truth is that the right hon. Gentleman proposed a remedy, but it was an ineffectual remedy; and nobody will say that if the right hon. Gentleman were in power and had his own remedy to work with he would be able to carry on the Business of the House. I said that the Rules he proposed were ineffectual for that purpose. If it be the fact that the quantity of Business has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished, the question is, what are the remedies we are to employ? Some Gentlemen opposite have repeated over and over again that we want to silence the Opposition. I suppose as Gentlemen say it that they believe it. To me it is incredible. I never was so astonished in my life as when I heard the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) rise in his place and say that this "Resolution is directed against the Tory Party, and it is directed against me." I am sure my hon. Friend, if he will allow me to call him so, was sincere; but does he really believe that it is the intention and object of this Resolution and of Gentlemen sitting upon these Benches to silence him? [MR. E. STANHOPE: As one of the Opposition.] Why, there is no man in this House to whom the House listens with greater pleasure. Does my hon. Friend really believe that when he desires to address the House, and intimates that he has something to add to the debate, you, Sir, will be of opinion that the subject has been adequately discussed, or that the "evident sense of the House" is that the debate should be closed? If that be the opinion of my hon. Friend, it seems to me that he is affected by "the fears of the brave and the follies of the wise." No, Sir; that is not the object of this Resolution, and if I believe in the sincerity of your assertion, I ask you to believe in the sincerity of mine. We may be wrong as to the methods; but as to the objects we are entitled to some credit when we affirm that we have no such desire. What we do desire is some method of economizing the time of the House. In the conduct of all business, if you are to deal with it effectually, you must apportion the time according to the object you have in view. What is the fact now? Has the House the means, as I am sure it has the will, to use its time to the best of the public advantage? Can anyone upon either side honestly say that this is so? Is it in the hands of the overwhelming majority of the House on both sides to dispose of its time? You know that any handful of men can prevent you from using the time of the House, can determine that the time of the House of Commons shall be wasted upon some trivial subject, and that, consequently, no time shall be left for the discussion of more important subjects. There is not a man opposite who has not suffered from that as much as we have done. You know perfectly well at present under the existing Rules, and I am sorry to say the existing practice, the House has no control over its own time to apportion it to the public advantage. If time is the most valuable commodity of all to an individual, so it is to the House of Commons. The necessity of some Rule of this kind had become apparent even in the time of Lord Eversley. There was not the same pressure then as now; but now that the necessity has arisen we must address ourselves to the remedy. You expect Parliament to do a great work, and you allow the machine to run to waste, to be employed upon objects which are not worth employing it upon, and you do not employ it upon the objects most deserving of your labour. Every year the country is requiring Parliament to do more, and every year, unfortunately, Parliament does less rather than more. I do not say that you consciously deceive yourselves upon this matter. But whatever may be the case within these walls, I venture to say that outside the walls the matter is thoroughly well understood, that the country knows perfectly what the mischief is from which we are suffering, and that it is against that mischief alone the efforts of the Government are directed. But, then, in the course of this debate some objection has been taken on the ground that we had said that this Rule was not directed against Obstruction, and yet we used Obstruction as a means of passing it. Now, there is an ambiguity in the word "Obstruction," and the fallacy lies in that ambiguity. You may have Obstruction of different kinds. First of all, in the most popular sense of the word, there is a wilful and perverse waste of time, a delay of Business simply for the purpose of delay, that sort of desperate resistance to a single Vote of which we have seen examples. A desperate resistance twice, at least, has only been overcome by action on the part of the authorities which has been characterized as a *coup d'état.* That shows, at all events, you may be obliged to resort to a *coup d'état* as long as Parliament has no regular way of dealing with its own time, or overcoming obstacles of that description. Most Gentlemen opposite would say they are against that kind of Obstruction, and that they would be willing to deal with it. The noble Lord below the Gangway (Lord Randolph Churchill) does not say so; but the right hon. Gentleman the recognized Leader of the Opposition condemns Obstruction of that description. However, it is not only necessary to know the view of Phœbus Apollo, but of Phæton. In the words of Prior, he may—

> "Obtain the chariot for a day
> And set the world on fire."

The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock tells us he is not against Irish Obstruction; he approves of it; he thinks it is a thing we require to encourage. He is altogether against Hibernian lawyers who sit upon the Front Bench; but he is as thick as possible with Irish Gentlemen below the Gangway. He says he regards Obstruction as a safety-valve. In that I fear there is a confusion of ideas, for I always thought a safety-valve was somewhat different from Obstruction. That is one of the rival policies among the Conservative Party in dealing with this matter. But besides this, the more familiar kind of Obstruction, there are other kinds to which likewise this Resolution is addressed. You may have conduct which does, in fact, obstruct Business, and which consequently is as much Obstruction as the other sort. That is the Obstruction against which this Resolution is clearly directed. Anything which wastes the time of the House, anything which leads to that which is beyond adequate discussion, is a thing against which this Resolution is directed. Anything beyond adequate discussion is Obstruction, whatever the motive or the source from which it may originate. Now, it is extremely difficult to deal with, because it is very Protean in its structure. We are very familiar with what is called the "block" system. I do not mean the system so skilfully carried out by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), but the system of discussing the most trivial measures in the world at extreme length, not on account of the measure itself, but to prevent other measures from being discussed; that is Obstruction of the very worst description, because it is a most unjustifiable waste of the time of the House. It is against waste of that description that this Resolution is directed; because when a measure of small importance and trivial character is discussed day after day and week after week, not upon its own merits, but simply for the purpose of preventing other measures from being discussed, that is one of the worst forms of Obstruction, and if the House sees that this is being done, it would be justified in saying—"We have discussed this measure long enough, let us pass on to another." That is common sense. Otherwise, what would happen? You have three measures which might be fairly discussed in three or four months, and what is easier than to take one of these and spend the whole four months upon it? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] The noble Lord cheers. I do not know whether he is really opposed to this Resolution, except that he has argued in a self-contradictory way, not exactly seeing with which horse he is going to win. The other day he urged the Conservative Party not to be so suicidal as to refuse the *clôture,* because, as he said, "when we come into Office we shall want it. Let us have a real *clôture,* so that we may carry our measures of Tory Democracy." Then, why is he against the *clôture,* and in what other way does he expect to be able to carry his measures of Tory Democracy? Coming into Office, he is going to carry these measures, and he cannot tolerate a two-thirds' majority, because that would obstruct and impede his projects; but if he is to have no *clôture,* I do not understand how these great measures are to be rushed through by the noble Lord. The real question before us is, is the House to have power to dispose of its time or not; and, if not, who is to determine how the time of the House is to be laid out? I do not think I am stating a very extraordinary proposition when I say that on this point the majority ought to decide, and that for this purpose the majority does mean the House of Commons. When you say "the House of Commons" has done this or that you mean the majority; when the House conducts its Business you mean the majority does so. And why? Because, as my noble Friend said the other night, the country holds, and must hold, the majority of the House of Commons responsible for the conduct of its Business. Indeed, no one else can possibly be responsible for it. Whichever Party furnishes the majority, there is the body of men whom the country has a right to hold responsible. The House decides by a majority upon all great questions, and, above all, the question of the order of its proceedings. It decides, for example, whether a particular Order of the Day shall have precedence; whether it shall sit on Saturdays, and so forth. And I was quite astonished to hear an hon. Member on the Front Opposition Bench say that such questions are decided by general consent. Nothing of the kind happens; the arrangement is made by the majority; and that must necessarily be the case, because if the country turned round on the House and asked the Government "What have you done with our time?" we could not go to the country and say —"We were willing to use your time to the best advantage, but the minority would not let us." What an answer is that for the majority to make to the country? The right hon. Gentleman does not attribute much importance to the safeguards we have provided. Let me say from what point of view I regard them. In my view, the Speaker is placed as a sort of assessor and moderator over the majority in this matter. It has been said over and over again that there used to be an honourable understanding with reference to the conduct of the Business of the House, when the minority agreed with the majority that the time had come for deciding the question under discussion. Unhappily, that is no longer to be relied upon. [An hon. MEMBER: Why?] Well, look back to the last two or three years. I have described the position that the Speaker holds, in my opinion, and I do not see how the duties of an assessor and moderator can be better performed than by the Speaker. Well, you also say that you contend for freedom of discussion. I say that we are for freedom of discussion as much as you. ["No!"] Yes, we are. Why should we not be? Who, I should like to know, has had the best of freedom of discussion in this country for the last 50 years—is it the Conservative or the Liberal Party? Depend upon it, all the measures we have carried against your resistance have been obtained by freedom of discussion. Why, you had possession of all the fortresses of the country, and we stormed them by freedom of discussion. We shall use freedom of discussion yet. What you want is, not freedom of discussion, but the power, even if the Speaker decides that the discussion has been adequate, of preventing the Question from being put. You are contending, not for freedom of discussion, but for a veto on Business. You contend for the right avowed by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), and, I understand, approved by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) —a right, if you choose, to defeat any measure by a minority, however small, even if that measure be supported by a majority, however large. ["No, no!"] That is the issue, and that power you cannot deny can be exercised under the existing Rules of the House. There is no dispute about it; that can at present be done, and that is the real issue here —the right of the minority to prevail over the majority. ["No, no!"] Well, it cannot be settled by clamour. I did not know, when I used that expression, that it was my right hon. Predecessor (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to whom I was addressing it. I say your objection, in my opinion, is not to silence; that is not what you refer to. What you would demand is, that you should have the power to evade defeat by delay, if you chose to exercise it. You wish to reserve to yourselves the power of preventing defeat by unlimited delay; but that is not a legitimate Parliamentary object. We have seen the power claimed and exercised by men who do not profess allegiance to this Parliament; and that is one thing that must be remembered. We have heard a great deal about a reckless and unscrupulous majority. Assume all you like against that majority as to the mischief it could do. It is assumed that a minority can never be reckless or unscrupulous. Why should that be assumed? And what is the consequence of the assumption? Why, the action of the House of Commons may be entirely paralyzed, and that is not a question for the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party, but for the whole country, in whatever hands the Government is. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said he disapproved of the *clôture*, but thought it was the only alternative.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I said, when recommending some other measure, that the only alternative would be this.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: At all events, we have come to a point where, if this be the only effectual measure, we must employ it. I admit all the prejudice against it. I admit I would far rather, if I thought it possible, adhere to the old traditional Rules of the House of Commons. One is naturally extremely averse to touching anything connected with an ancient institution like this House. Therefore, I do ask the House to believe that I have no rash desire to do so; but the experiences of later years of this Government, and of the preceding Government, have shown that it is absolutely indispensable that a remedy of this description should be applied. It is said the power may be abused. So it may be. But what will be the consequence? If you refuse the power you will reduce the House to a state of impotence. There are powers vested in the Crown and in the House of Lords which might be abused with the most mischievous effect; but hon. Gentlemen opposite do not propose to take them away. To nearly all the institutions of the country we are compelled to trust powers which, if they were abused, would produce results we should deplore. Yet that is not a reason for refusing the powers and paralyzing the Legislature or the Executive. You must rely for the use of these Rules, as of all the rest of the powers, upon the good humour and good sense of the English nation, as represented both in and out of the House of Commons. Hon. Members opposite entertain great alarm upon this subject. May I remind them, without offence, that they have entertained great alarms on the subject of many other proposals made by the Liberal Party. There is hardly a great reform which has not inspired you with alarms which, happily, have not been realized. There is not one of which it was not said it would produce results disastrous to the country; and they have not followed. Let me ask the Leaders of the Opposition what would be their position if they had to take our place? They might find some difficulty if they could not always rely upon the close alliance of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the Friends near him. Suppose they found they were not able to transact the necessary Business of the nation, as they have found before; suppose they found minorities had very different objects from freedom of discussion in this House, and were determined to paralyze the action of the State, and then they found that by voting against this Resolution they had deprived, not only themselves, but the country and the House of Commons, of the means of doing that which it is their clear duty to do—what condemnation would be too strong, what remorse too great, feeling that they had brought on themselves evils against which they had no remedy? That is a situation which is quite possible; you may take these seats, and you may find yourselves in it. We cannot accept that responsibility. You may remove us from these seats—that would be a circumstance I should not personally regret; but as long as we occupy these seats we have a duty to perform to the House of Commons and to the country. We have to propose to them such measures as we think necessary for the public advantage; and we have to endeavour, as far as we can, to make the House of Commons what it has been in former times —a great instrument for carrying out the will of the nation.

Viscount FOLKESTONE remarked, that the Home Secretary had informed them that everything had been said which could be said on this subject; and certainly the right hon. and learned Gentleman illustrated that statement pretty well by the speech to which they had just listened. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had assured them that the only plan which could be devised for restoring the authority of the House was the one under discussion, and he had emphatically denied that the power of closure was to be used for silencing the Opposition. He could only repeat that hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House had no doubt that it was not the intention of the present occupants of the Treasury Bench so to use the power; but they could not by any possibility answer for those who would come after them, or for those who would occupy the Chair after the present Speaker had resigned his Office. When this proposal was first brought forward he thought it was directed against the particular kind of wilful and persistent Obstruction which it was more necessary to stop than other forms of that unfortunate practice. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), however, referred to the practice of making Motions and keeping up long debates on comparatively trivial questions for the purpose of preventing certain measures from being brought on. He believed the hon. Member alluded to the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill as a cause of this mode of Obstruction. The argument, he thought, was one against the Half-past 12 o'clock Rule rather than in favour of this Resolution. It might be fairly argued that closure would be inoperative in such a case, inasmuch as it would be necessary to allow a certain time for the discussion of each of the Motions preceding the Bill objected to. Another form of Obstruction consisted in the discursiveness and length of speeches, in the "exuberant verbosity" of some Gentlemen. But certainly the Liberal Party was more obnoxious to that charge than the Conservatives. He knew that figures might be made to prove anything; but, at the same time, they occasionally formed an instructive study, and he thought it would be of some service to compare the speeches of one prominent Member of the House with another. He had taken the right hon. Gentlemen the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, and he had selected the volume of *Hansard* produced in 1879, from the period of the 31st of March to the 8th of May. At that time his right hon. Friend was Leader of the House and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was but a private Member. He found that during that period, exclusive of the Answers to Questions, the then Leader of the House occupied 71 columns in *Hansard*, while the Prime Minister occupied 55 columns. Then he had selected an analogous period in 1881 from March 26 to May 6, when the position of the two right hon. Gentlemen were exactly reversed. Then he found that his right hon. Friend occupied 31½ columns, while the Prime Minister occupied 139 columns, or nearly twice as much time as was occupied by his right hon. Friend in a similar period and under similar circumstances. He should say that both these periods included the Budget Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [Mr. GLADSTONE: There was the Land Bill.] He did not know how that was. He did not wish to say that the right Gentleman should have curtailed his power of speech, for they were always delighted to hear him; but he quoted the figures as showing how the time of the House was sometimes used. The Prime Minister had said that in other countries the *clôture* had never been abused. But the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) had pointed out one occasion of such abuse. That hon. and learned Gentleman said—

> "I have heard it stated in America that if there had been full debate the Civil War would have been avoided."

If that was so, it was a striking instance of abuse. Sir Erskine May, too, had pointed out that in America the *clôture* had been found ineffectual, and had to be supplemented by the one-hour Rule, under which no speaker whatever was allowed to speak more than one hour. The one-hour Rule had been found eminently successful. Much had been said against Obstruction, and, no doubt, a good deal of what had been said was just; nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that Obstruction was by no means a new practice, and that there had been occasions when it proved to be anything but an unmixed evil. Such an occasion was March 12, 1771, when the minority divided the House 23 times in its resistance against the proposal to punish the printers of the Debates, and when Burke said that "Posterity would bless the pertinacity of that day." This Rule was now avowedly aimed at Obstruction in the shape of prolixity and discursive debating, and the House would gladly welcome some reform provided it did not unduly interfere with due liberty of speech and action. The present proposal would be deleterious to the excellence of Parliamentary legislation. A good deal had been said about the power of public opinion to prevent the improper and tyrannical use of the *clôture.* If that was true, would not public opinion be equally efficacious in preventing the inconvenient use of Obstruction in that House? A proof of the indifference of the public to this question was shown in the fact that on no occasion during the debates on the *clôture* Rules had it been necessary that balloting should be resorted to for admission to the Strangers' Gallery. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not bring his great career to a close by passing a restrictive measure which would give more time to the House by the sacrifice of the freedom and independence of debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Viscount Lymington.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 7th November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SALVATION ARMY.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that certain persons connected with the Salvation Army have been condemned to fines ranging up to £3, and terms of imprisonment up to sixty days, by the magistrates of Arbroath, for participating in a procession which those magistrates, under a dormant Scottish Statute of 1606, had proclaimed as an unlawful convention, and that an appeal against the magistrates' decision has just been dismissed by the Scottish Justiciary Appeal Court; whether it is a fact that the Court of Queen's Bench very recently pronounced Salvation Army processions in themselves to be perfectly lawful demonstrations; and, whether, bearing in mind the circumstance that, until judgment was pronounced in the present case, there was no reason for supposing the Scottish Law regarding such demonstrations to differ from the English, he will consider whether the sentences in these particular cases should be remitted?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have been asked by my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary to answer this Question. Attention has been called to the case to which it relates. I am not aware of any authority for holding that the Statute referred to in the Question is dormant; but I do not find that the Judges of the Court of Justiciary based their Judgments upon that Statute. I understand them to have held that the magistrates had the inherent right and power to issue and enforce such a proclamation as they did issue, where they believed that the proceedings against which it was directed would cause a breach of the peace. It is the fact that in a reported case the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice decided that the offence of holding an unlawful assembly had not been committed by certain persons belonging to the Salvation Army. In the case to which this Question relates, it was stated that, in point of fact, the processions held in Arbroath had a tendency to cause, and did cause, a breach of the peace. It appeared that the persons convicted had been duly warned, and I do not find in the papers any evidence that they were ignorant that they were breaking the law. My right hon. and learned Friend requests me to say that he cannot interfere in the case.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—BRITISH VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. HERBERT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any truth in the report that has appeared in the papers, to the effect that British officers and men are being allowed to volunteer for service in the Soudan?

Mr. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I have telegraphed to Sir Archibald Alison, and he informs me that there is no foundation for the report.

EMIGRATION TO THE COLONIES—THE DEPOT AT PLYMOUTH.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he is aware that emigrants at the Emigration Depôt at Plymouth are frequently detained many days, occasionally weeks, before embarking, and are restricted from leaving the establishment (except on Sundays) to provide requisites for the voyage; and, whether he can intervene to alter the present arrangements?

MR. J. HOLMS (for Mr. CHAMBERLAIN): The Emigration Depôt at Plymouth is a depôt in which emigrants, with free or assisted passages for the Australian and New Zealand ports, are collected before embarking. I am informed that the emigrants usually arrive on Monday and embark on the following Wednesday or Thursday. They are only permitted to leave the depôt on showing good cause to the Colonial Government despatching officer—this restriction having been found necessary to keep the emigrants from risks of infection and from bad company. It appears, however, that the emigrants are not kept indoors, but have ample open space for exercise; and the time that intervenes between their arrival and embarkation is occupied in medical examination, verification of the people, and examination of luggage, &c. The rules applicable to these emigrants are not made by the Board of Trade, but by or with the sanction of the agent for the respective Colonies to which they are about to proceed. It is, I believe, a part of the contract into which the emigrants enter that they shall be at the depôt at a certain date; and no complaint has reached the Board of Trade as to their treatment.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF NATIONAL LEAGUE PLACARDS, AT TINTERN, CO. WEXFORD.

MR HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following notice was torn down by a policeman at St. Leonard's Chapel, Tintern, county Wexford, this week:—

> "Irish National League! A meeting of the parishioners of Tintern will be held at Ballycullane, on Sunday, November 5th instant, at 3 o'clock, for the purpose of organizing a branch of the above Association, and electing a committee. Union is strength. God save Ireland;"

if he approves of this action; whether, about a month since, a Tintern policeman tore down another placard calling a meeting in aid of evicted tenants, if this had his sanction; whether, last summer, a circular was issued by his authority instructing the police respecting their treatment of placards; and, whether the police action in the two cases now referred to was in contravention of that circular; and what notice he will take of the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: I find that the placards mentioned by the hon. Member were taken down by members of the County Wexford Constabulary, and so far as I can judge, I think they ought not to have been interfered with. The action of the police was not in contravention of the instructions issued to them recently with regard to placards, as these instructions were limited to the placards relating to the Labour League and Shepherds' Association. I am of opinion, however, as I stated yesterday, in reply to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), that similar instructions may be requisite with regard to the placards of the Irish National League, and I have therefore given orders for their issue.

MR. HEALY asked whether the police would be ordered to restore the placards?

MR. TREVELYAN thought the hon. Member exaggerated the power of the Irish Constabulary if he imagined they could put up the placards that had been pulled down.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—EXTRA ALLOWANCES TO PRISON WARDERS.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any determination has been come to as to the extra allowance promised prison warders for extra duty performed under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act; if so, what; when the money will be distributed, and how allocated?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have just received a report on this subject from the General Prisons Board, which I have now under consideration. The Treasury have to be consulted; and, apart from that, I cannot admit that there was an absolute promise in the matter.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—ZULULAND—THE PAPERS.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, When any further Papers on the affairs of Zululand will be presented, in continuation of Sir H. Bulwer's despatches of June last; and, whether such Papers will include a full statement of the arrangements for the restoration of Cetewayo, and the views expressed by Sir H. Bulwer on the subject, in order that the House may be in a position to form an opinion on the policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir; a further, and I hope a final despatch from Sir Henry Bulwer, giving his proposals for the settlement of Zululand, is actually on its way to this country; and, therefore, until it has arrived and is considered by the Government, the Papers cannot be laid on the Table. As soon as that has happened they will be laid on the Table. I cannot promise; but I hope they will be laid on the Table before the end of the Session.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table the Articles of the Egyptian Code under which Arabi Pacha is to be tried?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Arabi Pasha is, we understand, to be tried under special conditions, agreed to by the prisoners' counsel after certain special modifications have been introduced to meet their views. The Articles in the Ottoman Penal Code quoted in the charges will be found in the *Législation Ottomane*, by Aristarchi Bey.

Mr. BOURKE: I think there are only two Articles mentioned, and for all we know there may be other Articles under which the prisoner may be made amenable. Therefore, I hope the Government will see their way, as they have interfered with the trial, to lay these Articles on the Table.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not think so, because, as I stated before, the prisoner is to be tried under the special conditions agreed upon between the prosecutors and his own counsel. The two Articles are merely quoted; they are not the conditions under which he is to be tried.

Mr. BOURKE: Will those special conditions be laid on the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already read them at length, and quoted them to the House.

CRIME (IRELAND)—THE LATE ASSASSINATIONS IN THE PHŒNIX PARK —ARREST OF ONE OF THE ASSASSINS.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can inform the House of the reasons why the man Westgate, who confessed to having participated in the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, has not yet been brought to this Country for trial; and, what course Her Majesty's Government intends to take regarding him?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that there had been some delay in the matter of bringing this man Westgate to England. He was taken in custody at Jamaica, and before he could be brought to Dublin, it was necessary to obtain a warrant from Dublin, and also evidence to identify him. That evidence could only be obtained from the crew of the vessel in which he sailed from Dublin. The vessel did not arrive home till the middle of October, but the necessary evidence was then obtained. Having obtained the evidence of identification, a policeman was despatched to Jamaica to bring the prisoner to this country, and he hoped that no further delay would occur. Every possible investigation would be made to ascertain if there was any foundation for the man's statements.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the hon. and learned Gentleman's attention had been drawn to statements in the Dublin papers to the effect that Westgate was a harmless lunatic?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): No, Sir; I never read a Dublin newspaper.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS—MR. ROPER.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Sub-Commissioner

Roper has been repeatedly engaged in litigation with his Roscommon tenants?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have telegraphed this Question, which only appeared this morning, to Mr. Roper, and he replies that he commenced proceedings against three or four tenants who owed several years' rent; that he settled with them, and that he is on the best terms with all his tenants.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—THE DUAL CONTROL.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the reports, which have appeared in various journals, as to negotiations being carried on between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France with regard to the re-establishment or disestablishment of the Dual Control in Egypt; and, if so, whether he will inform the House as to the nature and object of those negotiations?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Confidential communications are passing between the English and French Governments with regard to Egypt; but the declarations made by the Prime Minister on the first night of the present Sittings of the House must prevent my making any statement with regard to their nature.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether these communications related to the Dual Control?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to exercise his own intelligence on the subject. It is not usual to make statements in this House in regard to confidential communications which are passing with foreign Governments.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the following telegram published in the "Standard" of the 6th instant:—

> "The Cuban refugees arrived here on the 20th of August by the English steamer 'Hercules,' from Tangier. On their landing the police demanded their passports, and they were without any. Then, instead of refusing them admission to the garrison in consequence of their having no passports, the refugees were placed in two cars, with two policemen and an inspector of police, and taken to the English frontier, where they were compelled to dismount, and were left. The Spanish officials, who were in waiting, arrested them immediately. A witness of the arrest showed me the actual spot, which is within twenty yards of the British sentry, consequently this proceeding of the Spaniards is an infringement of the neutral zone of one hundred yards. I have spoken to the Spanish official who arrested the refugees, and he states that they were not handed over by the British police, but simply turned out and prevented from returning to the British territory. He adds, however, that the whole affair was, without doubt, previously arranged between the British and Spanish authorities, information having been received at Linea, the Spanish frontier town, that the refugees would be expelled from English territory at a certain hour, in consequence of which he and three others were waiting close to the English sentries, and thus effected their arrest;"

and, whether he can inform the House if the statements contained in it are correct?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the statement in the "Standard" newspaper of the 6th instant is true, that certain Cuban refugees were taken to the British frontier near Gibraltar, and prevented from returning into British territory; and, if so, whether this proceeding was the subject of any previous arrangement, negotiation, or discussion between the Spanish and British authorities?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: As to the first part of the hon. Member's Question, if he will do me the favour of referring to the answer I gave on this subject a week ago he will see that, substantially, the statements made in this communication to *The Standard* are correct. But as, in a matter of this importance, one must be very accurate, I would say we have no information as to the actual place of the arrest within the neutral territory. But, of course, the important part of the Question of the hon. Gentleman, and that which is the principal part of the Question of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross), is, whether the Government could inform the House if the statements contained in the telegram—namely, that previous communications took place between the Spanish and English authorities—are true or not. We have no further information respecting that than we had when I previously answered a Question on the subject in the House. I should be very anxious to answer in a matter of such serious importance as fully as possible; but I believe the House would think it wrong if I were to give expression to mere opinion on the facts we already know when we have asked for, and expect very shortly to receive, a full statement of facts from the Governor. Hon. Members, no doubt, have seen a telegram in the newspapers to-day that an inquiry had already begun at the Governor's residence; and I need only appeal to the character and position of Lord Napier to show that that inquiry will be an exhaustive one. I might say that, in order to make the inquiry accurate and full, the Colonial Office telegraphed the paragraph that appeared in *The Standard* drawing Lord Napier's attention to this charge, and asking him to answer by telegraph whether there was any foundation for it or not. I need only add that as soon as we receive any information on the subject I will communicate with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, so that he can repeat his Question. Before sitting down, I may just say that the Secretary of State will not shrink from visiting with due severity any person who it may be thoroughly proved or shown has, either by gross negligence or something worse, contributed to bring about this very deplorable error.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Has the Government given up all hope of getting the men given back by the Spanish Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am afraid that it would not conduce to the end we have in view if I were to make any statement on the subject.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Has any representation been made by the English Government to the Spanish Government with respect to these men?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir; I have already stated to the House that communications have passed between the Foreign Office and the Government of Spain on the subject; but, looking to the extreme gravity of the Question, the House will see that it would not conduce to the end we have in view if I were to make a statement.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: On what day were despatches sent from the Foreign Office instructing our Ambassador to make representations to the Spanish Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I will be prepared to answer that Question on Thursday. The first communication made, as announced by me on the day it was made, was the telegraphing to Madrid the terms of the reply, given on behalf of the Colonial Office in this House, to the first Question asked on the subject.

NAVY—BARRACKS AT PORTSMOUTH.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the construction of Naval Barracks at Portsmouth, and to give to seamen of the Royal Navy at that Port the same accommodation as at Sheerness and Plymouth?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the erection of the barracks had been postponed.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will a Vote on the subject be asked for next year?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that Question must remain until the consideration of the Naval Estimates.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INDIAN CONTINGENT — VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY.

MR. BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for India, When the representatives of the Indian troops lately engaged in Egypt will arrive in this Country, and how many native officers and men are expected; and, what steps have been taken to give them a reception, on their arrival, worthy of their brilliant services in Egypt, and more especially of the remarkable march of their Cavalry under General Drury-Lowe from Tel-el-Kebir to Cairo on the 15th of September.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The *Lusitania*, bringing 13 Native commissioned officers, 7 Native non-commissioned officers, and 10 or 12 orderlies of the Indian Contingent, is expected to arrive in Portsmouth Harbour to-morrow morning. The principal object of the bringing of these officers and non-commissioned officers to this country is their reception by the Queen, as representing the corps of the Indian Army engaged in Egypt. Although the detailed arrangements are not yet complete, Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to express her intention to receive these officers, and I hope it may be possible for them to receive the medal for the campaign at the hands of Her Majesty. This, I believe, they would consider to be the highest honour that can be conferred upon them. All the arrangements for the reception of these officers have been made, as far as possible. A suitable house has been retained for their reception, near London, at Wimbledon, and General Sir Henry Daly, a distinguished Indian officer, having a great acquaintance with the Indian Army, has been good enough to promise to devote his time to these officers during their visit. I have no doubt that it will be within the power of those who have charge of them to make their visit not only, as it is intended to be, an honour to the Army to which they belong, but to make it satisfactory and agreeable to themselves.

COLONEL STANLEY: In consequence of that answer, and bearing in mind what was said in 1878, may I ask whether it would be necessary to ask for the legislative sanction of Parliament for bringing a detachment of Native troops from India to this country?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman will, perhaps, give Notice of that Question.

MR. GORST: Will the Indian troops be subject while here to the provisions of the Mutiny Act?

[No answer was given.]

STATE OF IRELAND—IMPENDING FAMINE—DISTRESS IN COUNTY CLARE.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received a Copy of a Resolution unanimously passed by the guardians of the Corofin (county Clare) Union, calling attention to the widespread distress which is apprehended throughout that Union; and, whether he is in possession of official information, with respect to similar warning, contained in a Resolution recently passed by the guardians of the neighbouring Union of Ennistymon, and in other documents which have been laid before him?

COLONEL THE O'GORMAN MAHON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a Resolution passed on the 24th of October by the guardians of the Ennistymon Union, relative to the distressed condition of that part of the county of Clare; and, whether the Government is likely to carry out the suggestions of the guardians with regard to the means that ought to be adopted by the former for the purpose of adverting, as far as possible, the threatened calamity?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen a copy of the Resolutions passed by the Guardians of the Corofin Union, and I communicated with the Local Government Board in Dublin upon the subject last evening. To-day I received a telegram from the Vice President of the Board, in reply to my communication, stating that the Resolution adopted by the Corofin Guardians on the subject of apprehended distress in their Union had reached the Board, who have instructed their Inspector in charge of the Union to proceed there and furnish a Report upon the subject without delay. I cannot, however, expect to receive his Report for a few days. With regard to the Ennistymon Union, I perceive that the hon. and gallant Colleague of the hon. Member also puts a Question to me, and I may answer both Questions together. The Resolution of the Ennistymon Guardians was received by the Local Government Board on the 30th ultimo; they at once directed their Inspector to proceed to the spot, and inquire into the matter. He has done so, and his Report was received this morning in Dublin, and comes over to me by to-night's post. I understand that he reports that the potato crop was a bad one, and that there will be a scarcity of potatoes, and that want of employment will be felt; but, at the same time, he says that it can hardly be contended that the resources of the Union have, up to the present, been seriously drawn on by the expenditure for the relief of the poor, and he thinks it premature to allege that they will prove insufficient to meet prospective expenses. I perceive that in the Resolutions of both Boards of Guardians the work of constructing the Ennis and West Clare Railway is particularly urged, and I am asked to communicate with the Treasury with a view of facilitating whatever loans may be necessary. I brought the matter before their Lordships on the 3rd instant, and I propose to supply them with copies of the special Report made by the Inspector, which will show how far the necessity for exceptional measures may exist; but beyond this I cannot interfere with their discretion and that of the Board of Works.

STATE OF IRELAND—IMPENDING FAMINE—DISTRESS IN THE WEST.

Mr. PARNELL: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any Reports from the Local Government Board in Dublin as to the probability of distress in the West of Ireland this winter; and, if so, whether he has had under consideration any steps to meet that distress, or for the purpose of affording employment to the people of those districts?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Yes, Sir; I have received and read Reports from the whole of Ireland, and, of course, with a great deal more interest those from the West of Ireland. No day goes by but some communication passes between London and Dublin on the subject. As Inspectors are always promptly sent down to any district where distress promises to be exceptionally severe, I cannot doubt that the Government will be informed in time.

INDIA (CHURCH OF ENGLAND)—THE BISHOP OF BOMBAY.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to a long circular issued by the Bishop of Bombay, in which he prohibits the chaplains and other clergymen from performing their functions in accordance with the Law of the land; whether he has received any complaints of the practical inconvenience which has been caused in Bombay by the conduct of the Bishop; and, whether, since the Bishop receives a salary from the Government of India, they intend to take any steps in consequence of this circular? In rising to ask it, the hon. Gentleman observed that, as the practice of reforming Questions was carried so far, perhaps he might be permitted to explain, although he did not complain of the wholesale purging of his Question, that the quotation from the words of the Bishop of Bombay, which he read to the House yesterday, had been suppressed.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON asked the hon. Member to postpone the Question, in order to enable him to obtain further information on the subject.

Mr. DALRYMPLE asked whether it was not desirable that in the body of the Question when it was put again some reference to the subject should be mentioned, rather than a sweeping assertion regarding a public servant of the Church of England and the Crown, calculated to prejudice him without any practical result?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Perhaps I should explain that the words cut out were the main and definite subject of my Question.

Mr. NEWDEGATE asked the hon. Member to bear in mind that they were not all Anglo-Indians, and hoped his Question would be framed in a more intelligible manner.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Commission appointed under the Transvaal Convention to settle locations for the natives within that State has yet commenced its work; and, if so, what progress has been made; whether, according to a scheme sanctioned by Lord Kimberley early in July, the Governments of the Cape Colony, Transvaal, and Orange Free State, united with Her Majesty's Government in sending a force of mounted police in putting down the aggression of lawless Boer and other adventurers upon the friendly chiefs Mankoroam and Montsioa, which appeared likely to result in the establishment of a new Republic to the west of the Transvaal; whether the request of the Transvaal Government, that their boundary, as fixed by the Convention, might be extended so as to include this territory, has been or will be complied with; and, whether peace has since been restored there, and what is the present position of the chiefs in question?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Commission to settle the Native locations begun its sittings on the 2nd of October, at Middleburg; but they have not made much progress yet, and I expect the events on the North-East Frontier will probably delay them. The scheme alluded to has fallen through, owing to the fact of the Transvaal Government refusing to participate in it as well as the Orange Free State, the latter refusing on the ground that it was not Constitutional to have to act in that manner outside their borders. With reference to the request of the Transvaal Government that their territory might be extended, that request has been distinctly refused by the Secretary of State. Peace has been restored there for a time; but I am afraid, from the last accounts, it is likely only to be temporary. In a few days Papers will be laid on the Table which will give all the information sought for on the subject.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Can the hon. Gentleman give any information with reference to the events on the North-East Border of the Transvaal?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We have received no information.

MR. GORST asked whether there was reason to believe that the Transvaal Government had taken any steps to prevent lawless incursions upon the Native Chiefs outside the Transvaal territory?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: That is a difficult Question to answer; but the hon. Member will see all that has taken place in the Papers to be furnished.

THE NEW LAW COURTS—THE APPROACHES.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First Commissioner of Works, If it is his intention to make any proposals to Parliament for the improvement of the approaches to the New Law Courts, and especially to provide for the removal of the block to the thoroughfare in the Strand caused by Holywell Street?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: It is not the intention of the Government to make any proposal on this subject, as it is their opinion that it would more properly fall to the duty of the Metropolitan Board of Works. I have, however, communicated with that Board, and I believe they are now considering a scheme for widening the streets and improving the approaches to the Royal Courts of Justice.

RAILWAYS (METROPOLIS)—WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

MR. FIRTH asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the serious overcrowding of trains, and especially of workmen's trains, on the various Metropolitan Lines of Railways; and, whether, since the intention of the Acts of Parliament, under which the Metropolitan Railway Companies are required to provide workmen's trains, is imperfectly carried out, when a small number of trains are run at inconvenient times and without adequate accommodation for one-half of the workmen anxious to avail themselves of the advantages granted by Parliament, he will consider the feasibility of dealing with this matter in the ensuing Session of Parliament, either by special legislation, or by the introduction of Directory Clauses into any Bills which may be promoted by the Metropolitan Railway Companies?

MR. J. HOLMS (for Mr. CHAMBERLAIN): The attention of the Board of Trade has been frequently called to the overcrowding of ordinary passenger trains on the Metropolitan Railways; but they have received no information as to workmen's trains being run at inconvenient times and without adequate accommodation. Should any representation to this effect reach them, the Board of Trade will be prepared to consider what steps can be taken to remedy any defects that exist in the present arrangements.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Khedive of Egypt issued a proclamation in July last declaring the reasons for the dismissal of Ahmed Arabi Pacha from the Ministries of War and Marine, and assigning, among other reasons, for such dismissal, that he had omitted to strengthen the Egyptian forts so as to resist the forces landed to effect their capture, and had allowed British troops to enter Alexandria without firing upon them; and, whether these omissions are to be made the subject of charge against Arabi Pacha upon his trial?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The charges against Arabi, as communicated to Her Majesty's Agent by the Egyptian Government, are those which I read to the House on Thursday last.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD asked whether the Proclamation did not contain the two allegations mentioned in his Question?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The reason why I cannot give a definite answer is that there are no such words in the Proclamation, and it is a matter of inference.

CRIMINAL LAW—INFLICTION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON ADULTS UNDER THE VAGRANT ACTS — SUBSTITUTION OF BIRCHING FOR FLOGGING.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the recent Surrey Sessions in dealing with incorrigible rogues, when sentences of twelve months' imprisonment, and twelve and twenty-four strokes with the birch, were passed upon adults; and, whether there is any warrant by Law for such sentences?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) (for Sir William Harcourt), in reply, said, the Home Secretary answered a Question which was almost identical last Session. The power of whipping rogues and vagabonds did not exist under an obsolete Statute, but in 5 *Geo.* IV. His right hon. and learned Friend could not give any reason why this sentence was not generally imposed. Inasmuch as it was a lawful sentence, in the discretion of the Court, he did not propose to interfere.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, his Question was, whether the use of the birch rod in place of the cat was warranted by the Act to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) asked that Notice should be given of the Question, for he really could not answer it offhand. It was not a pleasant subject to deal with.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—THE LAND COMMISSION COURT.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a Report of the proceedings under the Arrears Act before the Land Commission, in the "Freeman's Journal" of 28th October, where—

> "In the case of John Johnson, tenant, General Irwin, landlord, Mr. M'Gough mentioned that half a year's rent was paid on the 3rd May 1882, which, he supposed, the tenant would be entitled to take credit for under the Arrears Act:
>
> "Mr. Litton said he (Mr. M'Gough) would have to exercise his own discretion in that case, as the matter might be a subject for argument. If he found on investigation that he had lodged too little by taking credit for payment in May, and the investigation took place after the 30th November, the tenant would be left out in the cold. This was another of the shortcomings of the Act:
>
> "Mr. Vernon said this was a very great danger for the tenants to run. If they should be under the impression that they had satisfied the year's rent, and it should turn out at the investigation to be held after the 30th November that they had not legally done so, they would be out of court altogether;"

and, whether it is the fact that where the tenant claims he is entitled, in fulfilment of sub-section (a), section 1, to have rent paid in 1881 set to that year, and the landlord maintains that owing to the existence of a hanging gale no rent had at the time of payment become due for 1881, it will depend on the establishment or otherwise of the contention as to the hanging gale, whether sub-section (a), section 1, has been satisfied or not; and therefore, as this is a matter for the Court alone to decide, and appeals will lie first to the Head Commission and then to the Court of Appeal, so that a decision cannot be given before 30th November, he will say if he intends taking any steps so as to enable tenants, where a hanging gale which they dispute has been subsequently established to amend or supplement their payments for 1881 after November 30th?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to answer this Question. It is a long Question; but I think it is quite impossible to put the case so clearly as the hon. Member has put it with the omission of a single word. The hon. Gentleman has correctly stated the obligation and difficulties of the tenant with reference to what payment he has to make in respect of the hanging gale. The Irish Government and the Land Commission have been in earnest and constant communication for some time past on this special subject. A good deal has been done, and a good deal will be settled in a day or two in reference to the matter. On Friday I shall be able to tell the hon. Member how it is proposed to meet the emergency.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, is it the practice of the Irish Government, after the Land Commission has given a decision in a particular case, to communicate with the Land Commission as to that decision?

MR. TREVELYAN: This is entirely a matter of administration, and not of a judicial nature. The Government have no exception to take to the judgment of the Commissioners, who are expounding an Act of Parliament; but, in consequence of being obliged to give this judgment, the Commissioners found themselves in the condition which obliged them to apply to the Government for assistance. Besides this, I may tell the noble Lord that the Question involves the salaries of public officials, which can only be granted with the sanction of the Treasury.

MR. HEALY: I shall repeat my Question on Friday.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEES.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, before the discussion of the Resolutions on Standing Committees, he will lay before the House any proposals as to the conduct of business in such Committees?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government see no necessity for laying down any proposals as to the conduct of Business generally in such Committees, because we have no doubt that it will fall under the general Rules now applicable to Select Committees. There is one point not without importance that I ought to reserve, and that is that we shall make a proposal, of which the House shall have ample Notice, as regards the mode of appointing the Chairman of these Committees. In other respects, we look to the Code now in existence for Select Committees.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the question of quorums at a future date?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a question which is generally dealt with at the time of the appointment of the Committee; but it will be quite proper to consider it.

MR. GORST wished to know if it would be open to any Member of the House to propose for the acceptance of the House any scheme of Rules for the guidance of those Committees?

MR. GLADSTONE: I apprehend it would be quite possible for any Gentleman who thinks proper to propose any Amendment or additional Resolution.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the right hon. Gentleman if he could inform the House what was proposed as to the mode of appointing casual Chairmen of Committees?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a matter entirely distinct from the Question of the Resolution; and it appears to me that it is a subject which the House would most conveniently take up amongst the initial proceedings of the coming Session.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: With respect to what the right hon. Gentleman said just now as to the competence of hon. Members to propose additional Resolutions, I would ask him now, or give Notice to ask, what the intentions of the Government are with regard to the various additional Resolutions that have been put on the Paper by a number of Members of the House; whether it is the intention of the Government that those Resolutions shall be discussed; or whether they will consider that the Business of the Session is closed when the Resolutions originally proposed by themselves have been finished? If not convenient to answer now, I shall put the Question on Friday.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think I could answer that Question with regard to the whole mass of the Resolutions until we come nearer to the conclusion of our own Resolutions; but it would be quite proper to put the Question later on, after due Notice.

IRELAND—REFORM OF THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT.

MR. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is the intention of Government to take advantage of the vacancy now existing in the post of Under Secretary of State for Ireland, to commence the long-promised reform of the Castle Administration of Ireland, by appointing to the said post some gentleman who, by sympathy and religious opinions, is likely to command, in some degree, the confidence of the people over whom he exercises such extensive authority?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no vacancy now existing in the post of Under Secretary of State for Ireland. The hon. Member appears to have put this

Question upon imperfect information as to the facts. It will be the duty of Earl Spencer and the Irish Government to consider the matter of filling the vacancy when it does arise; and that is an important duty, which, no doubt, will be performed with the greatest care.

Mr. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman states that there is no vacancy. May I ask who has been appointed in Mr. Burke's place?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Mr. Hamilton has been appointed.

Mr. HEALY: I should like to ask whether Mr. Hamilton's appointment is permanent, or whether he intends to leave it at the end of the year; or, if not, whether the office he occupied at the Admiralty has been filled up; and, also, whether he receives the same salary as Mr. Burke, and discharges the same duties?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I think I am correct in saying that Mr. Hamilton was appointed in the usual manner. His place in the Admiralty has not been filled up; but his duty has been discharged in that Department by another official. The salary, I am sorry to say, is the same in both cases, so that Mr. Hamilton has been put to a very considerable and severe pecuniary loss, which, however, to him is amply compensated for by the knowledge that he is serving the country. With regard to the appointment being temporary, the hon. Member must draw his own conclusion from the fact that the Accountant Generalship to the Admiralty has not been filled up. I should be sorry to give a definite answer before conferring with Mr. Hamilton. I hope I have answered all the hon. Member's Questions.

Mr. HEALY: I only wish to say that my Questions were not directed against Mr. Hamilton by any means.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—REWARDS TO THE FORCES ENGAGED.

Mr. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, while recommending Parliament to grant large sums of money to reward General Sir Garnet Wolseley and Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour for their conduct in the Egyptian campaign, Her Majesty's Government will take into consideration the claims of the seamen and marines of the Royal Navy, and of the rank and file of Her Majesty's Army, to some pecuniary recognition of their services?

Mr. GLADSTONE: With regard to this Question, it appears to me to proceed upon some erroneous apprehension. We shall propose to Parliament to grant annuities in connection with the bestowal of Peerages upon General Sir Garnet Wolseley and Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour. In that respect we shall proceed in strict conformity with a course of precedents; and I am not aware of any precedent or usage that would give further extension to our duties, nor do I propose or intend to enter on the subject of the hon. and learned Member's Question, of which I greatly doubt the expediency.

NAVY—DOCKYARD GRIEVANCES.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that his predecessor in Office, on the 28th June 1880, whilst deprecating any discussion of dockyard grievances in the House of Commons, promised that the Board of Admiralty would themselves hear what the various classes of workmen had to say on the occasion of their annual visit to the dockyards; whether the Admiralty had fulfilled, or intended to fulfil, that promise; whether, on that occasion, as on all subsequent visits, the Admiralty peremptorily refused to hear what the representatives of the various classes had to say; and, is this policy to be continued?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, it is considered that there would be some inconvenience if it were accepted as a rule that the Board of Admiralty, on the occasion of their annual formal visit to the Dockyards, should receive deputations from the various classes of workmen. But, no doubt, in some instances, a personal statement of facts is desirable, in order that the Board may fully appreciate the case submitted to them; and there is no wish to exclude the men from this advantage. I have promised to the House that in the course of the Recess I would, together with my hon. Colleague, examine into the representations contained in the Memorials which have been forwarded in the usual way through the Superintendents; and we will, if we find it necessary, take any opportunity in our power of ascertaining personally the views of the workmen.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT —THE NEW RULES.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, in the New Rules regulating the working of the Arrears Act, provision has been made to meet those cases in which the landlord has expressed in writing his willingness to accept the Act, and to facilitate its extension to his tenants, but, at the same time, has made no affidavits; and, if the Land Commissioners will, with the object of reducing costs, treat as unopposed those cases in which there is at once a fair presumption of the general truth of the tenant's affidavit, documentary evidence that the landlord consents, and absence of opposition from the Treasury?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that they treat as unopposed applications in which the landlord either does not appear or does not contest; but, in discharging their duty under the Act of Parliament, they cannot accept the mere unverified applications of the tenant without an investigation. Any statement in writing of the landlord as to his willingness to facilitate the Act, or as to his belief in the *bona fides* of the application, would be received by the investigator, and have its due weight. The Commissioners could not act on mere presumption in appropriating the public funds. Under the Act it is absolutely necessary the preliminary conditions should be proved. When a landlord does not appear at the investigation, the inability of the tenant to pay his antecedent arrears must still be shown; but no technical objection is allowed to interfere with an order being made; and when the Treasury does not intervene, and the landlord does not oppose, the investigator may act on the oath or affidavit of the tenant.

COAL MINES—THE RECENT EXPLOSION AT CLAY CROSS.

MR. BROADHURST asked, Whether there was anyone present from the Home Office who could give the House any information on this subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: No; there is no one.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: With reference to the Motion of which I gave Notice yesterday, with regard to the employment of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt, I beg to give Notice that on Friday I will ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government whether he will name any day for the discussion of that Motion?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SIXTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON said, that in none of the speeches of hon. Members did he find they denied the fact that there had been great Obstruction, in none that the Rules of the House were inadequate to deal with that Obstruction. What was the remedy which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition suggested as a security for the good conduct of debate in that House? The right hon. Gentleman said it was the good feeling of the great body of the House, and that seemed to represent the spirit of the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) in his able speech in support of a proportional majority; but, speaking from the experience of the last few Sessions, what was the sum and value of this good feeling? In the first place, they had in the House a body of earnest and determined men, whose avowed object was the acquisition of an independent Parliament; and it was the avowed policy of those hon. Members, as they could not obtain that object in accordance with the wishes of the Members of the House, to endeavour to coerce the House and the country into this concession by rendering their presence in the House intolerable, by hampering and obstructing the Business, and by destroying the business-like and efficient character of the House of Commons, and degrading its position in the opinion of the constituencies. Obstruction, however, had not only been practised by the Irish Members; it had been practised in all parts of the House. Obstruction had become an art, which, once discovered, was always ready to hand, and was a formidable weapon in the hands of a small and determined minority. The House had lost that corporate character which permitted it to be influenced and controlled by the general opinion of its Members. In addition to this, and he might say as one of the causes of this, a great change had come over Parliament from the mode in which it was constituted. While Members were returned in great numbers for nomination boroughs, and the House was drawn almost entirely from one class, what the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) alluded to as the good opinion and general sense of the House was, doubtless, a very effective control on behalf of the good conduct of debate. Whether for good or evil, that influence had passed away, and in place of social pressure they now had popular pressure from great constituencies. The changes of the last 30 years had brought Parliament directly under the influence of the people themselves. As far as he was aware, there were only two other methods suggested, apart from the closing power, aimed at facilitating Business in the House. The one was the reference of Bills to Grand Committees; the second was limiting the duration of speeches. As to the reference of Bills to Grand Committees, he considered it pregnant with serious difficulties; but, while reserving his opinion, it might be turned to good account if it was found capable of meeting some of the reasonable requirements of the Irish Party. But if it were found expedient to refer Bills to Grand Committees, it could not be those which contained any question of general principle, and in regard to which the whole body of the House would have an interest. On measures of this character, an Opposition would be able to use the weapons of Obstruction in all their power, and the majority would remain powerless without *clôture;* and it was the primary object, it seemed to him, of reforming the Rules, to make the House, and not a minority, master of its debates. As to the suggestion that the duration of speeches should be limited, that appeared to him to be most objectionable. It behoved them to be very careful in framing these New Rules of Procedure lest they increased unduly the power of Ministers and ex-Ministers in that House, and substituted the despotism of officialism for that of Obstruction. That, to his mind, would have been the result of the two-thirds' majority, and it would also be the result of limiting the duration of speeches. Such a Rule as the latter would ruin the grace and spontaneity of debate. Had it existed in the past, the literature of this country would have lost such speeches as were delivered during the debate on the Crimean War by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), or during the debates on the Reform Bill by Lord Sherbrooke. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said on Friday night that this Resolution would hamper and destroy those friendly relations which then existed between the House and the Chair. He (Viscount Lymington) did not share in that opinion; but of this he was certain—that the House was acting in accordance with the highest interests of the Chair in taking efficient measures for protecting the Chair from such scenes as occurred in February, 1881, and in June last, when the Speaker was obliged, in the absence of any impersonal power such as the *clôture* contained, to proceed against Members of the House individually. Whatever might be the feelings of a body of men against whom the *clôture* had been put in force, they could not be so personally resentful or bitter towards the Chair as of those against whom the authority of the Chair had been personally directed. With regard to the dreaded harshness of a bare majority, it should be remembered that any attempt on the part of the Liberal Party in that House to rush a measure through would afford the House of Lords a creditable opportunity, which they would certainly take, of avenging an act of Liberal intolerance. Moreover, a large minority could hardly fail to find means to raise their opinions again in a new shape. The risks and inconveniences of compromises between the two Front Benches had already been stated during the debate on a proportionate majority; and, therefore, he would now merely address himself to the necessity of the *clôture.* That necessity was not, he believed, caused by any deterioration in the character of Parliament or of Parliamentary warfare. Not only had the responsibilities, the business, and the wealth of this country increased to an extent which had multiplied tenfold the material for legislation, but it was only now that they were beginning to realize the influence of the Liberal reforms of the last 30 years. Thanks to those reforms the public life of this country had grown with the growth of its material development. With an extended suffrage and a national system of education the people of this country were enabled to take a lively interest in all political questions; it was the action of that interest upon Parliament itself that had made a greater number of Members than formerly wish to take part in debate. So far from the *clôture* being a sign of decay, it was an evident result and indication of greater Parliamentary activity. The Liberal Party was not the Party who were likely to depreciate liberty of speech. What had it been to them? It had been the weapon—the only weapon—they had had with which to contend against all the forces which the Party opposite could call to their command. Against the forces of wealth, society, and position, and—if they might accept the statement of a noble Relative of his, who had lately returned to the fold of his Party, with all the enthusiasm of a repentant sinner—against two-thirds of the literary power of this country, they had only had the power which liberty of speech had given them, the power which honest discussion had had on the minds of their fellow-countrymen. He fully believed in the priceless value of liberty of speech. It could not be compromised in anything they said or did; but it would be without value and reality of purpose if it were not addressed to a certain end—the performance of public duty. It was because he believed that the power which the Prime Minister pleaded for was not going to stifle free speech, but to methodize their debates in that House in a way which was absolutely essential for the fulfilment of the first duty of their Parliamentary existence, that he, for one, should give his earnest and hearty support to this 1st Resolution.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE observed, that one of the arguments advanced was that no one on the Opposition side had proposed an alternative scheme for dealing with the mischief complained of. For his own part, however, if he had had the control of Business during the first portion of this Session, he should have simply taken two of the Resolutions subsequent to this; and, coupling these with anything like careful management of the Business of the House, there ought to have been guaranteed to any Government with a majority at its back a most successful Session. The House had now reached a point in the discussion when they were brought face to face with the difficulties with which they had to deal. When this Resolution was proposed in the early part of the year, the Prime Minister said it was the most important.

MR. GLADSTONE dissented.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: As regards precedence.

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said anything of the kind.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: The Resolution has obtained precedence and stands first.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE thought, therefore, that he was right *pro tanto* in what he had said with regard to precedence. It was hinted then that if it were rejected a Ministerial crisis and Dissolution might possibly be the result. Subsequently, in May, a proposal was made by the Prime Minister, by which the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was practically accepted. No doubt, the Prime Minister and the Government were at liberty to change their minds on the subject; but this spasmodic treatment of questions, as in the case of Ireland, where severity one day and leniency the next had proved most disastrous, and had made it very difficult to know how to deal with them. Upon the most vital questions concerning the future of that Assembly, it was greatly to be regretted that Her Majesty's Government should have betrayed so vacillating a spirit. When a proposal was made to gag freedom of speech, it would be most improper to accept the statements of the Government, remembering that the Prime Minister said the other day that the acceptance of the very proposal he made in May would make the conduct of Business in the House absolutely impossible. With respect to the conduct of the Business of the House, it might be that Her Majesty's Government took too sanguine or the Opposition too gloomy a view. That could be shown only by results; but it was right that the House should consider how the difficulties with which they had to contend had grown up, for it was only by doing so that they could arrive at a just conclusion as to how those difficulties should be dealt with. The latest ground upon which the necessity for the *clôture* had been urged was that the House had not time to transact the Business for which it met; but against that he put the conduct of Business by Her Majesty's Government during the present Session, and he took leave to say, after full consideration of the facts, that if they had undertaken purposely to waste the time by their mismanagement, they could hardly have been more successful in doing so. There were certain Rules laid down with respect to the conduct of Business—Rules not written, but long established and well recognized—and during the Session the Government had disregarded most of these Rules. The first order given to him when he was responsible for the conduct of the Public Business of the House was to see that the rights of private Members should be respected—that with regard to Tuesdays, although there was no positive obligation on the part of the Government to keep a House, yet it was the duty of those who had charge of the Business of the House to try to keep one. The Opposition were told when they were in Office that they passed no measures of importance; but that when a strong Radical Ministry came in we should then see how, by their will and energy, they could carry great measures for the benefit of the people. It was urged that the House had not time for the proper transaction of Business. Well, let them take this Session, and what had happened? On the 14th of last February the House was counted out at 9 o'clock, on the 28th of February at half-past 8, on the 7th of March at half-past 8, and on the 14th of March at half-past 7. On the 28th of March there was a Morning Sitting; and the House, having again met at 9, was counted out at a quarter-past 10 o'clock. On the 31st of March it was counted out at half-past 9, on the 18th of April at a quarter-past 8, and on the 16th of May at five minutes past 9. That was the formidable list; and he found on looking through the "Parliamentary Record" that in the short period he had spoken of the present Government allowed the House to be counted out as often as had been done in the first three years of the late Administration, 1875, 1876, and 1877. The late Government had discovered in their experience that if they were to get on with Public Business they must make considerable progress with certain measures before Easter. But what happened in the beginning of this Session? Her Majesty's Government brought forward an absurd Motion for attacking the House of Lords. When he saw that that was done, he said—"There goes this Session, so far as Business purposes are concerned." The Opposition were told that no one had anything to propose as an alternative. But he had shown that by a little management Her Majesty's Government might have done a great deal more; and when the Home Secretary said, as he had done last night, that the country would ask—"What have you done with the time of the House?" he would reply that Her Majesty's Government had been the chief Obstructives. The Home Secretary said that anything which wasted the time of the House meant Obstruction. Now, he charged Her Majesty's Government with having by their conduct wasted the time of the House. Why was it that Her Majesty's Government clung so pertinaciously to this Rule, and refused the proposal to deal with individual Obstruction? It appeared as if they were afraid that the first operation of such a penal Rule would be directed against themselves. In discussing this Resolution he was anxious to look to the future rather than to the present day, and the more so on account of the question that had arisen yesterday as to the Speaker's interpretation of the Rule. He had been very glad to hear that interpretation, the spirit of which was worthy of the occupant of the Chair; but there seemed to be no great inclination on the part of the Government to embody that dictum in their Resolution. That that should be done was a most moderate demand; but he went further, and ventured to assert that when so vast a change as this was proposed some stronger guarantee even than the interpretation of the present Speaker was desirable; and unless some such guarantee were provided, Members would not be justified in submitting without a struggle to its passage through the House. It had been said that the *clôture* would never be used, or only when such Obstruction was practised that both sides of the House would combine to put it down. He certainly took no such view of the Resolution. The future had to be thought of; and after the threatening utterances of certain hon. Members opposite, who bade the country wait and see what they would do with the *clôture* when they got it, he could not imagine that the intention was never to use it. Having had some practical experience both of majorities and minorities, he had formed the decided opinion that when a majority had a definite end in view, there was no more tyrannical engine than their voting power. He need not make a long search for an illustration of this assertion, but would quote the case of the Arrears Bill, which was introduced early in the present Session. That Bill was handed to Members on a Saturday, and, as everyone would remember, pressure was put upon the House to carry the second reading of the Bill on the following Monday. That was a conspicuous example of the change that might probably occur in the relation between the majority and the minority when this Resolution became a Standing Order. He remembered that when he worked in the House with the present Lord Wolverton, the latter used to come to the managers of the affairs of the Conservative Party and demand two or three days' notice of the intentions of the Opposition with respect to any particular measure, and nothing could be more businesslike than such a system; but, in the case he had cited, a Bill was placed in the hands of hon. Members on a Saturday, and the Opposition were held guilty of a most barbarous act of Obstruction because they did not accede to the desire of the Government that the Bill should be advanced a stage on the Monday following. He remembered, too, that when he urged that more time should be allowed for the perusal and consideration of the Bill, he was received with a yell of derision from the Ministerial Benches—a circumstance which at once led him to reflect on the probable course of Business under a Radical Government, with such a power as proposed placed in their hands. A great deal had been said of the position of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees with regard to the House if the Resolution were passed; and it was, perhaps, the worst feature of the New Rule—which, of course, would be carried out, or the Government would stand convicted of having called Parliament together in order to waste time—that it would gradually but surely destroy the impartiality of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees together with much besides that was good in the present system of Party government. There was a good deal which went on in the conduct of the Business of the House which was not known to people out-of-doors, and he considered that there was a great deal in the way in which the Business was conducted which was for the public good. It had been urged that if this Resolution was carried the Speaker would have no communication with the Government with reference to stopping a debate. In that case, if the Speaker were never to communicate with the Government of the day, he was confident that the House in general would greatly lose by the prohibition. Indeed, its Business could not be properly conducted without constant communication between the Speaker and the Secretary to the Treasury. Under this Resolution, if an hon. Member saw a Member of the Government during any important discussion carrying on a conversation with the Speaker, he would be justified in rising to a point of Order, and inquiring whether the subject of that conversation was the debate that was going on with a view to bringing it to an end. All that he had said on this point applied with tenfold force to the case of the Chairman of Committees; and he knew by his own experience as Secretary to the Treasury that it was necessary for him to be in constant—he might say incessant—communication both with the

Speaker and with the Chairman of Committees. The Chairman of Committees was appointed by the Government of the day, and it was absurd to ask them to believe that he was not influenced by them. Why, when his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) was Chairman of Committees, he (Sir William Hart-Dyke) was always at his elbow when the House was in Committee, asking how he was progressing with Business; and in future there was no doubt that great pressure would be put upon the Chairman if this Resolution passed. Was all this to be disregarded in the future, and no guarantee to be provided in the interests of minorities for the safe working of such a Rule? It was the protection of minorities that he looked to. He disclaimed any Party feeling in the matter as against the Government; and, with regard to the complaint which had been made against Conservative Members by the Irish Party, he could only say that in the course the Opposition had taken they had in view the protection of minorities in general. For himself, the more he looked at the Resolution the less he liked it. Then they had been told that they ought to fight this question to the bitter end. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had urged, in a letter to the Press, that the Conservative Party should fight this question, and produce an appeal to the constituencies with regard to it. As to that, he (Sir Willliam Hart Dyke) did not quite agree with his noble Friend. There was no man who loved fighting more sincerely than he did; but there was a time for fighting and a time for not fighting; and he did not quite agree with the noble Lord that the present was the time for driving Her Majesty's Government to appeal to the constituencies of the country. There was such a thing as fighting, and such a thing as paying the bill; and the interval between the conclusion of a most successful campaign and the actual moment for the payment of the bill was not a very felicitous time for election operations. It was a happy thought on the part of Her Majesty's Government, when they were struggling in difficulties at the end of last Session, to go for the wardrobe of the Opposition. They broke it open and put on the Conservative Party's clothes. For a time the clothes did not seem to fit very well; but now the Government had begun to settle down with a feeling of more comfort. He would say for the comfort of his noble Friend that in political life it was always the unexpected which happened, and it might happen that the great success they had achieved might turn out to be one of their greatest disasters. It might be possible that the Government would carry this Resolution, and if they did it would be mainly owing to the eloquence of the Prime Minister, for if any other man had brought it forward it would have been laughed out of the House in three hours' debate. Nothing could have been more curious than the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), or unhappy than the visage, during the speech of the Prime Minister, of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. P. Rylands). The hon. Member's countenance seemed like that of a man having a tooth drawn under the charm of some anæsthetic which was not sufficiently powerful in its effects to prevent him from being waked up to receive an occasional reminder of the biceps and the energy of the operator. What a lamentable thing it was to see in the Liberal Party a Baronet representing a Scotch constituency who could come down to the House and say he was perfectly happy because he had handed over his political conscience to Her Majesty's Government. From a speech made last night, they had discovered the only Liberal left on the Ministerial side of the House. These were all painful things; but the Opposition must notice them by the way, as they all strengthened them for the trouble that lay before them. He knew it was too late to appeal to the Government; through some misguidance they were determined to force this Resolution on the House. With proper management of the Business of the House and proper control the subsequent Resolutions were all that was necessary. The Opposition were still free to deal with them; but this Resolution was forced down their throats. In all sincerity he said it was a most lamentable incident in the public life of the country that a large minority such as they represented should be forced by the Government into the position of antagonism they now occupied. It might all have been avoided by better management. Under this Rule he could only take a most gloomy view of the future of that Assembly.

In pleading for the freedom of speech the minority pleaded for the freedom and good name of that Assembly; and he was firmly of opinion that if that freedom were destroyed a degree of confusion would be produced which would shake the confidence of the country in the value and efficiency of the House.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was glad to support the Resolution. As to the "counts out" complained of by the last speaker, he believed the initiative had usually come from the Opposition side of the House. If the Government had made a mistake in these proposals, it was that they did not go so far as they ought to do. So far from the Prime Minister forcing these Resolutions upon the rank and file of the Liberal Party, he ventured to say that, so far as his knowledge went, the Resolution had rather been forced upon the Prime Minister by the rank and file of the Party. No one would for a moment pretend to say that there was an unanimous support to these Resolutions. But then it had become a fashion, of recent years especially, that no man could be a good Liberal unless he was constantly in opposition to the Party to which he professedly belonged; and reference had been made to the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) as the only Liberal still left on the Radical Benches; but, for himself, he did not seek to distinguish his Liberalism by constantly doing his best to oppose those with whom he had been associated all his life. The feeling among the Liberal Party in the country was that there had been far too much talk and far too little result. The people did not require the operations of wire-pullers or the incitements of organizations to induce them to demand some reform that should make progress in legislation more possible than it had been. The early part of this Session had been marked by great repetition and redundancy in debate; and the country would not submit to have reforms delayed by talk. There had been many exhibitions of delay. He remembered the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) entertaining the House for upwards of an hour with a dissertation on the best means of planting potatoes. He had no fault to find with the lecture. It was, no doubt, very instructive to the Members present; but it was evident that if public life had been greatly benefited by the noble Lord's entrance into Parliament, the potato interest had greatly suffered. But the noble Lord's object was not to instruct them on the cultivation of potatoes, but obviously to occupy time so as to prevent another subject being discussed. There had been too many exhibitions of this kind of delay. The impression abroad was that reforms that could be no longer defeated by argument were being defeated by delay; and it was on this ground that a general demand had arisen in the country—not arisen on the part of the Government—that unless the Government could get on with their Business more rapidly than they had been able to do in recent Sessions, such alterations should be made as the Government might deem necessary for the promotion of Business. It was being constantly said, on the other side of the House, that Liberal Members were acting on instructions from associations. At any rate, the Caucus was the representation of the people in each constituency. [*Cries of* "No!"] It was the complete and free representation of all sections of the constituency for the free and popular choice of whatsoever candidates they thought proper to represent them in Parliament. [*Cries of* "No!"] He was, perhaps, to a great extent indebted for his seat in that House to the existence of an association which permitted every section of working men to be represented in it in proportion to their numbers, and thereby gave them a chance of selecting one of their own order to represent them in Parliament. With regard to that association, which was described as a Caucus, he could truly say for himself, and, he thought, for his Colleague also, in the representation of Stoke (Mr. Woodall), that never since they were returned to that House had they received from the association a single letter or telegram asking them to support any particular measure which was promoted by Her Majesty's Government. There was one exception in the case of the measure promoted by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). Everybody knew how zealous the teetotal party were; but they were not the Caucus. That association had never offered to suggest what course he and his Colleague should take on public questions; but had left the matter to their free choice and good judgment. He hoped the Resolution now under discussion would be carried, and carried soon. If it were true, as was rumoured about the House that evening, that they were to have three or four days' more discussion on a subject which had been absolutely threshed out time after time, this would be a magnificent illustration to the country that the proposals of the Government were not made any too soon; and, further, that they were not even now adequate to the requirements of the case.

Mr. HERBERT said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) had referred particularly to the way in which the *clôture* by a bare majority, or by the two-thirds' majority, would affect private Members. The right hon. Gentleman had said that almost the whole legislation of the past 30 years had originally emanated from private Members, and that he had thought that private Members would be sufficiently safeguarded under the New Rule as it stood, inasmuch as the words "adequately discussed" had been inserted. He admitted that those words would protect a certain section of private Members—namely, those who sat on the Government side of the House. Under the two-thirds' majority, which Her Majesty's Government had unfortunately not seen their way to accept, both sections of independent Members would be protected; but as the evident sense of the House was to be declared by a purely Party majority, Members of the Opposition who supported Motions, especially on going into Committee of Supply, would often be prevented from obtaining a hearing by the impatience and shouts of Gentlemen on the Government side. They had to remember also that the very adequacy of the discussion was to be settled by the Party in power. The Prime Minister had asserted that the Parliamentary history of the last few, and especially of the last two, years shewed the necessity for this change. During the six years in which he (Mr. Herbert) had had the honour of a seat in that House, he had keenly watched the progress of Business, and he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that in 1877, 1878, and 1879—especially 1878—there was a great deal more Obstruction than had been seen in the subsequent years. For instance, there was marked Obstruction during the progress of the South Africa Bill and the Army Discipline Bill, the latter containing the contentious matter of flogging in the Army. No one would deny that on both those Bills there was Obstruction in its worst form. The President of the Board of Trade took a large share in the discussion, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would himself admit that he really did obstruct.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No; I deny it most absolutely.

Mr. HERBERT said, that, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman used these words in the debate on the Army Discipline Bill on the 19th of June, 1879—

> "If there was any threat in that House or out of it of anything like Obstruction, they must not lose sight of the fact that the Government only made reasonable concessions after four days' discussion; in fact, they could get nothing from the Ministry except by what was commonly called Obstruction."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlvii. 206-7.]

He was bound to say, however, that the right hon. Gentleman qualified this on another occasion, the 17th of June, when he said—

> "It might be said that such opposition as that amounted to Obstruction. He thought that there was only one thing which justified such persistent opposition as was now offered—namely, the persistent obstinacy on the part of Her Majesty's Government to give way to the views expressed on that side of the House. The refusal on the part of those who had the conduct of this Bill to meet in any way the strong feelings which had been expressed on that side of the House justified any opposition to the Bill."—[*Ibid.* 46.]

Then the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India gave his opinion of this, he would not say Obstruction, but persistent opposition to the Bill. His Lordship said on the 7th of July, 1879—

> "He must say that he thought that the Privileges of the House had been abused by advantages being taken of a Motion to report Progress for discussing clauses which were not before the Committee."

He did not think there could be a better definition of Obstruction than that. As for the wilfully deliberate speaking to which the Prime Minister referred, he did not think it had been much indulged in by Members apart from the small knot of Obstructionists. There had, however, been occasions on which Bills had been talked out. In 1877, for example, the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), now Secretary to the Treasury, but who then had been but a short time possessed of a seat in the House, got up and deliberately talked out a Bill against a strong manifestation of the most evident sense of the House. With respect to frivolous speeches, the evident sense of the House would probably be manifested in such a way that it would be impossible to hear whether they were frivolous or not. It had been said by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that the feeling of the country was in favour of the Government proposals, as legislation was needed and no adequate means existed by which it could be effected. Well, all agreed that something must be done. But, with all due respect to the country, the question was one which the country ought not to decide. The mission from the country was that they should frame some measures to facilitate legislation; but it did not dictate the means. But when political clubs framed resolutions and sent them to the Prime Minister in favour of the present Rule, it ought to be borne in mind that not 3 per cent of the members of those clubs, or even of the constituencies, knew anything about the Rule. Every Member knew how difficult it was to master the Rules of the House, and how great an experience was required before the reasons for those Rules were understood. It was perfectly absurd, therefore, to say that the country was with the Government on the subject; and, even if it were true, that was not a question for the country to decide. The country was calling out about Obstruction and about nothing else, while the greater part of the subject-matter introduced by the Prime Minister was utterly apart from Obstruction. It had been said that there was a good deal of contradiction between the different Members on that side of the House. That might be so, but such contradiction was not confined to one side; and he might safely leave the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) to be answered by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The fact, too, that there was so much contradiction only showed that the House ought to be all the more careful and deliberate in its action in the matter. But there was certainly reason to complain that the Government had not accepted the proposal to defer the operation of the 1st Rule until the others had been disposed of. That decision would prevent the House from approaching the other Resolutions in the spirit in which they ought to be discussed. Some of those Resolutions required the fullest possible discussion; especially, for instance, that which proposed to establish Grand Committees. That was pre-eminently a question which ought to be thoroughly examined without any feeling of resentment, but calmly, and by the oldest Members on both sides who had great experience as Chairmen of Committees, who, so far as common sense went, could alone decide the question. He begged, in conclusion, to apologize for the length of his remarks. He had attempted to approach the subject, not in the spirit of a partisan, but as one who was sincerely anxious to promote the honour and dignity of that House. Regarding this as a question that ought to be looked at from a purely non-Party point of view, he hoped the House would have the courage to reject the proposals of the Government.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he felt so strongly upon the important question now before the House, that he was desirous to state his objections to it —objections which he felt bound to say had been strengthened, not weakened, by the debate, although he must apologize to the House for going over ground which had been, and would be, traversed by speakers far more experienced than himself. In spite of what had been said of the fears of those who opposed the Motion being visionary and baseless, he should not hesitate to state his fears of the result of the working of this Resolution. The Prime Minister had, a few days ago, taunted the Conservative Party for their alarm, and had reminded them of the ashes of their falsified predictions and fears upon many important questions. But he should be glad to hear from the Prime Minister, when he rose to reply, whether, in his political progress upwards, or downwards as he (Sir Henry Holland) should be inclined to say, from High Toryism to Advanced Liberalism, he had not to look back upon the ashes of many of his burnt hopes and fears and predictions. To take a comparatively recent and very analogous case. The Prime Minister, during the passing of the Irish Land Act in 1870, denounced, in eloquent and forcible terms, as impracticable and impossible the very measures which, within the short space of 12 years, he had to introduce, and defend in the recent Irish Land Act. Surely, then, he might refer the Prime Minister, when attacking the Conservative Party, to the ashes of his own weighty denunciations and strong opinions. He might also, upon this point, remind some of the right hon. Members now forming part of the Government, and notably the Home Secretary, of cases in which their predictions and fears of the result of measures brought foward by the late Government had been grievously falsified. Take, for example, the Royal Titles Bill, by which the Queen became Empress of India. It was prophesied that the Colonies would be discontented, and consider themselves left out in the cold; that India and the Native Princes would be alarmed at a change the reason for which they could not understand, and that disorder, discontent, and perhaps revolt, would ensue; and, lastly, that the honoured and dignified title of Queen would be degraded, and merge into the newly-coined title of Empress. He need hardly remind the House that none of these fears proved true. Passing, however, from this point, he would proceed to state, very briefly, his objections to the Resolution. In the first place, it was a distinct step, and, he feared, a very considerable step, downwards in the history of this great Assembly; a step which, at the same time, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to retrace. Englishmen prided themselves, and very justly, upon their freedom of debate and discussion inside and outside out of that House. Whether this Liberal Government would take steps to check this freedom outside the House he could not say, as he was not in the secrets of the Government; but, at all events, they in that House were to be humiliated—and the humiliation was great in proportion as their pride was great—by having to accept a Resolution, the practical effect of which would be that, if the majority of the House were tired and impatient, freedom of debate was to be cut short. He could not take comfort, as some speakers seemed to do, from the fact that the system of *clôture* prevailed in some Foreign Assemblies, and in one or two Colonies. They were not accustomed, or desirous, to look for their guidance to the practice of Foreign Assemblies, which, it must be observed, were but of recent creation compared with the antiquity of this great Assembly. Moreover the experience to be derived from the working of the system in those foreign bodies was not re-assuring. Few could study the debates in France, for example, without seeing how often the *clôture* was applied, and the debates stopped, when measures, unpalatable to the Government, or likely to endanger their position, were under discussion. He would observe, also, that some of the ablest and most moderate French journals, and notably the *Journal des Débats*, and, as he was informed, some of the best German papers, had expressed their surprise and regret at the proposed change of procedure in this House, and had sounded a note of warning to us. It might be said, as the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. Herbert) said of the country here, that foreigners did not understand the exact nature of the Resolution, or the grounds for pressing it on the House; but he suspected that those who had suffered under the *clôture* understood very well its working, and he believed that their experience and advice were very suggestive. Nor could he take comfort from the fact that this system prevailed in some Colonies. On the contrary, an examination of the case would show that Colonial experience was against the system, and that in a very marked manner. From the Return presented to Parliament in 1881, it appeared that there was no *clôture* in Tasmania, or Queensland, and only in the Legislative Council at the Cape, not in the Legislative Assembly. The case of New Zealand was very remarkable. There was originally a *clôture* Standing Order in the first Code of Orders. It did not appear whether it was ever put in force before 1863; but he rather gathered that it never had been. In 1863 it was made use of to terminate a debate as to the change of the seat of Government; and in that very year, and that same Session, a proposal to expunge the Standing Order was agreed to. In other words, the Colonial Assembly, upon their first experience of the working of the system, and closure of free discussion, refused to be bound down, and put an end to the restriction. The Colonial Assembly were wiser in their generation than this House; and he, for one, could only hope that *clôture*, when passed, might be got rid of here as speedily as it was in New Zealand. And the case of Victoria was hardly less striking. There was no *clôture* in that Colony, until the Session of 1875-6, and it was then only passed under very peculiar circumstances, and only for a part of that Session. The circumstances, it must be admitted, were very peculiar, for the Sittings were almost continuous, from May 1875 to April 1876, and in that time there were two changes of Government. The Resolution was, however, only in force from February to April, when the Session ended, and it was never revived. It was adopted for a very special purpose and for a very limited time—not as they were called upon to adopt it here, for general use and an unlimited time—and directly the special object was attained it was abandoned. The experience of this Colony, then, was also against the Government Resolution. The Prime Minister had felt himself pressed by this failure of *clôture*, and by the non-adoption of it in so many Colonies; and he tried to account for by saying, in one of his speeches, that—

> "In those comparatively infant and slightly developed societies and institutions, the Business of their Legislative Chambers is easily managed."

He could hardly expect the Prime Minister to study the debates of Colonial Assemblies; but having had occasion to look pretty closely into the working of these Assemblies and their debates, when he (Sir Henry Holland) was at the Colonial Office, he could assure the Prime Minister that if he did so, he would find that greater difficulties and troubles had to be encountered in the management of Public Business, and that greater obstruction and more persistent deadlocks had occurred in some of those Colonies than had ever occurred here. The Business was by no means so easily managed as the Prime Minister supposed. And now he would ask the House whether this great change, now embodied in the Resolution under consideration, was really and absolutely necessary? He held that it was not. When the Resolution was first introduced, it was argued that it was necessary for the purpose of putting down Obstruction. It was not a very easy matter, in the first place, to define exactly what was Obstruction. What was considered Obstruction by Members sitting on one side of the House was regarded as only a legitimate expression of opinion by Members on the other side. The Prime Minister, in his speech on the 20th of February, said that, "persistent and even reiterated pressure of argument was not always obstructive." He noted the word "always," in this sentence, as curiously bearing out the remarks of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), on Monday last, that in every definition of the Prime Minister's there was always to be found some qualifying word, which made it very difficult afterwards to pin him down to the full and apparently clear meaning of his definition. Possibly, however, in the present case, the word "always" was introduced as a protection to himself against the charge of Obstruction on account of his well-known, persistent, and even reiterated pressure of argument against the Divorce Bill. But whether such persistent argument was or was not always Obstruction, it must be admitted that it would always be considered to be so by Members sitting on the opposite side of the House, and it would, in the future, be speedily put an end to. The Prime Minister also, early in the debate in February last, defined "Obstruction" as—

> "The disposition of the minority of the House or of individuals to resist the prevailing will of the House otherwise than by argument."

He (Sir Henry Holland) ventured to think that a very fair definition; but as the debate proceeded, it appeared more clearly that it was not the general Obstruction of a minority, or of a section of a Party, but the Obstruction of individual Members that had caused the difficulty, to meet which this Resolution was put forward. It was the abuse by individuals of the liberty allowed under the Rules and Forms of the House. As the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) said—"The House has suffered from the tyranny of a few;" and the Prime Minister also, in one of his speeches, spoke of the diminution of power of the House over its own Members individually as the ground for this Resolution. He (Sir Henry Holland) quite agreed that this tyranny should be put down, and that the power of the House over individual Members should be regained; but he did not agree with hon. Members opposite that this should be effected by the introduction of a general *clôture*. He thought that this tyranny might be put down, and the power of the House regained, by what had been called "individual *clôture*" aided by the amendment of the Procedure of the House in other matters. It was not because the Rules of the House were abused by a few individuals that moderate men who desired to speak on any subject should have their mouths closed if they were not able to catch the Speaker's eye till late in the debate. This would be to adopt the principles of the Permissive Alliance Bill, and of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who, because a certain number of men drank to the ruin of themselves and their families, would limit the liberty and freedom of action of moderate and sober men. The plan of individual *clôture* was said by some to have failed. But he thought that it had not worked badly, even although it had only been tried fitfully, and upon no very clearly defined principle. He believed that if the principle of individual *clôture* was carefully defined and embodied in a Standing Order of the House, and was coupled with a more severe punishment than suspension to the end of the Sittings, the plan would be found to work well. The present punishment was quite insufficient; and the shortness and inadequacy of it, when taken in proportion to the time consumed before it could be inflicted, was quite apparent. The Member punished could now go out and enjoy his dinner, and then frame fresh material for a renewed fight at the next Sittings. In his opinion, the suspension should be for a month at least, except by special leave of the House. The Home Secretary and others had challenged the Opposition to produce an alternative scheme to this general *clôture*, and this was his answer to the challenge—"We propose individual *clôture* coupled with a more severe punishment, and with amendment of other parts of the present Procedure of the House." Well, as the debate went on, Obstruction somewhat fell out of the running as the ground for the proposed change, and the necessity of passing Government measures was put prominently forward as rendering *clôture* necessary. Now it was not denied by any one that it was desirable to clear the ground for measures of importance, affecting the interests and welfare of the great agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing classes of this country. It was not denied that for this purpose the Procedure of the House required amendment, and support would be readily accorded to most of the proposed amending Resolutions, though he must except from this list the Grand Committees Resolution, upon which very grave doubts existed. But it was denied that for this purpose it was necessary to sacrifice freedom of debate, or to limit the ancient and legitimate right of Members to speak freely and fully. It must be remembered that besides Government measures there were questions of the greatest importance which had to be discussed; political questions affecting our relations with Foreign States and our Colonies; grievances; wrongs to be redressed, and so forth. It would be greatly to be deplored if full discussion on these subjects was prematurely closed because the Government wanted to force on some measure. There would be a special danger that a question affecting the position of a Government, or damaging to it, would be cut short by the clamour of the Government supporters. It was true that the initiative was with the Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means; but, in the first place, he (Sir Henry Holland) was not satisfied with this safeguard; and, in the second place, he thought that this responsibility should not be cast on the Speaker or Chairman. He was not satisfied with the safeguard, because he thought that there was great danger that the Speaker might be, perhaps unconsciously, influenced by the Government majority. He did not take quite so gloomy a view of the Speakers in the future as some hon. Members had taken. He did not believe that the Speaker would ever become a mere partizan and tool of the Government majority to whom he owed his election; but he would naturally be anxious to see the Business of the House got through, and as, after all, Speakers were but poor human creatures, he might be anxious to get to bed. His sympathy would rather be with the majority than with the persistent reiteration of argument of the Opposition, though he had the high authority of the Prime Minister for saying that that was not always obstructive. He would be influenced by the cries of the supporters of the Government, and thus misled in forming his judgment. And one of the worst features of the Resolution before the House was that in a full House he would be sure of a majority; and although if the majority was a very small one his opinion would be, in fact, confirmed, yet the error of his judgment as to the "evident intention" of the House would be clearly manifested. Now, if all this was true of a Speaker, it might far more certainly be predicted of a Chairman of Ways and Means. They might argue as much as they pleased, and give all credit for honesty of purpose to Chairmen, past, present, and future; but no one, he thought, could really doubt that the Chairman of Ways and Means was less likely to be impartial, and more likely to be influenced by Government pressure, than the Speaker. The post of Chairman of Ways and Means was practically one of the Government places, although the actual election rested with the House itself. Speakers had of late been re-elected Parliament after Parliament, though the Government might have frequently changed. That had never, he believed, been the case with the Chairmen of Ways and Means, and probably never would be. They had heard that evening how constant was the communication between the Chairman and the Party in power, and the fear expressed lest, under the New Rule, this friendly communication should become pressure. Again, the Speaker's right to vote and speak had never of late been exercised, and thus his absolute freedom from Party bias had been made more manifest; but the very contrary was the case with the Chairman of Ways and Means. He voted regularly with his Party, except when the House was in Committee, and no one blamed him. If, then, he (Sir Henry Holland) distrusted the safeguard of the Speaker in the future, he had far greater reason to distrust the safeguard of the Chairman. But, in the second place, he thought that this responsibility should not be cast on the Speaker. The responsibility should rest with the Leader of the House, as representing the majority, and answerable, in a more or less degree, for the good conduct of the Business of the House. In this latter work he had been hitherto materially assisted by an honourable understanding that had existed between the Front Benches, and by the good sense of the House. He (Sir Henry Holland) was afraid that this good understanding, which had hitherto prevailed in the great majority of cases, though of late somewhat weakened by the action of a few individuals, would cease to exist if this *clôture* was frequently applied, as the feeling of the minority who had resisted the restriction of debate would be much embittered. And this feeling of bitterness and resentment would, he feared, tend to weaken the position and dignity of the Speaker, who had to take the initiative, both in the House and out of it. In the House, because the Members of the minority, if at all a large one, would be more inclined to cavil at the subsequent rulings of the Speaker; and out of the House because attacks would be made on the Speaker as a Party man or as a weak man, both in the Press and on the platform. It might be that he would be wrongly blamed and attacked; but, still, his present high position, above attack, would be lowered. To sum up, he (Sir Henry Holland) believed that there was no necessity for this general *clôture*, which infringed upon the ancient privileges of Members; he feared that the dignity of the House and of the Speaker would be lessened by the exercise of this power; that the good understanding which had hitherto existed between the Leaders of the Parties as to the management of debates would give place to a sore and bitter feeling; that Obstruction would be rather quickened than suppressed; and, for these reasons, he should give his vote heartily against the Resolution.

MR. T. C. THOMPSON said, he had all along voted for the Government on this subject, and he intended to do so on this occasion, though if the Government had been endeavouring to limit the right of debate and freedom of speech in that House, he should unquestionably have opposed them, and he should have done the same if the Resolution had been one of first impression. Notwithstanding the eloquence of the Prime Minister, he should have opposed such proposals, although he might be opposed by the Liberal Associations, which sometimes were called Caucuses. His hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) had spoken with approval of the Caucus, and well he might, because in the borough of Stoke he was probably the Caucus himself. He thought Liberal Associations had a perfect right to call the attention of their Members to the votes they had given in opposition to Liberal principles; but he thought that they showed a great want of modesty when they called attention to the votes of a Member who had not been going against, but had been supporting the principles that he had been sent to Parliament to represent. As he had already observed, he should not vote for the Resolution if it had been one of the first impression. He would not vote for any Resolution which would limit the right of free speech in that House. Complaints had been made that there was Obstruction to the Business of the country. He would remind the House how that had arisen. The House of Commons was composed of Her Majesty's Government and Her Majesty's Opposition, and no one had presumed to say that the Leaders of either had made tedious addresses to that Assembly. But on both sides of the House, besides those two great Parties, there were men who entertained strong opinions and strong principles. They were the minorities of the House, and it was to them that they owed almost all of the important legislation of the last few years. One or two distinguished Members could be, and generally were, appointed to speak on behalf of either the Government or the Opposition; but it would not answer the purpose of minorities to have only one or two persons speaking for them. They must individually advocate their views to willing or unwilling ears, through good report and evil report, before full Benches and before empty Benches, and speak whenever an occasion should present itself. In the country at present such conduct was looked on as Obstruction; but it ought to be remembered, as he had said, that it was to such Obstruction that we owed most of our reforms. Why were the people now in favour of these proposals of the Government? Because the Obstruction about which complaint was made was being carried on by a Party who were said to be opposing the legislation of the Prime Minister so strenuously that it was futile to hope that any of it could be successful. The people believed that, but for this Obstruction, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government would have passed household suffrage for the counties, and effected the dissolution of the Church of England. Many people believed also that if Obstruction had not been practised, the right hon. Gentleman would now be on the point of carrying Home Rule for Ireland. It was for such reasons as these that Obstruction was so unpopular. But it should be borne in mind that the small band of resolute men who had shown so much resistance to the wishes of the Government were then defending the liberties of Ireland, and that the conduct of the Government during the last two years had been such as to cause a feeling of hatred between the English and the Irish. He was one of those who thought that it was dangerous to attack the liberties of Ireland, and that opinion was shared by very many in the country. During his persistent opposition to the coercive measures of the last two years he had received strange-looking epistles, some of them dirty productions, and not emanating from the pen of the ready writer. They had not come from the Caucuses, but from some of the large towns of England — from men living in streets where the scent of the violet and the bloom of the primrose were not to be found. Those letters were from men who, in the mine and in the ironworks, worked early to promote the grandeur of England. They were afraid that if the liberties of Ireland were assailed now, those of England might be assailed later on. It was because this so-called Obstruction had been put down with so high a hand that he should now support the Government. On the first memorable occasion when the Speaker interfered to close the mouths of the Irish Members, it was said that there should be no repetition of the occurrence. But, before long, the Irish Members were silenced a second time in a manner that reflected dishonour and disgrace upon that House. They would at a future time certainly look back with sorrow to the occasion when a number of Gentlemen were suspended from the exercise of their Parliamentary functions, though they had but just risen from their beds, and had not for some hours been in the House. As Members had been twice assailed in this way, he thought the time had come when some definite plan to limit the right of the Authorities of the House to interfere should be adopted. The Speaker had stated on the first occasion that it was imperatively necessary that in the future the closure of debate should be guarded by legislation. It was necessary, therefore, to legislate on the subject; not to put a fetter on men's lips, but to limit the right of the Authorities of the House to interpose in its debates. No doctrine was more dangerous than that which said, "This shall be for this once only." Alas! how often had such teaching heralded to their fall the noble and the beautiful! Of such legislation to guard the right of debate he did not think that any better or wiser proposal than that of the Government could have been made. In his opinion, the proposal on the other side to change the whole principle of the House, and no longer leave the decision to a simple majority, had been wisely rejected. A majority of two-thirds or three-fourths always opened the door to communication between the Leaders on both sides; hence the necessity for compromise arose. When the House was endeavouring to restrain the liberties of the Irish nation, did the necessity of having a two-thirds' majority make any difference? Was the cruel treatment of Ireland lessened by that? No, certainly not; and he ventured to say that if the House had been confined to the old system of a majority, it would have been possible to obtain better consideration for the people of Ireland than was obtained under the two-thirds' majority Rule. Then, again, hon. Members opposite had recommended the Government to look at what was done in foreign countries with regard to this matter. He hoped the House of Commons was too proud to look anywhere else for information or instruction on the subject. In past time men had been accustomed to look to that House for an example. It was a new doctrine, indeed, that for lessons in our conduct we must look to our own Colonies or to the mushroom growth of freedom in France. It seemed to him that they could not do better than leave it to the Speaker to initiate the closing of the debate. Nor did he see that much had been gained by the Amendment requiring him to be of opinion that the subject had been "adequately discussed." Was his conviction on that subject to be questioned? Was it open to point out to him that more argument could be advanced? Supposing the Speaker were to decide that a subject had been sufficiently discussed, and some ingenious Member were to write a letter to *The Times* the next morning suggesting new arguments, the Speaker would be placed in a false position. But let the initiative come from the Speaker, let a consequent Motion be required to be made to the House, let the House decide by a majority, and enough would be done. It was his hope and his belief that with such safeguards the *clôture* would never be used.

COLONEL KENNARD said, he believed that the very last nail was being driven into the coffin of freedom of debate. If the Resolution were passed, he might never have another opportunity of raising his voice in the House; for, in the Prime Minister's words, he might be considered vain, idle, and frivolous, and as only willing to please his constituents. It had been argued by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House that, far from curtailing speech, the closure would restore freedom of debate, just as if, by the restoration of duties on foreign imports, they would be placing on a higher footing the principles of Free Trade. Others contended that the closure was not so much directed against legitimate opposition as illegitimate Obstruction. In that case, they would be cracking a small nut with a Nasmyth hammer. Why did they not pass penal Rules against individual offenders, instead of directing penal legislation against a whole Party? If the *clôture* were to be seldom used, why should the Government consume the time of the House in constructing this great engine of offence against their political opponents? If, however, as he thought was more natural, the *clôture* was frequently used, mistakes would constantly occur, and, if so, they were certain to be animadverted upon both inside and outside of the House; and he believed that the dignity of the Chair would be thereby impaired. The frank and direct avowal of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that he would give the Opposition half-an-hour to discuss any proposal made by the Minister of the day and then silence them, showed what they might expect if the democratic Resolution with which they were threatened was ever accomplished, and the principles of the Constitution swept away, and the despotism of mob law substituted in its stead. At the same time, he did not sympathize with the view of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), who appeared to think that if the Conservative Party obtained power they would use the *clôture* by way of retaliation against their opponents. He (Colonel Kennard) would not retaliate; but the proposed legislation was altogether so distasteful to him that, instead of using the power it gave, he would prefer to vote for its total repeal. He thought, having regard to the reduced majority that had hitherto supported the Government, that the country and the House entertained grave doubts as to the advantage of this measure. He would, therefore, support the right hon. Member for North Devon in his opposition to the Resolution.

Mr. MELLOR said, it was somewhat late in the day to question the necessity of dealing with Obstruction. So far back as 1848, the Committee on Parliamentary Procedure was appointed to consider the subject, and examined several witnesses, among others, M. Guizot, who gave important evidence as to the use of the *clôture* in France. The Committee thought so much of this evidence that they set it out on the face of their Report. M. Guizot stated that, having had the *clôture* in operation since 1816, in his opinion it had never been abused, and that Public Business could not have been effectively carried on without it. The Committee set this out unquestionably to draw the attention of Parliament to the subject. That Committee included such eminent authorities as Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Evelyn Denison, who was afterwards Speaker. No condemnation was passed by that Committee on the principle of closure on any of the grounds relied upon by the other side. A suggestion was made by Lord Eversley which was even more stringent in its character than that now introduced by the Government, for Lord Eversley's proposal was that it should be in the power of any hon. Member, on the Order of the Day for the resumption of an adjourned debate, to rise in his place and move that it be not again adjourned, but that the division upon it should be taken before 2 o'clock A.M. Moreover, it was suggested that the Motion might be carried by a bare majority. From 1848 down to 1880, Obstruction was steadily increasing; and in 1880 the right hon. Baronet opposite, the then Leader of the House, speaking with all the responsibility of his Office, said—

> "I earnestly press upon the House the consideration that Obstruction is an evil which has grown up in a large measure during the life of the present Parliament, and that this House has had the opportunity—the melancholy opportunity—of witnessing its growth and its threatening character."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1462.]

The right hon. Gentleman had said that his statements respecting closure had been garbled during the present debate; but hon. Members were not suggesting that he ever said he approved of closure, but had drawn attention to the testimony which he gave as to the important nature of Obstruction, and that, having come to the conclusions that he did, had stated their astonishment that he shrank from the only remedy. Another right hon. Gentleman opposite, the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross), had used language almost as strong; he said, amongst other things, that the state of the House had become a by-word. The House, therefore, had the testimony of two right hon. Gentlemen of great experience on the other side of the House that Obstruction had become serious, and that it was important to deal with it at once. He had great difficulty in understanding how, in the face of that opinion, those right hon. Gentlemen could have arrived at their present conclusions. In this matter of Obstruction it was to be observed that, while in 1881 there were 122 dilatory Motions for Adjournment, in the year of the great Reform agitation there were only 20. To meet these dilatory Motions no remedy had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He had stated that he had a scheme, but had given the House no details of any kind, and no other hon. Member opposite had ventured to suggest a scheme. It was said that the proper way of dealing with the matter was by punishing the individual. That was all very well in dealing with cases of wilful Obstruction which were an obvious offence against the House; but how was that to be carried out where there were several Members all combining to obstruct and spin out the discussion on one measure, in order to prevent a Bill to which they were opposed from being brought forward and having a chance of being discussed? In such a case it might be difficult to apportion the degree of blame. He had been but a short time in the House; but he had seen these tactics resorted to on several occasions, as in the case of the Bill to legalize Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, discussion upon which had been absolutely prevented by these means. This mode of Obstruction was difficult to deal with. They had been told more than once that this Resolution was all the work of an imperious Prime Minister, that pressure had been put upon his followers, and that they disliked the measure. He would like to know where hon. Members got their information from?—certainly not from the Liberal Party. Was it not evident, from the course of that debate, that the Prime Minister was not the first, but the last man to be convinced of the necessity of that measure? The pressure for it had come from the Liberal Party to the Government, and not from the Government to the Liberal Party. It had been said that it was the work of the Caucus, which was supposed by some to be a dreadful institution; but he could not understand how any man who had seen it at work, and who was really anxious for the good working of representative institutions, could attack the Caucus—a body which fairly represented the feelings and views of the Liberal Party in the constituency in which it existed. The Resolutions had been very severely criticized; but he was much disposed to agree with the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) in thinking that the country was prepared for a far stronger measure of *clôture* than the one now proposed. It was all very well to allege that the country did not understand the question; but it understood this—that there was a deadlock of Business in Parliament, and that unless something was done that deadlock could not be got rid of. Men had come to the conclusion that the debates ought to be shortened, that the time of the country was now wasted, and that the people were cheated, to some extent, of the legislation to which they were entitled. If any hon. Member doubted the feeling of the country, he invited him to attend a public meeting anywhere, and he would soon get a very plain answer. The Government, besides, had so moulded the Resolution that it was difficult to see how it could be unfairly used. It was not proposed to interfere at all with legitimate discussion. The Speaker had become more and more of a judicial officer, whose decisions were recorded as precedents for future guidance; and it was not likely that any future Speaker would exercise the power intrusted to him with a Party bias—a course which must deprive him of the respect of the House. Neither could it be suggested that Members on either side would wish to act unfairly towards their opponents in closing debates. To use the Rule unfairly they must have a conspiracy or combination among a large body of Members; and surely that was a thing not to be thought of. If any attempt were made to stop fair discussion on any burning question, so strong a feeling would be aroused in the country against the Government, or the Party making it, that they would be speedily hurled from power. The Rule would be used to enable questions to be fairly discussed, some of which were now blocked, and which the public wanted to have properly debated. He earnestly trusted that the Government would succeed in carrying that Resolution, because he believed that they had not only a united Party, but the strong feeling of the country with them.

COLONEL L. P. DAWNAY said, that if the hon. Member for Durham (Mr. T. C. Thompson) was not convinced by his own arguments, nothing could convince him; for, while he ended by saying he would vote for the Resolution, his speech was a strong protest against the *clôture.* He (Colonel Dawnay) trusted that they had not fallen so low as to be willing to remodel that ancient House upon a French pattern. Although the Prime Minister had hitherto achieved an uninterrupted success in regard to the proposed change of Procedure, still his triumph was eclipsed by that of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). In the division on the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) the Home Rule Party had scored a double victory. In the first place, they had struck a blow at the Conservative Opposition; and, in the second place, they had earned the heartfelt gratitude of the Government, which they had rescued from an imminent defeat. He was thankful they had at last got out of the region of artificial safeguards. The question now at issue was whether they were to part with that right of free discussion which had been so jealously guarded for centuries by the Commons of England. The hon. Member for Northampton had pretty plainly shown them that that measure was intended to silence the Conservative Party in order to give free play to revolutionary legislation. That might not be the object of the Government, but it was the object of some of their supporters; and surely the House ought to be very careful how they intrusted so dangerous a power to the hands of any Party. If brute force was to be substituted for argument, they might depend on it the decline and fall of Parliamentary government was imminent. The National Expenditure would no longer be subject to independent criticism; and while this might be a small matter when a Government of peace and retrenchment was in Office, yet there might come a time when an unscrupulous and extravagant Tory Administration were in power, and then the *clôture* might be a source of considerable anxiety to hon. Gentlemen opposite. On his side of the House it was thought that the *clôture* would be used as an organ of oppression, and he believed that many of the Liberal Party viewed it with feelings of apprehension. If the power was abused, it would undoubtedly show up Parliamentary government to the contempt of the country. He wished to draw the attention of the House to another point. It might happen that what appeared to Mr. Speaker the evident sense of the House was by no means the evident sense of the country. It might happen that in some important debate the views of the Representatives of the Cities of London or Liverpool might be prevented from being heard by the casting vote of the microscopic constituency of Carlow. On both sides of the House there existed a strong feeling that, sooner or later, the *clôture* would be used as an engine of oppression, and would end in a gross abuse of the powers of the majority. Some hon. Gentlemen appeared to look forward to that result with satisfaction; but there were many others who regarded it with grave misgivings. If used for Party purposes, it would rouse feelings of anger and resentment; and, sooner or later, it would bring government by Party into contempt in the eyes of the country. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had, during his long career, been the defender of many institutions which he had afterwards felt it his duty to attack and to destroy; but he trusted even now that it never might be able to be said of him that he had brought his long and distinguished Parliamentary career to a close by lowering the character and destroying the ancient liberties of the House of Commons.

Mr. LEWIS FRY said, that, as representing a large constituency, he should ask the House to listen to him for a few moments while he adverted to one point which had been alluded to in the course of the debate. It had been remarked in the course of the debate that had taken place on these Rules of Procedure that the country did not care about this question; but he rose to assure the House that his constituency, at all events, felt a very keen interest in the matter. A great deal had been said as to the object and purpose the Government had in view in bringing forward the Resolutions that they were now engaged in discussing, and it had been frequently stated from the other side of the House that they were brought forward for the purpose of enabling the more speedy prosecution of certain measures to which the Government were pledged. They who sat on that side of the House were very anxious, and so also his constituency were extremely anxious, that many of those measures that had been promised to the country should be passed. But what he wished to state was this—that, in his opinion, there was a more strongly felt and expressed conviction than any wish for the passing of any particular measure; and that was the feeling that the credit of the House of Commons was at stake, in the continuance of the state of things that existed in their debates. The country, he believed, was thoroughly determined that the House of Commons should be placed in a position which would enable it to carry forward its debates with efficiency, and to carry into effect also, in a reasonable time, the will of the country. There was a time when that House was regarded as a model for all other business Assemblies as to the manner in which it conducted its Business; but they must surely all be prepared to admit that the respect once felt for the House of Commons had sensibly diminished. Many, indeed, felt that the Members of the House of Commons were often treated almost with condolence at the things they had to suffer in that House—evils which he was sorry to say they were almost powerless to remove. Certainly, the proceedings in that House were often spoken of in a manner almost approaching to contempt by men who were accustomed to other great business gatherings in the country. No doubt, great differences of opinion on that subject did exist in the House of Commons itself; but he thought—nay, he was convinced—that the evident sense of the country at large was this—that the time had come when the existing state of things should be altered, and the House of Commons placed in a position which would be calculated to enable it to conduct its Business with efficiency, and in a manner far better calculated to promote the great interests of the nation. It was when that feeling prevailed with respect to the House of Commons, that the Government had brought forward a plan which they had submitted for the consideration of hon. Members. As was anticipated, the scheme of the Government had provoked a great deal of discussion, and certain propositions had come from right hon. and hon. Members sitting on the other side of the House. He (Mr. Fry) had not a word to say as to the plan that had been proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). There was, no doubt, a great deal to be said on that side of the question; but one might also say this—that the weight of the arguments, adduced in the course of the debate on the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, most strongly supported the view that was taken by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. And now, after two weeks' debate, they were asked to reject the Resolution proposed by the Prime Minister altogether! He (Mr. Fry) might, however, ask in what condition they would stand before the country if that course were adopted? It had been hinted at that the other Resolutions, which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would propose, would be sufficient to meet the difficulty, and deal with the awkward pass to which matters had come; but he believed the soundness of that argument had hitherto been questioned by the House, and should be also by hon. Gentleman opposite who were prepared to oppose this Resolution, if they were unable to show what remedy they could suggest for the evils which the country was admittedly suffering under—evils which he did not hesitate to say were freely confessed on both sides of the House to exist. What would be the result of rejecting the proposition now before the House? If they rejected that Resolution, which he did not believe, the House would, in effect, tell the country they were unable, as a House of Parliament, to get themselves out of the difficulties in which they found themselves plunged. He did not believe that was the course the House of Commons would take; but that rather it would carry the Resolution submitted by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government by a substantial majority. He, for one, taking as he did the view that the country itself was most earnest in the matter, that the people really did desire a reform in the condition of things existing in that House, and looking at the future not only of the Liberal Party, but also of the Conservative Party and Parliamentary life in general, bound up as it of necessity would be with the question of Procedure in the guidance of the Business of the House, should most certainly, for the reasons he had mentioned, support the proposal now before the House which was made by Her Majesty's Government.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, the hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor), who had spoken, seemed to think that Obstruction had had its rise in the year 1848, or, at all events, became then a noticeable entity. But was he not aware that it had been a theme, not only of prose writers, but of poets in the comparatively early years of the last century? While listening to the hon. and learned Gentleman he had called to mind some lines, he thought by the Poet Cowper—

> "Ye powers that rule the tongue, if such there are,
> And make colloquial happiness your care,
> Protect me from the thing I dread and hate,
> A duel in the form of a debate;
> The clash of arguments and din of words,

> Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
> Decide no question with their tedious length,
> For opposition gives opinion strength."

It seemed to him that the same dislike to iteration existed in the minds of politicians and private individuals in the last century in the same degree as existed now; and certainly that opposition was expressed in more musical words than they had heard during the course of that debate. The hon. and learned Gentleman had quoted the Leader of the Opposition in support of the assertion that Obstruction had become intolerable. Well, he believed all in the House were agreed that it had become intolerable, or at all events objectionable, and the very purpose of their assembling at this period was to consult with the Ministry as to the best means of putting down Obstruction. It was simply as to the method of doing so that the Opposition differed from the Government. They considered the proposal of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) preferable to that of the Government; but that had been rejected, and they were quite within their right in objecting to the proposal of the Government. They were only standing up, each according to his ability, for the rights and the freedom of minorities in all time to come. He denied that there was that unity in the Liberal Party on this subject which the hon. Member who had last spoken alleged. The hon. Member must have forgotten the able and amusing speech of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) in the early part of the Session, the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) last evening, and the names of 15 Members of great weight in the Liberal Party which appeared in the Division List in support of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Those facts seemed to show very little unity in the Liberal Party. They had heard a great deal about the evident sense of the country being in favour of the Resolutions. Well, he had attended a comparatively great number of political meetings during the short Recess, and it was perhaps because his countrymen were proverbially slow of apprehension that he was unable to apprehend that evident sense of the country. It had been said to him, over and over again—"Don't come to us and ask what Rules you are to make to regulate the debates of Parliament If you can't make Rules to regulate your own debates, you are not fit to be in Parliament, and don't expect us to do it for you." The evident sense of the country on these questions was a sense of indifference. They were told that the Caucuses were exerting themselves in favour of the Resolutions; but that was wire-pulling. How many of the people who had attended these Caucus meetings, or signed Petitions in support of the Government, understood what went on in debates? He believed it would be a revelation to 99 out of every 100 people in the country to learn that the debates which seemed so continuous in the papers were interrupted for 20 or 30 minutes every evening while the Speaker took refreshment. The interior economy of that House was not a matter for the country at all, except in this respect, that hopes of legislation in certain directions had been excited, and the people of the country had been stimulated and encouraged to desire reform of the Rules of Procedure, in order that such legislation might be proceeded with. The country had been asked to swallow these Rules of Procedure in much the same way that a child was induced to swallow the nauseous dose—in order that it might have something sweet put into its mouth afterwards. It might be said that the nauseous dose was necessary—that medicine was salutary. Yes; but before they consented to open their mouths and swallow the medicine, they had to have some confidence in the doctor who was prescribing for them; but in this case, on the Opposition side of the House, and to a great extent in the country, there was a want of such confidence. Had not the Members of the Government themselves been guilty of Obstruction? He had heard a well-known and mature Member of the Liberal Party say that half of the time of the House was taken up in listening to the Prime Minister and the other half in disputing about what he had said. Of all the measures mentioned in Her Majesty's Speech at the opening of the Session, only two had been passed; these related to Scotland, and were passed because the Scotch Members determined to set to work in a business-like manner. He believed that the

Floods Prevention Bill and other Bills of greater importance than the so-called popular measures, might have been passed if the Government and their Supporters had shown a more earnest desire to press them forward. It appeared to him that outside the House the country was indifferent on the question of *clôture*, and that the actual feeling of the House was adequately expressed by its yawns. The evident sense of the House was one of langour and distate. When he was a boy a cruel species of tyranny was practised at school, which consisted in the recurrence at each successive meal of the arrears of food that remained over from the previous repast, the process being repeated till the last tasteless morsel was assimilated. That was the case at the present moment with the House of Commons; and those who had called hon. Members together to discuss the New Rules probably foresaw that they would ultimately accept them from sheer nausea and weariness. Except the Prime Minister—who always threw a charm and a glamour over whatever he handled—and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), no one had exhibited the slightest enthusiasm for the *clôture*. In such circumstances, the Opposition was compelled to protest strongly against the Resolution, especially as the House had always been disinclined to alter its Rules of Procedure. All had felt the inconvenience of Obstruction; but they were not prepared to make such a radical and lasting change in the Rules as would deprive them of that characteristic which this House possessed in a greater degree than any other Assembly in the world, and they were all the more loth to pass this Resolution because they felt that the House would be unable to part with it after it had once been adopted. His greatest objection, however, to this Resolution was that it would confer almost despotic power on the Ministry of the day. To say nothing of the present Ministry, which was a combination of transcendant genius and set off to great advantage the moderation of the Prime Minister and the patience of the Home Secretary, other Ministries would come after them whom he should be sorry to intrust with the power of enforcing the *clôture*, and other Speakers would in process of time succeed the present occupant of the Chair. As long as the Speaker whom they all trusted presided over the debates of the House he had no fear; but he naturally looked to the possibilities of the future, and was afraid that the time might come when, on the eve of a great debate, English orators might use the greeting of the Roman gladiators—"*Ave, Cæsar! Imperator, morituri te salutant.*" Besides, who could say that the Government might not some day find it convenient to bring a debate to a close by manufacturing and stimulating Obstruction? Perhaps, in the endeavour to rouse the evident sense of the House, Ministers might, like Canning's horsemen—

> "With deft heel, insidiously applied,
> Provoke the caper which they feign to chide."

The Prime Minister and other right hon. Gentlemen had repeatedly said that they did not intend, that it was not conceivable they should intend, to smother debate; but could they always be quite sure of the evident sense of the House? Of course, there was a good deal went on that was not understood by private Members, otherwise debates would collapse at inconvenient moments. These things must be arranged. Could the Ministers be sure that they or future Ministers would have their followers so in hand and so bestowed that they could at all times estimate and regulate the amount of evident sense which should be shown, so that debates should not come to an end by snatched divisions at undesirable and inconvenient times? He had only spoken on this occasion because he felt that they were about to pass from them those traditions of freedom of speech which they certainly should be the last to part with. They were about to take a leap in the dark. That was admitted on all hands. No one knew what the working of these Rules would be; but some of his fears would probably be realized, and it might, at any rate, be predicted that the Ministry of the future would have to deal with an Opposition exacerbated by the intended *clôture*, and willing, in consequence, to take any unfair advantage. He would leave the supporters of the Resolution to say how greatly it would conduce to the dignity of the debates for the Opposition, whether Liberal or Conservative, to come down to the House, like the Devil in the Apocalypse, "having great wrath, because they know that they have but a short time."

Mr. H. LEE supported the Resolution on the ground that much valuable time was wasted by the reiteration of arguments, and that the increasing work of the House necessitated the shortening of debates. He trusted the Resolution would be passed by a considerable majority, and he believed its operation would prove an advantage to the House. The constituencies were almost universally in favour of it; if they had not been, they would have held meetings and expressed themselves in such a way that the House could have been under no misapprehension. Knowing that the Autumn Session was to be devoted to the subject, they were willing to wait; but if the House did not pass the Resolution, meetings would soon be held to pass resolutions of remonstrance. No Speaker would venture to take the evident sense of one side of the House without taking the evident sense of the other side too. Any future Speaker would satisfy himself as to the evident sense of the House on both sides before he expressed any opinion under this Resolution. There was real security for freedom in the safeguard that a subject must have been adequately discussed before a debate could be closed. He believed that after these Resolutions were passed it would be found that the House of Commons would be able to fulfil the purpose for which it was elected by the nation, and to pass laws which would be of advantage to the community at large.

Mr. PICKERING PHIPPS said, the exercise of the *clôture*, as to whether it would or would not be used to pass Party measures, was presented to the House in various aspects by different speakers on the Ministerial side of the House. One hon. Gentleman expressed the belief that it would be seldom used; another expressed the hope that it would be often used; while another frankly uttered the hope that it would be often used for Party purposes, so that the Democratic Millennium which he looked forward to might be the sooner realized. It was with the object that the country should be saved from the latter calamity that the Opposition were desirous of opposing the *clôture* with all legitimate weapons in their power. They opposed the measure because it was altogether unnecessary. The other Resolutions would give the Government of the day sufficient power to carry on the Business of the country. The tendency of the *clôture* must be to diminish freedom of speech, which had long honourably distinguished, and which all desired to preserve in, the British House of Commons. The Resolution, as framed, would protect small minorities and bear harshly on large minorities. The Home Rulers had been the immediate cause of any necessity for the alteration of Procedure, and they would be in a measure protected; while the Conservatives, who had not been delinquents, would be punished. Some alterations were necessary, and the Conservatives were willing to help the Government in making them. But the measure, while equal to the necessity, ought not to go beyond it. Less drastic measures than this Resolution carried unanimously would be more likely to produce a good effect than extreme measures forced by a majority. If the Government were determined to press this Resolution in the spirit of the Radicals who, like the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), openly avowed that they wished to limit free discussion by Conservatives, the latter were justified in offering to the Resolution all the opposition they could. The concession made by the Government was very much like one of which he heard the other day. A person who had put another into the County Court wrote to the defendant in these terms—

> "Dear Sir,—I am opposed to law altogether, and if you will accept my view of the case, and pay all the expenses, and the sum which I think is due to me, I will not bring the matter into Court."

That appeared to him to be like the concession made by the Government. He held that if the Government were determined to thrust the *clôture* by a bare majority upon the House, the Conservative Party would be justified in using in a legitimate and proper manner all those powers which had been so graphically described by the Prime Minister as essentially belonging to an important minority. While it had been said by the Prime Minister—"Better not have *clôture* at all than have it by a two-thirds' majority," he believed he was expressing the opinion of all hon. Members on that side of the House when he said—"Better not have *clôture* at all than have it by a bare majority."

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, that in introducing the Resolution, the Prime Minister stated, as a main argument, that its principle was adopted in most other Legislative Assemblies, and especially in our Colonies, in which the British character was reflected, and which valued British freedom no less than we did. In point of fact, however, not only no *clôture* existed in any of the British Colonies, with the exception of South Australia, which contained less than 250,000 of English people, but also that it had been tried in New Zealand and Victoria, and had to be abandoned. Therefore, he asked whether it was right that the great English House of Commons — the mother and model of all the Constitutional Assemblies in the world—should show, by adopting these Resolutions, that she had less power of restraint than was possessed by her children? In Europe there were 13 Lower Houses. *Clôture*, by a bare majority, existed in three only—those of Belgium, Denmark, and Germany. In five—those of Hungary, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, and Spain—no form of *clôture* existed at all. In Switzerland there was a two-thirds' majority, which was found to work well. In France, Holland, Italy, and Austria the *clôture* was only enforced after further debate. In France the *clôture* was not introduced until after the *coup d'état* of December, 1851, which in reality put an end to all Parliamentary institutions in that country; and he could not help thinking that the passing of these Resolutions in the House of Commons would be the *coup d'état* of our liberty, and that we should thereafter be practically at the mercy of the Minister of the day. After the *clôture* had been introduced in France it became a regular habit of the majority to clamour at once for the closing of debate the moment they were given to understand that that was the wish of the Minister of the day to silence the Opposition. The next result was that the Speakers became strong Party men. Count Walewski was obliged to give up his Office because he was not a sufficiently Party-going man. Men like Thiers, Berryer, Ollivier, Picard, and others were silenced; and measures of the greatest importance were never allowed to be discussed—as, for example, the Mexican Expedition, which was the first step in the downfall of the French Empire, and M. Thiers complained that he was never allowed to bring on a discussion upon it in the Chamber, either before it was undertaken, upon the ground that if it was so discussed the enemy might think the French armies were not backed by the whole French nation, nor afterwards, because it would be useless and unpatriotic. More important still was the war which rose out of the Hohenzollern Question. Had that subject been fully debated in the French Assembly probably the Franco-German War would never have occurred, which had brought so much ruin and misery on the French people. If that was the experience of their neighbours, should they not take a lesson from it in that House? Did they not believe that if this measure were adopted clamour, instead of debate, would become the object of some people in that House? The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) hoped that *clôture* would be adopted in order that his Party might be able to force certain measures through the House of Commons. Would they not always have the Chair filled by partizans in future? The present Speaker was elected by the Liberals; but when the Tories came into power, in 1874, it was the wish of all parts of the House that he should continue to exercise the high functions which had been performed with so much impartiality. But did they think that any Party could in future afford to give up the advantage of having a partizan in the Chair to support them? Again, might they not hereafter have men as patriotic as Thiers, as eloquent as Berryer, as fearless as Jules Favre, who it might be desirable for the Minister of the day to silence? And, lastly, might not questions as important as those French ones to which he had referred arise in this country, and yet, not having those questions fully debated, they might find themselves some day involved in a war, which, had opportunity for discussion been allowed, might have been avoided with dignity and honour? Lord Macaulay justly said that to gag the Press was to take away the rattle of the serpent while leaving its sting, and he thought the same words might be applied with even greater force to the House of Commons. In conclusion, he expressed a hope that the Prime Minister would pause before it was too late, and not sully an illustrious career by forcing on a reluctant House of Commons a measure which he could not but feel would be the death-knell of its liberties and those of the whole English people.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, that the cause originally assigned for the introduction of this Resolution was receding from view, while the real cause of its introduction was coming more clearly in sight—namely, the reason that it would put into the Ministers' hands the power of forcing through the House, as rapidly as they pleased, certain Radical measures which they desired to pass. It was remarkable to notice the different arguments used by right hon. Gentlemen opposite in favour of this Rule, according to the audience they wished to influence. If the Whigs were shaky, they were assured that this Rule was quite harmless, and could not be put in force without the interposition of the Speaker. When doubts were entertained by some Members of the Radical Party whether this Rule was running on the lines of the old Liberal programme, the assurance was given that it was not Obstruction that was aimed at, but the object was to give the Government absolute command of the time of the House because they wished to pass Radical measures, and if those who entertained these doubts wished such measures to be passed they must give the Government their support. The situation had become more grave since the very important statement of last evening was made by the Speaker. That statement was to the effect that it would always, under this Resolution, be the duty of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to consider before putting it into action whether the evident sense of the House was the evident sense of the House at large. If it was not the sense of the House at large, then it was, in the opinion of the Speaker, contrary to the intention of the words of the Rule that it should be put in force. If that were so, what became of the argument of the Home Secretary that when the Rule was passed the Government were going to carry through Parliament any measures they pleased? They had been buying up Radical support throughout the country by holding out false promises, which, according to the Speaker's interpretation of the Rule, they had not the power to fulfil. He feared, however, that the Prime Minister did not accept the ruling which had been laid down by the Chair. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to say whether he accepted it or not. If they did they would bring upon them the whole pressure of the Caucus. No considerable Radical feeling would endure to be thwarted by the action of a Speaker of that House. If they did not they were involved in the inconsistency of making the evident sense of the House mean a bare majority of the House, and going directly in the face of the Speaker's decision. He wanted to know what was the view of the Government as to the position of the Speaker and the Chairman? Their positions would be changed, and the whole tone of the House of Commons would be lowered. If *clôture* were carried by a bare majority the Speaker's initiative would be falsified, and it would be shown that the evident sense of the House was not in favour of closing the debate; but the debate would be closed nevertheless. Then the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had opened out a new view, and told the House that the real debates were held in the country, and the Members of that House were only there to records votes and to carry out the instructions of their constituencies. But when had the constituencies declared in favour of *clôture?* If they had not so declared why did not the hon. Member stand upon the floor of the House, and declare that that question should not be decided there? The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had thrown cold water on all that the hon. Member for Northampton had said. But at that moment certain Whig votes were supposed to be in the balance, and they remembered the noble Marquess under pressure on a former occasion. It would be remembered in the Army Discipline debates, when Obstruction was being practised by certain Gentlemen opposite, that the noble Marquess adopted a very dignified and sensible attitude. But pressure was brought to bear, and in particular one prominent Member of the Radical Party referred to the noble Marquess as "the late Leader of the Opposition." Then followed a complete change of front on the part of the noble Lord, which it was painful for those to witness who respected his high character and position. Then it was said that the *clôture* would never be enforced unless in case of absolute necessity. But many Members of the House would bear in mind the occasion on which Urgency was demanded in Supply, and when the Prime Minster came down to the House and stated most distinctly that it would be impossible to obtain the Votes within the necessary time unless Urgency were voted; but Urgency was refused, and the Votes passed within the time referred to. So it would not do to rely too far upon the leniency of the Prime Minister. Those who abused the Rules of the House should be dealt with stringently; but A B should not be punished because C D had transgressed the licence of debate. The more he heard and thought of the Rule, the more he was convinced that it was un-English, unnecessary, and dangerous, and that the Government Resolutions were aimed not at Obstruction, but at freedom of speech, and that they would extend the Rule as they went on until its operation had converted the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means into Party men, and had done irreparable damage to freedom of debate in the House of Commons.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he had been endeavouring to classify the arguments of hon. Members opposite; and one or two of them had struck him as remarkable. The hon. Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor) had complained of the trouble that had been raised about the Speaker becoming more or less of a political character; whereas already the Lord Chancellor, who acted as Speaker of the other House, was confessedly one. The hon. Member must remember that the Lord Chancellor could not call to Order, or perform many of the other duties intrusted to the Speaker of the House of Commons. The Woolsack was supposed to be, technically speaking, out of the House of Lords; and, further than that, the Speaker of that House need not himself be a Peer. In fact, he (Mr. Beresford Hope) remembered the Great Seal being in Commission, and a Commoner being the Speaker of the House of Lords. Did the hon. Member wish to reduce the Speaker of the House of Commons to that level? Then they had heard a good deal about the *clôture* being demanded by the nation. What could that mean, when, as it was well known, the displacement of very few votes would have wholly altered the results of the last General Election? As it was, too, why were they to listen to the supposed demands of one part of the country rather than of any other? Were the demands of all the South-Eastern Counties—of Middlesex, Essex, of Surrey, Sussex, Kent, and Hants—to go for nothing, and only Birmingham and Mid Lothian to be attended to? Another Gentleman, the hon. Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Brinton), with sweet simplicity, said—"I am a young Member, and very seldom have an opportunity of speaking. Only introduce the *clôture*, and young Members will be able often to give their views to the House." But the hon. Member must remember that as debates increased in length, so did opportunities of speaking. [MR. MUNDELLA: No, no!] But he (Mr. Beresford Hope) would say "Yes." The more the debates were shortened, the greater would be the difficulty of private and inconspicuous Members, and the more completely would the time be monopolized by the two Front Benches, as it had been in the un-Reformed Parliaments and in the times shortly after them. He could remember the old times referred to by the Prime Minister—the times of Mr. Wynn—and he asserted that the speaking in the House of Commons, in those days, was the monopoly of the two Front Benches, except by their leave. Speaking was not so free in those times as it was now, and debates were shorter. The increase in their length was a part of the great political and literary movement of the age, of the increase of newspapers and readers, and of the increased interest taken by the public in the debates, although it was denied by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) the other night; and, if that freedom was curtailed, although the Government might attain that mysterious end known as "getting through Business or carrying through measures," they would do it at the expense of such hon. Members as the hon. Members for Kidderminster and Grantham. The people who would profit by the *clôture* would be the Ministers and ex-Ministers. But those remarks were only preliminary. He gave this warning out of pure benevolence towards those young Members who expected such great opportunities of speaking when they got the *clôture.* He wished to refer to the Chairman of Ways and Means, who had not had his innings to-night. The Chairman would, of course, attend to what had fallen from the Speaker, and would search for the "evident sense of the House" in the Committee at large. But suppose the Chairman came to the conclusion that the "evident sense of the House" demanded the *clôture*, and that, upon a division, there appeared 199 against 201 votes in favour of it—technically, his decision would be right, but, by the natural sense of language, the "evident sense of the House" would not have been as he assumed. He would, in short, be shut up in a conclusion inevitably reached under the new Forms, and yet untruthful and immoral. Then, again, how were they to bring home to the Chairman of Ways and Means an idea of the "evident sense of the House?" It must be by the aid of various cries of "*Clôture!*" of "Close!" and so forth; and the House would soon find a large number of fresh cries acclimatized in addition to its already too copious vocabulary—indeed, an entirely new art would be developed in their invention. Looking at the Resolution in its entirety, he regarded it as a violation of grammar and of common sense in its use of language, and as in its substance embodying a form of Procedure that would not add to the dignity of a House that had long been celebrated for the gravity and logical accuracy of all its Rules, Orders, and Proceedings. He feared that the *clôture* would give rise to scenes of undignified disorder. Under the proposed system, the irregular, illegitimate, clandestine forms of communication between Members, such as conclaves in the Lobby, and whisperings in the Library, would be multiplied, intensified, and vulgarized; in short, this power would lead to the creation of a new form of strategy, or, in other words, a new Code of Obstruction. Would not discontented minorities, who had a spite against any particular measure, cry from the earliest period of the debate for the *clôture* for the mere purpose of annoying an overbearing majority by the unexpected use of the new instrument of torture forged by the Prime Minister? He was convinced, in fact, that the New Rules, which were intended to make them so good, were not unlikely to make them more turbulent than they were at present. As to the tales of grievance brought by hon. Members opposite, and their complaints that questions of interest had been shunted over half-past 12 o'clock by inordinate talking over some antecedent topic, he must point out that these events usually occurred on any private Members' nights—Mondays most constantly—so the Government gag could not help them, and, in all probability, there would not be 200 Members in the House to sustain a *clôture.* The only expedient he could think of for insuring a House would be to bring in a Bill to marry your grandmother, and intrust it to the Member for Birmingham.

Mr. CHARLES PHIPPS said, he could only account for the silence of hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House during the later hours of the evening, by the supposition that the Government hoped to make it appear that the Opposition were obstructing their scheme. If that supposition was not correct, he would ask whether that reticence was observed because the "gag" had already been imposed upon them? Obstruction was of very recent growth, and there was no evidence that it would become permanent. With regard to the change proposed by the Prime Minister, it involved such an upheaval of their former usages that he, for one, should be sorry to see the *clôture* substituted for the present system, which, on the whole, had worked extremely well. It did not seem to him that it was right, hastily and without consideration, to alter the Rules under which the House of Commons had attained its present high position simply to correct an evil of modern growth. There was no proof before the House as to what was the state of public opinion on this question, and he doubted whether the Government represented the feeling of the majority of the country in the proposals they were making. He firmly opposed the Resolution, as it would, in his opinion, so work in Committee of Supply as practically to place the whole Expenditure of the country in the hands of the Government of the day. It was, of course, easy to attack the time-honoured institutions of the country; but he warned the House not to be too hasty in voting for the Resolution, as the time would come when England would deeply rue it.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that in the earlier part of the debate the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) had expressed an opinion to the effect that that subject had been worn threadbare; and the speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite would imply that such was the case, for what was the argument they all used? It amounted to this—some alterations of the Rules were necessary, and, therefore, as the Government had put this Rule first, it was necessary for the House to accept it. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had been in the House during the past few hours, he would have found that, so far from the arguments against this Resolution being threadbare, a great many new points had been raised by hon. Gentlemen who had spoken from the Opposition Benches, and his (Lord George Hamilton's) noble Friend the Member for Carmarthen (Viscount Emlyn), in particular, had stated very clearly what was the real question they were deciding—and it was the most important question they had dealt with since he (Lord George Hamilton) had had a seat in the House. It was not merely whether any alteration in the Rules was necessary or not; it had not now to decide whether the system of *clôture* was the best remedy; the question before it was whether the *clôture*, as proposed in this Resolution, would raise and elevate the tone and dignity of the House of Commons, and tend to the more rapid progress of Public Business. In his opinion, of all forms of the *clôture* that could have been devised, this was the worst and most dangerous. In the first place, what did the Resolution mean? From the first day of the debate until then, they had been asking, but could get no reply. The Government had assured them on that (the Opposition) side of the House that their intentions were benign and moderate; but when they (the Opposition) attempted to import any modification for the purpose of embodying those intentions into the Resolution, they were always met by a resolute refusal. The absurdity culminated last night. They had been told that the great protection of the future was the impartiality of the Chair, and a most important ruling was given on that occasion by the Speaker. They implored the Prime Minister to put that ruling into the Resolution, so as to be hereafter accepted as the definite interpretation of the Resolution. That he declined to do, on the ground, so far as he (Lord George Hamilton) understood, that he was satisfied with the decision of the Chair, and bowed to its ruling. Would the right hon. Gentleman pay the same deference to the possible ruling of another Speaker, a few years hence, in a sense hostile to that given last night? His (Lord George Hamilton's) objection to the Resolution was that it was so hypocritical; there was deceit stamped on every line of it. The Resolution pretended to put down Obstruction, while it legalized the peculiar Obstruction from which the House had suffered for the last four years. It purported to protect fair discussion by putting it under the ægis of the impartiality of the Chair; but the inevitable tendency of the Resolution was to convert the Speaker into a partizan. It made the highest Officer of the House a partizan of the most objectionable character possible, and, having done so, it utilized him for the promotion of the *clôture*. It made the highest judicial Officer of the House perform partizan functions under the guise of judicial impartiality. With that Resolution, they could not expect the same stamp of Speakers hereafter as they had had. The Resolution contained clear and distinct instructions to the Speaker to co-operate with the majority for the time being for the purpose of expediting measures which it was the duty of the minority to oppose. The Speaker, therefore, must belong to the majority for the time being; for no man of delicacy or honour would accept a position, in which he would know that one of his primary duties was to expedite measures, which he believed to be wrong, by shutting the mouths of those he believed to be right. How was the Speaker to ascertain the "evident sense of the House?" In his (Lord George Hamilton's) opinion, there was only one conceivable method by which that "evident sense" could be expressed, and that was by noise and by interruption. The Government, therefore, proposed, with the view of elevating the tone and dignity of the House, deliberately to tie to their highest judicial Officer the noise, violence, and intolerance of the majority. Any decision the House arrived at on this question would be irrevocable—[Mr. GLADSTONE: Why?]—he was glad to have received that interrogation from the right hon. Gentleman, and he would at once answer. If, when once this weapon had been forged, it were of the use to the present majority which Radical Members expected it would be, future majorities would not be able to dispense, in the future, with a weapon that had been of such immense value to their Predecessors. The case would have been different, if the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had been accepted; for, in that case, the minority would have had in a certain sense to co-operate with the majority. They had, however, been told that to accept that was impossible, because the minority might have abused the rights of co-operation. But if the minority had abused their power, the remedy always lay in the hands of the majority by amending the Rule. On the other hand, if the majority abused their power, there was absolutely no remedy. The Resolution was so cunningly contrived that, no matter how unfair the Speaker might be in the future, there was absolutely no remedy, either inside or outside the House, against his interference, provided the majority for the time being supported him. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), in opposing the Amendment with respect to protest, had pointed out that it would not be possible for hon. Members to protest against the action of the majority, without attacking the action of the Speaker. Therefore, he (Lord George Hamilton) maintained that the action of the Speaker and the action of the majority were so inseparably mixed up, that they could not separate them. He would ask the Prime Minister, whether it was not almost verging on nonsense to tell the minority that, if the Speaker abused his powers, the minority would have him out of his Chair in a month? They could not attack the Speaker without attacking the position of the majority, and outside the House there was no remedy. However unfair the Speaker might be, or however intolerant the majority, the majority had an impregnable defence. The majority might fairly say they could not be wrong, because they had the Speaker with them. The Speaker, on the other hand, would say he had only acted according to the Resolution and the sense of the majority. The principle that he thought was most objectionable in this Resolution was, that a judicial decision in this House was to be regulated by the amount of Party pressure that could be brought to bear upon the Judge. That was a principle to be sanctioned for the first time in English history. He wished to emphasize the immorality of that principle by pointing to Ireland, where the discontent with the decisions of the so-called Judges of the Land Court was based upon the belief that those decisions were regulated, not by the evidence given before these Judges, but by the amount of political pressure that was brought to bear upon them. If the decisions of the Speaker were to be regulated by Party pressure the effect would be felt through the whole political strata of the country. It had been said that this would be impossible. Nothing was impossible. If three years ago Liberal Members had been told that the three most notable acts of the Prime Minister would be the introduction of the strongest coercive measure ever passed for Ireland, the suppression of a national movement in Egypt, and the introduction of *clôture* by a bare majority for the purposes of restriction of debate and freedom of speech, they would not have believed it possible there could be such a departure from the traditional principles of the Liberal Party. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) had complained of the comments made on the Resolution by Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, and had told them it was not true that it was proposed for the purpose of enabling the Government to pass the legislation it desired; but it had since been affirmed by the Chairman of the Liberal Federation at Portsmouth and by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that that was the case. Indeed, the hon. Gentleman had expressed his opinion that the only reason he cared for the Resolution was that it would expedite Liberal legislation. If they were asked to describe the difference between English, French, and American politicians, it would be that, in this country, men in high official rank made a distinction between their duty to their Party and their duty to their country; but if the Government were successful in carrying their Resolution, and placing it upon the Standing Orders of the House, they would make a new departure which would produce results very little contemplated by its most ardent Supporters. Of this, he was perfectly certain, that although there might have been in the constituencies, a strong feeling that some change in the Procedure of the House was necessary, there was no wish that the Speaker should be made a partizan; and he believed that, if the natural and the inevitable result of this Resolution were known, there would be a very strong and unanimous feeling expressed against it. The Opposition had a right to complain upon three grounds against the conduct of the Government with regard to the Resolution—first, that they had departed from the usual order observed in dealing with such matters and had contrived so to obscure its purport, that very few persons could understand it; secondly, that they had unfairly exercised pressure, both within the House and out of it, for the purpose of carrying it; and, thirdly, that the Prime Minister had made a most unfair use of the trust and confidence placed in him by his own Supporters, by giving personal assurances which it was impossible could be fulfilled. It was the invariable practice of the House in dealing with offences against its Rules to specify the offences for which they wished to provide a penalty or remedy, and then to take a general power with regard to offences which were not included in the list. Following that practice, he thought this Resolution ought to have been, not the first, but the last; but being the last, he believed it would not have been passed, because the other Rules would have dealt specifically with certain classes of Obstruction, and when such Obstruction had been disposed of, the Government would have been obliged to define what was the real object and the necessity for this Rule, which they could not have done, and then it could not have been passed. These protracted debates were entirely due to that reversal of that usual order of proceeding. In the last Parliament there was persistent Obstruction, and it had been proved that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had himself been guilty of Obstruction. It was a fact that Obstruction systematically prevailed in the late Parliament, and that it was supported by Liberal Members. In 1880, a solid Irish Vote was given for the present Government; but, very shortly after they came into Office, they coerced those who placed them in power, and the Government was supported by those on this side of the House. The Irish Members naturally resented those coercive measures, and resorted to Obstruction. He maintained that the Obstruction of the Irish Members in the present Parliament was more justifiable than the Obstruction of the Liberal Members in the late Parliament. A certain amount of popular indignation was roused on every Liberal platform throughout the country against the Obstruction of the Irish Members, and now the Government proposed a Resolution which, as a sort of bribe, legalized a particular kind of Obstruction which those hon. Members practised. An agitation had thus been got up to enable the Government to pass the *clôture,* in order that, by its means, they might gag the responsible Opposition. In fact, if they took the history of the last two years, whether they looked to the Irish Party or to the Conservative Party, they must come to the conclusion that the Government had deluded and entrapped each political Party in turn; but he doubted whether such tactics as these were likely to add to the moral tone of the House of Commons. The Prime Minister had declared to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), that if the operation of that Rule should tend to gag the Opposition he would be the first to co-operate towards its repeal. But what was the value of that promise? The right hon. Gentleman had himself told them that his political life was in the past, and not in the future. But the Prime Minister had, during the past few years, more than once induced the House to adopt a false principle of policy, on the plea that the exigency was so great that they could not do otherwise, and also that the false principle was so safeguarded that no evil or dangerous consequences would result from it. But he (Lord George Hamilton) believed that of all the mischievous theories and fallacies in political life, the most mischievous was that a false principle could be so adopted, because it was safeguarded. And, moreover, had they not seen how the false principle itself was afterwards made the means of sweeping away the very safeguards by which it was at first accompanied? He believed that so far from the fact of the Speaker being associated with the initiative of providing a safeguard, it would prove exactly the reverse, He had himself repeatedly endeavoured to have the words "evident sense of the House" struck out of that Resolution, as being most dangerous. When those Resolutions first came under discussion, he met a distinguished foreign diplomatist, who had been deputed by his Government to inquire into the operation of the *clôture* where it was in existence, and he said to him (Lord George Hamilton)—

> "Whatever you do, do not allow the Speaker to be associated with the initiation of the *clôture*, because the invariable effect of such a system has been to make the Speaker a partizan. During the second French Empire, there being constant complaints against M. de Morny as President of the Chamber, he was succeeded by M. Schneider, who was absolutely under the thumb of M. Rouher, and then M. Gambetta, M. Theirs, and other eminent Members were not allowed to speak."

The great mass of the Conservative Party had never been averse to reform, when such was proved to be necessary; but this Resolution did create a revolution in the Forms and Procedure of Parliament. A great authority had laid down, as an incontrovertible maxim, that "Cautious progress was alone continuous progress," and that had been their motto. As regarded the Procedure of the House, however, so far as the Resolution was concerned, their progress had not been progress, but a rash and reckless innovation; and if the new powers were to be used for the purpose of pushing through measures without adequate discussion, they might depend upon it that their progress, though it might be rapid, would not be continuous; nor would their legislation, when once passed, retain the same character of stability which had hitherto marked it. It was to be feared that the Party which was uppermost, if this power were given to it, would be tempted to use its strength unmercifully; and if it became known that those powers were to be used by the majority severely and mercilessly a feeling of irritation would be produced that would be widespread; and he could not help regretting that they were going to give those increased powers to a Prime Minister who had such destructive tendencies. He was quite sure the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to destroy everything he touched; but even, when he was endeavouring to construct, so overwhelming was his tendency to demolition, that the things which he created destroyed everything they touched. They might take that very Resolution as an illustration of his handiwork. The Prime Minister did not wish to tamper with two of the great characteristics of the English House of Commons—freedom of speech and the impartiality of the Chair. He professed to desire to preserve freedom of speech and the impartiality of the Chair; and yet he had constructed a Resolution, the tendency of which was the destruction of freedom of discussion under the ruins of the impartiality of the Chair. The new conditions would cause much irritation, and the effect of adopting that Resolution would, he feared, be the curtailment of those kindly and friendly personal relations between hon. Members on both sides, which had heretofore done so much towards smoothing the course of Public Business in the House. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; he believed there would be a great curtailment of those relationships, arising from the natural irritation of gagged men, who suffered from a sense of injustice. He did not deny that the Liberal Party might gain a temporary advantage over the Opposition; but he thought they would purchase such temporary advantage very dearly, because, some day or other, when the Conservative Party appealed to the constituencies, they would have a very powerful weapon in their hands, for they would be able to say that, in 1882, the Liberal Party and its Leaders did not make a fair use of the confidence which the country had reposed in them—that they deliberately turned a Judge into a partizan in order to gag their political opponents. The Conservative Party would be able to add, as a claim to the confidence of the country, that, at that critical moment, they had, to the best of their power, under most untoward circumstances and against overwhelming odds, endeavoured to preserve, in their integrity, two of the noblest attributes of public life in this country—liberty and freedom of speech and fair play.

Sir GEORGE GAMPBELL said, he had always been in favour of *clôtures* and of *clôture* by a majority. As to the destructive tendencies of the Prime Minister which had been referred to by the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton), he (Sir George Campbell) believed it was necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to destroy a great deal that was evil in order that he might build upon a safe foundation. Though he was entirely in favour of the *clôture*, he confessed he had some doubts whether it was desirable to put it so much in the forefront as was now the case, and whether they ought not to have proceeded with some of the other Resolutions first. He confessed also that, with the Prime Minister, he had great doubts whether the *clôture* alone could possibly be passed in so strong a form as to be a radical cure for the evils under which they were suffering. He was disposed to attach very great importance to some system by which they might better divide their labours among the Members of the House. It was, he thought, impossible, that 650 Members sitting in one House, at one time, could satisfactorily conduct all the Business of the Three Kingdoms and the Empire. He believed that the *clôture* was undoubtedly a necessity, as to which he was sure that hon. Members opposite were far to much afraid; and he did not think the result would be so bad as was imagined, because it was so safeguarded that it would not often be put into practice. In the last Parliament, there were many occasions when it would have been well to have had such a power; but during the present Parliament, there had been but few occasions when it could have been put in force; and he certainly thought the opposition offered to the Irish Coercion Bills were not such occasions, because the Bills in question were highly distasteful to the Irish Party, and therefore the discussion was not excessive. Yet he believed that notwithstanding the infrequency of its actual use, it would exercise a constant influence upon the debates, and be held as it were *in terrorem* over Members who might be disposed to offend. He admitted that there were some defects in the form of the Resolution. He particularly disliked the arrangement which put the initiative in the matter in the hands of the Speaker, and he specially disliked the words the "evident sense of the House." He was afraid that some ambiguity, some doubt, might arise in that respect; but there was another sense in which he very much doubted the advisability of inserting those words. Already they had a sufficient idea of the "sense of the House" in the howling of Members, and the great noise that was made when impatience was shown by the House; and the effect of this Resolution would be to put a premium upon those disorderly noises, causing them to become more frequent, and induce the House not to give a fair hearing to small minorities. He was indeed very jealous of those words that were inserted in the Resolution, because he was afraid the effect of them would be to make the House more intolerant than ever to small minorities with crotchets. The reason he was against the initiative being placed in the hands of the Speaker was because he thought the position of the Speaker ought to be that of an English Judge, and not that of a foreign Judge. The Speaker should act only when put in motion by a responsible person, either by a Minister or by a Member, supported by a number of other Members rising in their places, and that was why he supported the Amendment to that effect, moved by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). In that case no damage would be done to the authority of the Chair in case the speaker made a mistake. He hoped, however, that the Resolution would be passed, but that it would shortly be so amended that the Speaker would not have the responsibility of acting upon the initiative.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that almost every hon. Member who had spoken from the opposite side of the House, had spoken of the Resolution with some reservation, and the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir George Campbell) distinctly stated that, so far as the House was concerned, a *clôture* of some kind was essential; but he objected to two fundamental propositions contained in it—namely, the initiative of the Speaker, and the words "the evident sense of the House." But those were precisely what the Conservative Party objected to; and if they excluded those two conditions, they would remove the very conditions on which the Government placed the greatest reliance. Therefore, the hon. Gentleman supported not the Resolution, but something altogether different. The question of the initiative of the Speaker was a very serious one indeed, for he had said that he was to have regard to the "evident sense of the House at large." But the Resolution of the Government involved something essentially different from that, and they had not accepted that interpretation. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the judicial character of the Speaker; and the Conservative Party looked upon that judicial character as one of the most precious possessions of the House. It had been the duty of every Speaker, from time immemorial, to plead at the Bar of the House of Lords for freedom of speech for Her Majesty's faithful Commons; and yet, singularly enough, it now became the duty of the Speaker to be the Officer who would check that liberty of speech in the House. That was a change in the circumstances which would alter altogether the judicial character of the Office which he held, and other circumstances might occur which would bring about changes more radical than any changes of the past. If the Speaker should be so unfortunate as to make a mistake in interpreting the "evident sense of the House," if he should come to be placed in a minority, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) could not understand how it would be possible for him longer to retain the position he occupied, and he could conceive no misfortune that could overcome the House that would be more serious. The hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor) could claim no better argument for the Resolution than that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had declared that some change was essential. But there was no hon. Gentleman on that (the Opposition) side of the House who did not admit that some change was necessary to advance the Business of the House. And they would be prepared to give all the assistance in their power to carry some scheme that would promote Business and vindicate the authority of the House; and when these discussions commenced last February they were fully prepared, as the Prime Minister was well aware, to give favourable consideration to such a modification of the Rules as would have resulted in a considerable curtailment of the opportunities for delays, and which, while they provided for fair discussion, would have facilitated the progress of the Business of the House. But they could not understand why the Government had not first proceeded with the other proposals concerning details, as to which there was a less strongly marked difference of opinion. The House might then, after disposing of those questions, have proceeded with the question of closing the debate. If the Government had first set about Rules 2 to 9, much time might have been saved and progress made; and it would probably have then been seen that no case existed for the application of the present Rule. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had said last night that the Government might be wrong or right as to their particular proposals, but that some change was absolutely wanted. But the real controversy was what that change was to be. The proposal of the Government was that the House should part with all its traditions, and that all the immemorial customs of Parliament should be swept away. He asked the House whether it was reasonable to suppose that the substitution of law and force for that understanding which had subsisted during periods of great trial for the House and the country could work well when a mode of proceeding might be adopted which would be assented to by the great body of the House, and even by those who might feel affected by it? He believed, from the bottom of his heart, that no greater calamity could befall the House than that what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had described as an understanding, a conventional agreement, should be swept away, and that law should be substituted for it. No law could take the place or answer the purpose of that loyal, thorough, and cordial concurrence which had existed, notwithstanding political differences, between Members of the House, between Parties on one side and on the other, and between the Government and the Opposition, to support the ancient traditions of the House, and to vindicate its title to the confidence and affection of the country. Let it be understood that whatever was not prohibited by law was allowed; and if the time should come that hon. Gentlemen should feel themselves in bondage under that Rule, they would use all the power, ingenuity, and skill they might possess to defy the Rule, to bring that law into contempt and failure, those who enforced it into difficulty, and the Business of the House into danger. He felt that they were approaching a time which was most grave in the history of Parliament, which threatened the influence of Parliament and the character of the House of Commons. The argument of the Government was that it was not responsible, that it was the Government of the majority, and that the majority was omnipotent. That was a theory altogether inconsistent with the rights and privileges of the Members of the House of Commons. It was a new and startling doctrine. As the hon. Member opposite (Sir George Campbell) had said, unpopular men and unpopular minorities had, from time to time, found themselves at liberty to raise questions which ultimately attracted the sympathy and support of the House and the country; but all that, under the *clôture,* would be absolutely impossible. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) acknowledged that, for some time to come, while the traditions of the House of Commons existed, and Members remained who had sat in it for many years, that would not be the case. But as time passed the existence of the new power would induce violent and strong men to demand its application. There were instances every day that men who had resisted dictation and pressure from outside at last gave way, because they did not wish to lose the position they now occupied. He had no more doubt than that he was standing in that place that that power would be exercised by-and-bye in a manner not contemplated by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and only contemplated now by one or two Members of the House. There had already been two notable speeches from hon. Members representing two different sections of the House. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) told the House, in a cynical manner, that he supported this proposal because he believed it would be the prelude to a series of operations which would result in an imperative mandate to Members of Parliament that the measures upon which the mandate had been given should be passed rapidly and without discussion through the House; and the hon. Member added that discussion was useless when the constituencies had come to a conclusion on the measure. It was true the hon. Member represented a very advanced section, but that section was very much in earnest. There were hon. Gentlemen opposite who, being moderate Liberals, represented large Radical and vigorous constituencies; and he was afraid the time was coming when those hon. Gentlemen would either have to give place to others much more advanced in their principles than themselves, or, as in time past, have to move rapidly under pressure from behind, and be prepared to accept, more nearly than they were at present prepared to do, the views of that advanced Party. There was a section in the House—and it was well that the fact should be recognized—who were prepared to encounter almost any misfortune, if they could only involve the House of Commons and its traditions in the common ruin. For instance, the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) justified his vote the other night by saying that he was prepared—like Samson—to put his arms around the pillars, and bring down the roof upon himself. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) should like to consider next, whether the *clôture* would be effectual. In one way, it would certainly be effectual, for it would leave the Opposition free from responsibility. Time was, as had been referred to by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), on which appeals made to the Opposition by the Government of the day for support had been loyally responded to, invariably the bounden duty of the Opposition having been to give the Government the required support; but now, if the Rule were passed, it would be, as the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had said, the right of the majority in the future to control and direct the Government of the country, while the minorty would have no right to interfere, or to put any difficulty in the way. But if it was the right of the majority to do as it pleased, and that was the real and clear expression of the views of the Government on this matter, it was no longer the right or the duty of the minority to assist the majority in any difficulty under any kind of *clôture.* He understood that to be the converse of the noble Marquess's proposition. The noble Marquess said distinctly that they, on that side of the House, were prepared to part entirely with the past; all that had gone before was to be as nothing; the experience of the past was distasteful and disagreeable, and they would rely henceforth wholly on the power of the majority. If that was the spirit in which the Government meant to conduct the Business of the House, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) could say that, on the Opposition benches, there were many hon. Gentlemen who so far inherited the traditions of the House that they would not place difficulties in the way of the Government, but who would distinctly understand that they were no longer called upon to assist in the Government of the country. He regarded the views that had been expressed with respect to the Opposition as being, if not unconstitutional, at any rate different from those that had been held in time past. He believed he had rightly understood the noble Marquess the other day to say that the Leader of the Opposition had no responsibility?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am most unwilling to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. He may put whatever interpretation he thinks fit on words I have uttered; but I must disclaim the words he attributes to me. What I was arguing against was, the proposition of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), who wished to place in the hands of the Opposition the power of saying whether a debate should be protracted or not.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was glad to extract from the noble Marquess any explanation of his views; but the noble Marquess had said this—

> "My position is that in placing such a power in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition, you will be giving it to one who has none of the rights that entitle him to the exercise of this power."

And the noble Marquess went on to say—

> "You cannot make the Leader of the Opposition responsible, because no responsibility attaches to his position."

That was a doctrine to which he (Mr. W. H. Smith) took serious exception, as it was, in his opinion, opposed to the theory of the English Constitution. Up to the present time, he had always been under the impression that the Leader of the Opposition had a great responsibility—and so had every individual Member of the House—for the conduct of Public Business. If, however, the proposed great change were effected, and the majority took all the power into their own hands, that responsibility would be entirely lost, with the loss of all power, by the Opposition. The noble Marquess had spoken the other night of the extreme inconvenience that attached to arrangements between the two sides of the House, because, as he said, they resulted in compromises, than which nothing could be more hateful. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) admitted, of course, the superior power of the majority; but, surely, no Government ever possessed such abundant wisdom as to make compromises always unnecessary? His own belief was that the *clôture* would do little or nothing to expedite the Business of the House; but, on the contrary, that it would delay and obstruct it, and would merely be a weapon in the hands of the wire-pullers; still, assuming it to be successful, the only result would be that all the drastic measures spoken of by the hon. Member for Northampton would be passed; and that a violent reaction would follow. When the reaction came, there would be a demand for the reversal of legislation, and such a state of things was not to be apprehended without concern or alarm. Hitherto, great changes had been accepted after long and almost intolerable discussion; but legislation under the *clôture* would be followed by other legislation under the *clôture*, and the exasperation which produced reaction would be followed by a demand for the reversal of that legislation which had gone before. There could be nothing more dangerous or injurious to the country than such a position, and he believed it would arise. Party Government was a necessary evil; but the wire-pullers and others who were attached to it were a comparatively small proportion of the population. Were we prepared to shock the greater mass of moderate men by the triumph of a majority under the *clôture?* Because a small minority had made the conduct of Business impossible, it was proposed to impose on the Constitutional Opposition conditions hitherto unknown. The opponents who were loyal were to be punished, because there were others who were not. Experience had shown the necessity for the power and privilege proposed to be parted with, and no one would regret more than he if, from this time, were dated the decline and fall of Parliamentary life.

MR. DAWSON said, the House was like a club or an association, the prosperity of which would be imperilled by the substitution of Rules for the traditional influences which had rendered regulations unnecessary. In Austria-Hungary, when a Motion was put to close debate, the speaker who at the time happened to be addressing the Chamber could not be interrupted in the course of his remarks; and, besides this, each Party could choose one person on their behalf to make final speeches on the subject under discussion. He was not aware that the Prime Minister had made any such provision for the House of Commons. Again, in Austria-Hungary, if the Government answered any of the charges made by the final speakers, the debate was re-opened *de novo*. In France two appeals were allowed before the discussion was closed; while in Germany no special privileges were given to the Members of the Government. It was true that the *clôture* existed in the American Congress; but it should be borne in mind that that Assembly had to deal only with "Imperial," and not with local affairs. It was melancholy to reflect that that great Assembly, now the foremost in the world, was about to sink to the lowest position among Assemblies of its kind. He knew that the Party to which he belonged had been accused of being guilty of Obstruction, which was unwarranted by the condition of things, and which was put forward as the reason for the necessity of the step now proposed to be taken. That they had been so guilty he most emphatically denied. Since the year 1880 there had been several Imperial measures, and several specially English measures; and they were found supporting every great and liberal measure which the Government had introduced. What did they obstruct? They obstructed two things. They obstructed penal, coercive, despotic, tyrannous, and, as it had proved, useless legislation against their own countrymen. He contended that it was their bounden and imperative duty to oppose and delay those measures of coercion, and, as every man did in public or private, put off the evil day to the very last hour. What else had they delayed? They delayed the Land Bill. He always expressed his thanks to the Prime Minister for the Land Bill he had introduced; but he would ask him, would he not admit that that Bill had been materially improved in consequence of the delay to which it had been subjected on that side of the House? Then what had they done? They had obstructed—they had delayed that which they had improved. What had they therefore done that the Government should crush them, and, in crushing them, ruin and imperil the liberties of that great Assembly? Hon. Members should bear in mind that while the English Members had the English Press, by which to ventilate their grievances and opinions, the Irish Members had no such resource to fall back upon in this country, as Irish newspapers were not read or circulated in England. Irish newspapers were not to be found along the English railways and in the principal reading rooms. Except where his hon. Friend the Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) had put them, they would not find an Irish newspaper. Did the Prime Minister not know that his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had admitted to-day that he never read an Irish newspaper? The only platform, therefore, which the Irish Members had to reach the English ear, or even the ear of the Prime Minister, was the platform of the House. It should also be remembered that the only channel through which Englishmen and persons abroad derived their information about Ireland was the correspondence supplied to *The Times* by their Irish Correspondent in Dublin, who was also the editor of *The Daily Express*. Through that correspondence foul calumnies were circulated about Ireland, and no opportunity or means were available for the refutation of these calumnies. As respected the allegation that there had been a compact entered into between the Prime Minister and the Irish Party with regard to the course they should take on the *clôture* Resolutions, to the effect that, if they remained silent, the right hon. Gentleman would promise them Home Rule, he (Mr. Dawson) would remind the right hon. Gentleman that he had on a former occasion given a categorical promise of Home Rule. In conclusion, he would say that it was his earnest belief that the course now taken by the Government indicated a political movement which would end in the destruction of the liberties of England.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would not oppose the Motion.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he understood that it had been arranged by the authorities on the two Front Benches that there should be no division upon the Amendment until Friday. He wished to know what would be the use of spending two more days in talking upon a subject in regard to which every Member of the House had made up his mind, and upon which it was absolutely impossible to bring forward any new argument? Why were hon. Members to be put to the purgatory of hearing all this stuff talked over again for two more days? He would suggest that it would be much better to adjourn the debate until Friday. It would be a matter of great convenience to everybody, and he would throw out the suggestion for the consideration of the Government. [*Cries of* "Move!"] If it was the wish of the House he would move that the debate be adjourned until Friday.

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Question to be settled is the Motion "That the Debate be now adjourned."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be adjourned till To-morrow."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," and insert "Friday."—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that one reason, and one absolutely conclusive against the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was, that if the debate were adjourned until Friday, the division would not be taken until Monday. If his hon. Friend could prevail upon the House to go to a division on Friday, he would gladly accede to the Motion; but he (Mr. Gladstone) was afraid that no such understanding could be arrived at.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he could bear personal testimony to the fact that there were still a very large number of hon. Members who desired to speak upon the Amendment.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he was sorry to hear that such was the case. He would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 8*th November,* 1882.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SEVENTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The issue which is now before this House I venture to consider the most momentous which has ever been submitted to the decision of Parliament. Great and critical as have been the decisions which the Government and Parliament of an Imperial people have in the course of their brilliant history been compelled to take, there has been none so pregnant with the fate of the English people as that now under discussion. In this question of the freedom of speech and the fulness of Parliamentary debate the very life and independence of the British House of Commons are at stake. Upon the decision of this brief Autumn Session depends the fate, not of one question, or group of questions, however important, but of every political issue that shall in the future come before Parliament. The poison is directed against the very centre and mainspring of the Constitution itself. It is the brain and the heart of the body politic which are about to be vitiated. Now, I protest at the outset against this *clôture* being applied to the debates of this House. It is bad in principle and unjust in application. Real Obstruction, most of us agree, should be prevented. But it is monstrous to close the mouths of all because of the offence of a few.. To wholly stop discussion because some abuse their privileges is totally indefensible. The true remedy is to punish individual Obstructives, and not to gag the whole House. There is no difficulty in doing this. There are Rules of Procedure available which have, I believe, whenever properly applied, proved effective. If they are insufficient let them be strengthened. But never let the House of Commons give to an imperious Minister, working with an obedient majority and a subservient Speaker, the power of strangling debate. The Prime Minister admitted that this was a most serious and critical change. Yet the position of affairs is, he said, unprecedented, and the demoralization of Parliamentary debate requires a desperate remedy. But whose fault is it that the House of Commons has thus degenerated? Is this House to be punished, and freedom of speech to be annihilated, because of the terrible blunders committed by the Government in their management of Ireland, and in their conduct of the Business of this House? Are the 650 Members of Parliament to be gagged because the Prime Minister has reduced Ireland from a state of peace and unwonted prosperity to a reign of terror and to widespread demoralization? Is this grievous and terrible innovation to be inflicted upon Parliament because the Ministry have introduced ill-considered and immoral legislation—laws of violent coercion, and acts of unjust plunder—in order to atone for their own mismanagement? Is it because the right hon. Gentleman who represents Birmingham thought fit to encourage Irish agitation for political purposes, and then to repress it with the utmost severity, that this House is to be deprived of its freedom of discussion? Is it because the Government first created a necessity for coercion, and then introduced a stupid and ineffective measure, administered that measure inefficiently, and had to supplement it by other enactments, that we are to be thus afflicted? Is it because the Ministry have wasted the time of Parliament in alternately fostering and treading down Irish agitation that this odious and unwholesome *clôture* is to be imposed upon this House? Much was made by the Prime Minister and those who follow him in advocating this *clôture* by a bare majority of the assumption that it prevails in other countries, and in the Colonies of Britain. With regard to the Colonies, whose love of freedom—we have it on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman—is not inferior to our own, his information was, as is not unfrequently the case, singularly inaccurate. The *clôture* does not exist, as the Prime Minister affirmed it did, in Canada, in New Zealand, in Tasmania, in Victoria, or in our great and important Cape Colony. In South Australia alone, with a population of less than 250,000, has it been adopted; whereas the population of those Colonies which are free from this unwholesome and un-English gag number nearly 10,000,000 of souls. New South Wales and Queensland are free from it, and the Colony of Victoria having, in 1875, adopted a somewhat similar Standing Order, has never again repeated the unfortunate experiment. In the Cape Assembly serious Obstruction was tried in 1865, there having been two Sittings of 17 and 21 hours respectively. In the interesting Report of Mr. Noble, Clerk of the Assembly, the following statement occurs:—

> "This course of Obstruction, however, failed in its object, and was acknowledged to be an unwise as well as an undignified mode of procedure. It has never been repeated, and on any appearance of an approach to it the good sense of the House has always asserted itself, and

checked any undue exercise of the inherent powers of a minority."

That would, I believe, soon be the fate of Obstruction in this House. There has been already a very strong reaction against Obstruction, as practised during the last two years; and I believe that it required only a little more patience, combined with, perhaps, considerably more judgment on the part of the Government in their management of Public Business, to prevent its recurrence. If the right hon. Gentleman is so inaccurate as to his facts, with regard to those members of the British family in countries closely connected with England by every tie of race, and feeling, and government, why should we rely upon his confident predictions as to the harmlessness of his grave innovation? If the Legislative Assemblies of the Colonies, which are constructed on more Democratic lines, and where there is necessarily less of culture, knowledge, and refinement, can do without this odious restraint, why should not this ancient Commons House of England deal with Obstruction and yet preserve freedom of debate? The very name of the Grand Council and Legislature of these Realms signifies the origin and the main object of its existence and privileges. We are not an Assembly, or a *Corps Législatif*, or "Congress," or a Senate—we are the Commons House of the Parliament of Britain—that is, the place and the Assembly whose main purpose is the full and complete and free discussion and debate of every subject that affects the people of this Empire. I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman, with his knowledge of the history of his country, with the traditions of Constitutional liberty and struggles after freedom of speech, which are associated with this House and with the careers of many of his greatest Predecessors in the high Office which he holds, would have blushed to appeal to the example of Continental nations, who have tried, with but scant success, to follow in the footsteps of English freedom. Is it to France, ever fickle and ever unreliable, with its shifting kaleidoscope of *régimes* and Ministries, that we should turn to find a guide in the process of annihilating our dearly-won freedom of debate? France has never known the meaning of real liberty, as between man and man, and class and class. The oppression of the *Ancien Régime* was succeeded by the sanguinary tyranny of the Jacobins; after them came the crushing despotism of the First Empire. Under the Constitutional Monarchy of Louis Philippe, which was the nearest approach to real freedom that France has enjoyed, there was no *clôture.* The Third Empire saw it introduced, and bitterly did the Favres, Gambettas, and the Thiers complain of its repressive force. The evident sense of the House was shown by uproarious clamour, rattling of paper knives, and banging of desks. The Republicans, since they have held power, have made an even more unscrupulous use of this weapon. Over and over again of late years has awkward criticism been checked, damaging investigation prevented, discussion abruptly closed by the organized clamour which there represents the "evident sense of the House." There have been ample indications of late in the intolerant bearing and disorderly interruptions of Members opposite as to the manner in which searching criticism will be prevented by them if this Rule becomes the law of the House. The very last Session of the French Assembly furnished a conspicuous instance of the abuse and the ruinous power of the *clôture.* A measure of the last importance for the future of France was brought forward by the Government. It proposed to do that which the Radicals of Birmingham—and the identity of action in this respect is worth noticing—tried to effect within their municipal jurisdiction a few years back. All religious teaching, all religious emblems, even reference to the name of the Almighty, were to be forbidden throughout the public schools of France. The Conservative Party in the Chamber, and even some moderate Republicans, were aroused by so shameful a proposal. It seemed certain that the Bill would receive unsparing and prolonged criticism. The public conscience might have been aroused and the Ministry defeated; but the favourite weapon of Parliamentary despotism was at hand. Clamours were raised for the *clôture.* It was promptly voted by a majority; and thus, after the briefest of discussions, an Atheistic measure was hurried through the Legislature, and all religious teaching was banished from the schools of the Republic. Was it asking too much to demand that the exercise of such a power as this should not be conferred upon any Ministry unless supported by, at the very least, a majority of two-thirds, which the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) proposed. I have referred to the case of France, from which, if time permitted, many other instances of the evil-working of the *clôture* might be quoted. It has been the rule, and not the exception, for French Oppositions to be abruptly silenced by the *clôture*, in order that Ministerial measures might not be "obstructed"—that is, not be criticized or debated. Yet, even in France, there is this great advantage over the scheme of our Government—that the *clôture* cannot be voted without a debate. What, then, are the other Legislatures to which the Prime Minister would point as models for the imitation of the British Parliament? Is it the young Assembly of Germany to which he would direct our admiration? I am not sure, Sir, that a little more Bismarckian resolution and statesmanship, and a little less sophistry and rhetoric and verbosity, would not be a good thing for England; but I shall be somewhat surprised to find hon. Members opposite basing their ideas of Parliamentary debate upon the example of Germany. In Hungary, whose history and Constitution more closely resemble our own than those of any European country, and whose national pride and dauntless independence of spirit are akin to those of the English people, *clôture* is unknown. But I had forgotten the deep admiration which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and many of his followers, have, of late years, professed for that Government, whose methods of *clôture*, national and individual, are so absolute and so perfect. It is the country of the "civilizing mission" and the "knightly crusade" which furnishes the Prime Minister with the most crushing form of *clôture* which the world has ever seen. Nor is it surprising to find that the founder of the Caucus and the principal advocate of the *clôture* has lately been studying the science of national oppression under the shadow of the despotism of St. Petersburgh. Even the ingenuity of Birmingham may learn a few lessons from the practised absolutism of Russia. If there is any lesson to be deduced from a comparison of the liberties of our Parliament with the mechanical devices of Foreign Assemblies, it is not that we should blindly imitate their *clôture*, but rather that they should copy the unrestricted freedom of the parent of Constitutional liberty. Moreover, in some Foreign Legislatures Members had the immense protection of voting by ballot upon the question of the *clôture*. Will the Government grant this protection to Members of the House of Commons? The monstrous blunder of the right hon. Gentleman as to Colonial practice is hardly less creditable than his total want of information as to the working of the *clôture* in those foreign countries to whose example he appealed, or than his silence respecting its abuses, if he was acquainted with them. The fact is, the *clôture* has acted as a deadly blow to liberty wherever it prevails, and that all minorities in *clôture*-ridden countries groan under its tyranny. Why was it that the Government refused to accept the moderate and sensible Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin? Why were they unwilling that a majority of two-thirds should be necessary to close discussion in this House? Did they adduce the smallest proof that such a limitation would not be ample, and more than ample, to prevent Obstruction? Had they any evidence to bring forward which would show that a third of the Members of this House, or anything like that proportion, ever attempted to delay the progress of Business? Why, Parliamentary discussion has never been resorted to by more than a twentieth part of the Representatives of the people. In one year it may have slightly exceeded this proportion; but that was when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), were the co-Obstructors and abettors of those Irish Gentlemen whom they have of late been so vigorously coercing. No, Mr. Speaker; the *clôture*, by a bare majority, is not meant as a genuine Parliamentary reform. It is a political engine and a partizan device. It is to be used, like the Irish Land Act, as a means for crippling a great Party in the State, and a class of the community who do not fall down and worship the more advanced Leaders of the Liberal Party. A series of revolutionary and drastic measures have to be hurried through Parliament in order to redeem the rash pledges, and to revive the waning credit of Radical Ministers.

The existing electorate has had enough of the anarchy at home and confusion abroad, which have marked the career of Her Majesty's present Government. Fresh fields of credulity are to be opened, in order that their lease of power may be prolonged. Careful discussion and thorough debate might be fatal to the success of their pernicious projects; and so, like the Atheists and Radicals of the French Republic, they seek to stifle discussion with the *clôture*, and to strangle argument by the vote of a bare majority. We might be willing to intrust such a power as this to the present Prime Minister, though I am bound to say that many of his acts do not bear the impress of Parliamentary toleration. His conduct with regard to the Royal Warrant in 1873, his more recent and repeated attempts to override the decisions of the House with regard to Mr. Bradlaugh, and his hasty and ill-considered censure upon the House of Lords for appointing a Committee, which was perfectly within their rights, might render me unwilling to confide so great a power even to the right hon. Gentleman himself. But the very argument used by the right hon, Gentleman, that his own interest in this measure lies in the past, and that it will mainly affect Parliaments in which he may not have the conspicuous voice he holds in this, is, to my mind, a very strong one against this *clôture*. We might, perhaps, trust the right hon. Gentleman, with his 50 years of Parliamentary life, and his long traditions of Parliamentary fairness; but can we trust those who may succeed him? Those who have introduced new and unwholesome elements of mechanical wire-pulling into English politics; those who have organized victory, not by healthy public opinion, not by individual judgment, but by an organized machinery, at once slavish and tyrannical; those who get themselves, by adroit pressure from outside, pitchforked into the Cabinet—these are the men whose possible advent to commanding positions in the State should make everyone who regards the independence and spontaneity of political life hesitate before placing such a tremendous weapon in the hands of politicians who are only too likely to misuse it. The right hon. Gentleman, however, has often before been on the point of abandoning his prominent position in political life, and we may still hope for his long continuance among us. I pass over the obvious inequalities and absurdities of the Rule as proposed by the Government. These have already been fully criticized. No Minister has yet been able to explain the sense or logic of permitting a majority of 62 to silence 39 Members, while they require a majority of 161 to silence 40 Members, and, above all, while they allow 201 Members to silence 200. The disproportion of these regulations is so glaring that their details need only to be stated without comment. The general arguments of the Prime Minister are exceedingly weak when tested by practical investigation. The right hon. Gentleman is certainly a most accomplished actor, and those portions of his eloquent speeches which are delivered with the most fervour are generally the weakest in logic. His main argument is built on two assumptions, neither of which will by any means bear close inspection. The first is the infallibility of the Speaker; the second is the certainty that an oppressed minority would always be able to make itself heard in the country if not in the House, and that such indignation would be aroused out-of-doors that a Government using the *clôture* vigorously to cut discussion short would speedily be hurled from power. In the first place, this second statement is the purest assumption. It is not so easy to hurl Governments from power, even if their conduct be reprehensible and their unpopularity great. A Ministry that commands a majority in this House can retain Office without the possibility of its overthrow till the natural term of its Parliamentary existence expires. Such a Government will be sure to hold on till the last moment, hoping for some lucky event to change public feeling. I believe that last May and June the present Ministry were wholly discredited in the country, and that an appeal to the constituencies would then have been fatal to them. The Egyptian War is pretty generally thought to have been the *Deus ex machinâ* of their deliverance. With this view I do not altogether agree, for when the country sees how little the Government obtain as the fruits of a costly war, and, above all, when the country realizes the full volume of the incapacity and blundering, monstrous and incredible, that alone rendered this war necessary, public feeling will undergo a remarkable re-action. How can the oppressed minority in this

House assert its rights and arouse the indignation upon which the Prime Minister so eloquently descanted? The majority have the whip-hand, and they will keep it ruthlessly under the dictation and management of the Caucus. What happens in the United States? Let the right hon. Gentleman read a little of the political literature of that great country, and he will see how, in spite of a magnificent Continent, a noble people, and originally very free institutions, that monstrous triple offspring of ingenious Demagogueism—the Caucus, the *clôture*, and organized clamour—are absolutely fatal to freedom and independence. What says a very acute judge, and one by no means hostile to Republican institutions, who has just been visiting the great Republic of the West?—

> "We see a whole people gradually losing their freedom amidst the growth of great commercial activity and the development of the Arts. While the American people retain the form of freedom there has been considerable loss of the substance. The sovereign people are fast becoming a puppet, which moves and springs as the wire-pullers determine."

These are startling and important sentences. They are pregnant with warning to Englishmen, who have already seen the initiation in this country of that accursed system of wire-pulling and of professional politics which are ruining the free institutions of the United States. Well, Sir, this is not the only instance. In such a case a few examples of the practical working of the *clôture* are worth bushels of sentiment and rhetoric. Take the example of another Democratic country—that of France. How has the *clôture* worked there? It is perfectly misleading for Ministers to come to this House with vague and groundless statements that the *clôture* works well in foreign countries. I challenge the Prime Minister to give me an instance where it does work well. In France every Party cries out against it. It oppressed the Liberals and Radicals when used by an Imperialist Ministry, and M. Thiers and other eminent men denounced it bitterly. It oppresses the monarchical and religious—that is the Conservative minority under the Republic. It has over and over again stifled debate in the most obnoxious and unjust and premature way. Nor has it been found impossible for France, as the right hon. Gentleman assumed it would be found impossible in this Parliament, that a presiding Officer, equivalent to our Speaker, should favour the majority, and be supported in his favouritism. Nor has he been hurled from Office because of such favouritism. I hold that one of the surest results of this 1st Resolution—which devolves on the Speaker the initiation of the *clôture*—will be to lower and deteriorate the character of the occupants of that Chair. The argument of the Premier upon this point was of the flimsiest description; indeed, Sir, it consisted of a series of impassioned appeals to the impossibility of your Successors degenerating from your own high impartiality. He went so far in hyperbole as to denounce the idea of any Speaker ever being such a—I almost tremble at repeating his word—fool as to deviate from the strict path of right and fairness in his appeal for the *clôture*. It is necessary to remind the right hon. Gentleman that those who will have most responsibility in the future will be, not Speakers of high character and dignity, but the Ministers and the majority in whose power the choice of Speakers will rest. Supposing, for example—and it is by no means a strained supposition—that the Speakers of the future are chosen with a special view to their Party usefulness, what a tremendous temptation the new power which this Resolution is placing in their hands will be to those who manage the dominant Party in this House! Why, a compliant Speaker, who would interpret the "evident sense of the House" in favour of his Party for the purpose of closing a dangerous discussion, would be more valuable to a Government than a score of fluent orators. The taint of original sin is too strong in our political nature to enable such a temptation to be long resisted, and this House will have partizan Speakers, just as the Legislatures of other countries have had them. It is said that any Speaker who misused this power ever so slightly would find his position untenable by reason of the indignant hostility of the oppressed minority. This is the purest assumption of all. It does not so happen in France, or in the United States, whose Chambers have been more often than not presided over by partizan Chairmen. The unjust Speaker may have the minority against him, but he will have the majority at his back. You ask who will protect him in case of injustice against an indignant minority? I ask you, in reply, who will protect him—the Speaker—against an irate and overweening majority? What will become of an occupant of that Chair who ventures to disregard once or twice or thrice the interested but unjust clamours, even of a bare majority, for the *clôture?* If he resists their pressure, will he not be denounced by those who will, indeed, have the power to make his position untenable? Will not the Speakers of the future be compelled to hazard the indignant, perhaps the passionate, but still the helpless outcry of the down-trodden minority, rather than incur censure and—what is sure to follow—deposition by an all-powerful majority. The presiding Officers of foreign countries have in too many instances degenerated into political partizans. When I see the conduct of those who have of late years dominated the Liberal Party, of those who have introduced and manipulated, without stint or scruple, the machinery of the Caucus, when I read their avowed projects and their insolent Circulars threatening Members of this House with condign punishment if they do not promptly obey the dictation of an ambitious Minister and an obscure clique, I ask this House whether it is at all unlikely that these persons will in the future be over-scrupulous, either as to the kind of Speaker they appoint or as to the pressure they will put upon him to do that which finds favour in their eyes? A very conspicuous instance of such premature *clôture* to which I have already referred occurred this year in the debate upon the anti-religious Bill, which was the great Charter of French Radicals and Atheists. When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister assured the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin that he would be the first to help him if any such repression of discussion as we anticipate was tried under this Rule, we feel deeply obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. But, for my part, I dread the gifts of the right hon. Gentleman. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* We have not forgotten the golden promises of the Prime Minister and of the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) with regard to the Land Act and the Sub-Commissioners, and we remember how they were fulfilled. Cold comfort have the victims of the iniquitous decisions of those partizan officials obtained from their appeals to the right hon. Gentleman. The real fact with regard to this *clôture* is, that it is part of a large scheme of political manipulation which is to hand over this great and ancient country, with its splendid traditions of freedom and independence and amplitude of discussion, bound hand and foot to the mercy of the self-seeking and unscrupulous men who wish to obtain power by these novel and unhealthy methods. First, we have seen the establishment throughout the country of an elaborate organization arranged in hierarchical grades. It is, in fact, a copy of the American Ring, with its agents, its leaders, its Ring, and its Boss, who drive the game of politics. We have seen specimens of the dictation and tyranny this organization has sought to exercise over Members of this House who have dared to be a little independent. Hon. Gentlemen have been instructed by an obscure clique of Birmingham wirepullers how they are to vote. They have been threatened with penalties if they do not vote in a certain way. Who are these obscure persons, these Schnadhorsts, and Harrisses, and Kenricks, and Snagges, and Nuttalls who dictate their votes to the Liberal Members of Parliament? They are the exact counterpart of what is called in America a Ring—that is, a small circle of otherwise obscure men, who make politics a profession, and who think, move, vote, and elect for the people. They are the persons in whose hands, according to Mr. Herbert Spencer's warning words, "the sovereign people are fast becoming a puppet, which moves and springs as the wire-pullers determine." At the head of this Ring, and behind the scenes, sits the great Boss, the Supreme Head of the political machine. Who he is, and where he is to be found, we need not too closely examine. But, Sir, like a celebrated personage, the author of all evil, he is probably not very far from that Bench. The hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) end others have said that the Caucuses are really Representative Bodies, and that he never experienced any dictation from his own Caucus. Well, Sir, the hon. Member is always asserting his independence, though nobody obeys the Government Whip with greater docility. But it is a singular fact that the hon. Member for Stoke was one of the few

Members of this House who were sufficiently influenced by the insolent Circular of the Caucus with regard to this gag. He did respond to their directions, and tried by public speeches to stimulate the mechanical agitation which they ordered. But the appearance of election is only on the surface. The "hundreds" are chosen by districts in each constituency, and these delegates form the local Caucuses. So far so good. These Caucuses each elect an inner ring or council. These councils send representatives to the Central Council, which is itself ruled by a small clique at Birmingham, to whom I have referred. Thus, the Central Caucus has its inner ring, which is at the head of all. Behind this ring, and in close connection with it, is the "Boss," or Supreme Head, who shall be here nameless, but who really directs its movements. Orders can thus be transmitted from the top throughout the whole hierarchy down to the electors in the constituencies, who are driven like sheep to the polls. There is no appeal to the individual judgment or knowledge of the electorate. Orders are issued from the Supreme Ring upon every political question, great and small, and they have to be obeyed. It is not a question of political organization. That may be necessary and desirable. But the action of the whole of the Liberal Party is now dictated from above upon every question. Not only votes, but opinions, agitations, even thoughts, are now arranged by the central wire-pullers at Birmingham. Even the votes of Members of this House are dictated by these obscure persons. Thus all individuality, spontaneity, and independence in English political life is being destroyed. How, then, does all this apply to the proceedings in this House? I will endeavour to show. At present there is one sanctuary, not wholly free from the dictates of the Boss and the Ring, but still comparatively free from its control and its dominating power. The British House of Commons, for centuries the home of freedom of speech and fulness of discussion, yet retains its unshackled independence. Careful debate and liberty of speech are fatal to this Caucus system. It cannot stand the criticism and dissection to which itself, its manipulators, and its works would be subjected by a free Parliament. Like the owls and the bats, it lives in darkness and prowls about amid the shades of night. To enable the Caucuses to control Parliament and to stifle discussion and criticisms, which are fatal to its movements and its aims, the *clôture* has been invented to hand this House over to its dictators. The Prime Minister may not recognize its dark operations; but it is the wire-pulling of the Caucus which has put upon him the pressure that forced him to abandon the fair compromise which he offered to the Leaders of the Opposition last May, and which he has so clumsily withdrawn. The *clôture* is to be worked by the "evident sense of the House"—that is, by organized clamour, which has been fatal to the freedom of political Conventions in America, and which will destroy not only order and courtesy, but fair discussion in this House. The combined system of Caucus, clamour, and *clôture* will be fatal to English liberty. The great point upon which terrible and, I believe, irremediable abuses will spring up is the attempt to determine "the evident sense of the House." The manufacture of this "evident sense of the House" will, as I have said before, soon be turned by the Government agents in this House, acting under outside direction, into a fine art. It will be so convenient, so desirable, so invaluable in a partizan sense to close awkward debates after one night or, perhaps, half-a-night's discussion. There is no lack of material. It would be very easy to organize a certain number of hon. Members into an "evident sense of the House" brigade. There are the hon. Members for Brecknock (Mr. Flower), and Bucks (Mr. Carington), and North Northamptonshire (Mr. Spencer), and Stoke (the senior Member I mean) (Mr. Woodall), and Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James), West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson), and East Derbyshire (Mr. Barnes), and especially the Members for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), and for Cheltenham (Baron de Ferrieres), who have already shown their high capacity in this direction. These hon. Members would be led, aptly and boldly, by the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), and whipped in, if any reluctance were shown, by the hon. Baronet the Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Sir Frederick Milbank), who, indeed, has already received a handsome reward for his distinguished services in this direction. These would altogether make an admirable and effective force, armed and equipped at all points for the campaign of the *clôture.* I can imagine how ingeniously they would be distributed over those Benches, and how irresistible, but, at the same time, innocent, would be "the evident sense" they would create. It might have been some security to require that before this *clôture* was put to the House, the judgment of the Speaker should be re-inforced, as was proposed on Monday last, by an hon. Member opposite, by a certain number of Members rising in their places to support it. In that case the House would have seen, and not been impressed by, the familiar and amiable faces of the Brigade, whose powers of argument are in inverse ratio to the vigour of their lungs. Even the hon. Members, to whom I have referred, might have blushed to show themselves frequently. But the proposers of this scheme were too clever to accept any such limitation on their project, and it was incontinently rejected. But, says the right hon. Gentleman, the majority of this House would never support such an unworthy *clôture*, or, indeed, any hasty finish of a debate. I wish we could feel at all sure of that. There have been several striking instances of late when not the majority of the future House of Commons, elected, perhaps, by universal suffrage and managed by the Caucus; but the present majority would, if they could, have closed important—nay, vital — debates after a single night's discussion. The case of the Arrears Bill has been referred to. It is notorious that this most grave measure, in principle, the most novel and dangerous, perhaps, ever submitted to Parliament, was nearly hustled through its second reading after a few hours' debate; nor has the House forgotten the desperate clamour which was raised by the supporters of the Government on the first night of the debate upon the censure on the House of Lords to close the discussion there and then. Can anyone doubt that if this Clôture Rule had been in force that it would not have been constantly applied, as in similar cases it is always being applied in France? Or, supposing the majority in their hearts believe that a debate has not been sufficiently debated, but that they are ordered by their Whips and by the Caucus to vote for the *clôture.* Dare they refuse? What said the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) on the debate on this very question last summer? Why that, but for the strong pressure put upon them by their Leaders and their Whips, not 100 Liberal Members would have voted against the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). That I believe was quite true. If such results have already been accomplished by disciplinary coercion in this House, what is there impossible, or even improbable, in the idea that under this Rule a majority will always, on important questions, be made ready to vote for the *clôture?* The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade is the principal supporter of this *clôture*, and has done more than any other man, by means of the organization which he controls, to force it upon the Prime Minister and upon the House. No English Member has made so free a use of Obstruction as that right hon. Gentleman. Last night, it is true, in reply to the charge of the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. Herbert), he (Mr. Chamberlain) denied point blank that he had been guilty of Obstruction. But, Sir, his memory must have singularly failed him. The quotations from the right hon. Gentleman's speeches on those occasions prove his complicity beyond a doubt. The hon. Member for Wilton quoted one passage from a speech of the President of the Board of Trade in 1879—

> "If there was any threat in that House or out of it of anything like Obstruction, they must not lose sight of the fact that the Government only made reasonable concessions after four days' discussion—in fact, they could get nothing from the Ministry except by what was commonly called Obstruction; and, therefore, the Ministry had no right to complain if opposition were carried further than previously they had been accustomed to carry it."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlvii., 206-7.]

But there was even more significant language used by the right hon. Gentleman. On the same Bill, speaking on the 5th of July, 1879, he said—

> "If Irish Members were guilty of Obstruction, he said English Members were decided to adopt the same course—call it Obstruction, or systematic opposition, or what they would."—[*Ibid.* 1554.]

The course he adopted then, and in which he gloried, was precisely that adopted by hon. Members from Ireland during the past two years, which has been denounced by the Prime Minister and every occupant of the Treasury Bench as Obstruction. Reiterated speeches, constant Motions to report Progress, innumerable divisions, braggings of "no surrender," all-night Sittings — these were the methods which the President of the Board of Trade then found consonant with his sense of Parliamentary propriety, but which he—now in Office —seeks to repress. He spoke over 150 times in one Session, nor was the right hon. Gentleman then the Leader of even a section of the Liberal Party. Indeed, when he was rebuked by the then Leader of the Opposition, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, his present Colleague, for his conduct, he at once threw off his allegiance to the noble Marquess and spoke of him in the most contumelious and insubordinate terms. He sneered at the noble Marquess as "the Leader of only one section of the Liberal Party." If the President of the Board of Trade were consistent he could now not only vote with us, but speak against this odious innovation. One of my principal objections to the power of *clôture*, especially when it can be put in force by a bare majority, is that it must tend to produce in England, as it has produced in foreign countries, the appeal to revolutionary violence, instead of to peaceful and Constitutional methods. A minority defeated, after a fair struggle, in which every opportunity of stating its case has been afforded, and after it has enjoyed the invaluable privilege of exposing to the mind of Parliament and of the public all the arguments that ability and ingenuity can urge on its behalf, bears defeat in such a case with resignation and without rancour. No sense of gross injustice rankles in the breast of the beaten Party, for they have been defeated in a fair field and on their merits. But once let a minority have ground to feel that they have been treated with injustice, that their criticism has been stifled, and their arguments refused a hearing, and you will before long completely revolutionize not only the spirit with which the great Parties in this country have hitherto regarded each other, but—what is more serious—you will revolutionize the practice and the methods of political struggle. Premature repression will be met by violent resistance. The secret societies and conspiracies and desperate factions which, owing to similar causes, prevail among Continental nations, will in time obtain hold of English political life. Freedom of speech and unrestricted discussion have been alike the main charter of British liberty and the chief safety-valve of popular opinion. You are about to close this safety-valve. You will have no right to be surprised if explosions ensue. And for what is this dangerous risk to be run? Are the laws which England has obtained under the good old system which you are now abrogating, perhaps for ever, so much worse than the enactments of other peoples who have not possessed your privileges? Is the freedom enjoyed by the people of these Realms less genuine and less widespread than that which the conscription-ridden and revolution-ridden nations of the Continent fitfully possess? Is the progress which we have made less real and less stable than the revolutionary cataclysms and reactions of foreign despotisms and Republics? Supposing the gentlemen of Birmingham and their dependents do find, in the work of rushing through Parliament their drastic measures of wholesale change, a little more delay than their avidity is disposed to brook, will the evil, after all, be so very intolerable? If the leaders of the Caucuses do not find themselves masters of a gagged Parliament and a wire-pulled country quite so soon as they desire, will the majority of Englishmen be so grievously injured or disappointed? No, Mr. Speaker; it is not the country that is crying out for this new legislation, which hon. Members opposite are for ever using as the stalking-horse to conceal their tyrannical aims. We are, as a nation, not suffering from want of laws, but from over-legislation. The country wants individual action and enterprize, spontaneity of thought and deed, and less of officious and grandmotherly legislation. I am not at all sure that the country would not benefit if this House, as at present constituted, were to be adjourned, not for three months, but for three years. It is not in the interests of the country at large, of the British people, that freedom of debate is to be strangled. It is that a small coterie of ambitious politicians, who despair of winning to their views by open Constitutional methods the existing electorate, may establish their own power that they are seeking for this novel and foreign political weapon. It is no paper Constitution with which the Government are now tampering. It is not one of those mushroom schemes of Government which the political adventurers of the Continent can produce by scores from their pigeon-holes at every opportunity. The British Constitution has been the slow growth of the wisdom of centuries, its matchless privileges have been the most hardly won, and up to the present time the most dearly prized heritage of your race. It is the parent of all free institutions of modern civilization. It is the exemplar upon whose model other peoples have moulded their efforts after liberty and order. The keystone of that Constitution has been freedom of speech, absolute, and untrammelled, for the Representatives of the people in Parliament. Every measure submitted to the Commons of England—no matter by whom, or how powerfully supported—has had to endure the most searching, the most complete, and even the most protracted criticism. It is this full and uncontrolled discussion, combined with perfect freedom and independence of speech for every Member of this House, however humble, which has secured for England just and equal laws, sure and moderate progress, and those general liberties, which are at once our pride and our happiness. It is at this freedom of speech and fulness of discussion at which you are now aiming a dangerous, perhaps a deadly blow. You are attacking not an outwork, or a limb, or a branch, of the Constitution; your assault is aimed at the very keystone, and basis, and mainspring of the liberties of the British people. And into whose interests and by what necessity are you impelled to this threatening, this injurious innovation? Is there any legislation so urgent that it cannot brook a slight or even a considerable delay? Can any impartial mind affirm that the country is suffering from a want of legislative change? Is it not clear that the risk we run is the risk of hurried, fussy, inconsiderate, and partizan legislation, rather than that of a dearth of beneficial laws? Is it not clear that debate in this House is to be stifled, not in the interests of the people of England, not for the sake of sound and deliberate legislation, but to enable a body of reckless and unscrupulous politicians to secure their own future by means of a series of revolutionary and drastic changes which shall enable them to keep political power in their hands? What matters the fate of a Ministry even if its Chief be the eloquent Prime Minister? What matters the fate of a Party even if it consider itself uniquely gifted, in comparison with the independence of Parliament and the freedom of speech? Shall it be said of this Parliament, as it was said of the Nobles of Venice, that they forged the chains of their own servitude without a struggle and without a blush? I cannot, and I will not, believe it till that fatal vote is cast which shall for all time poison the very source and lifeblood of our Parliamentary freedom. Mr. Speaker, I shall record my vote with all the sincerity of profound conviction against a scheme which will degrade public life in this country, which must tend to degenerate your high and impartial Office, which will be fatal to the independence of hon. Members and to the fulness of discussion in this House, and which will destroy what has been alike the pride and the bulwark of our Constitution life—freedom of speech in Parliament.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER said, he would not have risen to take part in the debate had it not been for some remarks which were made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck). In the course of a speech he had delivered a few days ago, the right hon. and learned Member did him the honour to refer to a letter he had written on the subject of these debates, and evidently thought that letter so admirable that he had kept it in his pocket for a period of eight months. If he had been able in any way to oblige the right hon. and learned Member by writing that letter he was very glad, and if another letter would be equally useful he (Mr. Macliver) would be very glad to write it. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, and others who had spoken on the same side, seemed to think that Members on the Liberal side were labouring under the bogey of a Caucus system; but, so far as he was concerned, he could assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman he was perfectly free from any pressure of the Caucus, and that the votes he had given, as well as those he should give, were entirely free and unfettered. A great deal had been said about the silence maintained by Members on the Liberal side of the House; and the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), with his usual good taste and profound judgment, described them as mutes engaged at the funeral of free speech. Well, the noble Lord might have extended the remark by saying that the same mutes had been engaged at the last General Election in burying a good many of the noble Lord's political friends; and he might add that when another occasion came the same service would be performed again. Liberal Members had been taunted with their devotion to their Leader. At any rate, they did not require two Leaders in the Liberal Party. One sufficed for them; and they on that side of the House would feel alarmed at the appearance of a second, not to say a third. So far as he could judge, they who sat on the Liberal Benches were content to support the Prime Minister, whose object they believed was to promote, not to curtail, freedom of speech; and they would support him in the measures he had brought forward to place restraints upon licence of debate, and to reform the Procedure of the House in the manner necessary for the due performance of its duties.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, he could not think, in spite of the remarks just made, that the conduct and speeches of certain Radical Members, particularly the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), were characterized by implicit confidence in, and loyalty to, the Prime Minister. He hoped the debate would not close without their obtaining from the Prime Minister a definite statement on one point—namely, the sense in which Her Majesty's Government wished to apply this Resolution when they had got it passed. It was necessary that they should have such a definition; because the Government had objected to the ruling which the Speaker had given the other day being formally recorded. He also wished the Prime Minister to inform the House whether his contention was that this measure was required because the conduct of certain Members of the House had been such as to render it necessary; or whether it was because so much time was now consumed in debate that legislation had become impossible? If the former, the Constitutional Opposition had the right to ask the Prime Minister whether he complained of them; if he did, he ought to make a charge and substantiate it; if he did not, they were entitled to honourable acquittal as a Party. If the Prime Minister said the Rule was necessary because legislation had become impossible, a practical difficulty arose. Hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway on the Ministerial side said—"You can trust us not to apply the Rule unfairly," and expressed surprise at that being doubted; but what would be their position when the Rule was passed? Now, when they visited their constituents they were able to say that such and such a measure, which they loyally supported, had not passed because of the opposition it encountered, and that was now a valid excuse; but under the New Rule the constituents might reply—"You have made a Rule which was to put down Obstruction and enable you to carry legislation; if you do not avail yourselves of it we must seek Members to represent us more faithfully." When it came to a question of a Member losing his seat, or assuming an unscrupulous attitude towards the Opposition, there was really serious danger that Members would prefer to keep their seats at the risk of restricting debate unfairly. Then it was possible that the Speaker of the future might suffer from the tyranny of the majority in the event of his strictly maintaining the traditions of the Chair. If the Speaker did not fall in with the view of the extreme Party, represented by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), a cry would be got up that he was the Speaker of the minority, and pressure would be used to prevent his being re-elected. It was suggested that the dissatisfied minority might appeal to the country. But he understood that appeals were to be made to the electors on questions of policy, and not on matters relating to the internal discipline of the House. It could hardly be desired that a Member would go about the country advertising that he had been put to silence. And what could be more undignified than to have Members running about the country debating in a one-sided manner every question again, and asserting to ill-informed electors the dangerous doctrine that the Peoples' House was tyrannical? The Leader of the Opposition was now held responsible, to a certain extent, for the way in which the Business of the House was conducted. He was occasionally reminded of his duty, and was taunted with inability to keep the free lances of the Party under control. The effect of carrying the Resolution would be to increase the power of the free lances as against the Constitutional and regular Leader; because, if power were taken away from the regular Leader, any unscrupulous follower would say—"You are relieved from all responsibilities; the Government and the Speaker have now taken the exclusive control of debate upon themselves, and I may just as well go on and get myself suspended, and then go and stump the country and say I am the victim of the tyranny of the majority." He hoped there were few hon. Gentlemen who would take that course; but there was a danger that some would, and it was quite possible that a very unreasonable, but not a very formidable, cry might be got up on that account. This question was argued as if it were whether the minority or the majority should prevail. That was not the case, because the majority had certain powers. They decided when a Session was to begin and end, what Business should be laid before Parliament, and what days in each week should be devoted to each question. All the minority's power was to insist on a debate not closing till they had said their say. Was it reasonable to affirm that they had equal powers to the majority? If the minority were left the power of continuing a debate, could the majority want a better cry than Obstruction, should the minority, as a body, abuse it? It was probable that this Rule would expedite legislation, and if he did not believe that the other Rules would so far expedite legislation as to render the first one unnecessary, he should feel much difficulty in voting against it. He had abstained from voting against the Government on two important Amendments, and had voted with them on a third, and had thus done what he could to show that he approached the question in a fair spirit; and he had now said enough to show why, on reasonable and moderate grounds, the younger Members of the House, who were specially interested in the future conduct of its proceedings, might oppose this Resolution.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS observed that, in the very fair and temperate speech to which they had just listened, the hon. Member had asked two questions. One was as to the sense in which Her Majesty's Government intended to apply this Rule. He thought that the hon. Member would find the answer to that within the four corners of the Rule itself. He did not think Her Majesty's Government intended to apply the Rule at all, but that it lay with the Speaker when he thought proper to apply the Rule. On this point he would suggest another way in which the sense of the House would become very evident to the Speaker, and that was on the division taken on the adjournment of the debate. Supposing a very large number of Members voted against the adjournment, and there was a small minority in its favour, he thought it would become very clear that the majority of the House wished the debate to be closed. Then the hon. Member asked whether this Resolution was intended to put down Obstruction or to promote legislation? Well, he did not think this Resolution ought to be separated from the whole mass of the Resolutions. It was part of a general scheme. There was and had been Obstruction; but that Obstruction was only one incident of the block of Business, and this was only one, and by no means the most important, of the Rules, though it stood first, and from its being first, perhaps, an undue importance had been given to it. Members who had been in the House that morning had listened to a somewhat lengthy speech from the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), and, at any rate, he had given a good measure of words to his Party. He would not follow the hon. Member in his wanderings East and West and South and North in search of the *clôture;* but he would say that when the hon. Member challenged the Prime Minister to find one single instance of the *clôture* answering and acting well, he should, at least, have brought forward some single instance of its not answering well. He made certain assertions of the way in which it had worked in certain countries; but he never for one moment gave a single instance where it had worked in practice badly. The hon. Member was good enough to pity poor Liberal Members for the way in which they were domineered over by the Caucus. Now, they did not accept that pity at all. The Liberal Members were very well able to take care of themselves, and they and their constituents would understand one another very well in the future; but if there was any weight in the utterances of the Leaders of the Party opposite, at Glasgow, Inverness, and elsewhere, they would say that there was a very great desire among the Leaders of the Party to establish a system very similar for the benefit of Members of the Conservative Party. Perhaps the objection of the hon. Member for Eye to the Caucus might be gathered from one of the greatest powers to be found in it, which was "that directions come from the top" to the lower representatives of the Caucus. He could well understand that the hon. Member for Eye should think, with many other Members of the Conservative Party, that directions should not come from the top. They had seen instances of this pretty often in the last year or two in the House; and the letter of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) was a very good instance of that at the present moment. He should not go into the various points touched upon in the speech of the hon. Member for Eye. It was a speech, no doubt, admirable for the purpose for which it was made, which was to give the House an instance of the forcible keeping open of a debate; because that was what they were suffering from now. That was a point which it was only right should be impressed upon the country. This, he believed, was the 17th day on which they had been discussing this Resolution, and they were yet to have two more days' discussion on it. They had heard a great deal about liberty of speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) yesterday, who laid great stress upon the ancient liberty of speech claimed by Members of that House. Well, what was that liberty of speech which the Speaker claimed at the commencement of every Parliament when he went to the House of Lords? It was not the right to talk at interminable length; it was not the right to force opinions on the House; but it was the right to say without fear within the walls of the House words that Members might be in danger for if they uttered them without the walls of the House. That was not what hon. Members opposite contended for now. What they were contending for was the right to delay the measures of the majority, if they could not defeat them openly; to delay them, put them off, veto them by interminable and useless discussion. In old days, it was the fear of any encroachment on this real ancient liberty of speech which made the House so jealous of any attempt to publish its debates; but that very publicity, then so greatly feared and now so fully established, was, perhaps, the greatest safeguard they had that this Rule and other Rules would be enforced fairly and temperately, and used and not abused. Argument had been used more than once during these debates that the country was opposed to this Rule, because it had not agitated in favour of it. At least as strong an argument might be found in the fact that the constituencies had not agitated against it, and they might say that "silence is the perfectest tone of joy." [Mr. WARTON: Oh, oh!] It might not be the case of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport. All who had argued against the *clôture*, however, had seemed to assume the co-existence of three conditions which had not existed in the House heretofore; and those three things were—a partial Speaker, who was the tool of an unscrupulous Ministry; a Ministry without scruple, backed by a violent majority, weak and subservient, and with no sense of its proper duties. Now, he admitted at once that if these three conditions existed there might be an abuse of this closing power; but what right had they to suppose that they would exist in the future? They had not existed in the past. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) had said that, no doubt, in the case of the present Speaker and his Predecessors these objections would not be feared. If he admitted that in the past Speakers had not failed in their arduous duty, but had always supported the dignity and impartiality of the Chair, why should he argue that in the future all would be changed? He saw no reason for it whatever. He quite admitted there was a possibility, even a probability, in the future that there would be a strong and all-powerful Ministry; but in proportion as that Ministry abused the powers granted to it, just in that proportion would the Opposition gain strength and power, and in equal proportion would the country feel bound to pull down the Ministry if they abused their powers. It seemed to him that the true definition of freedom, whether it was of speech or of action, was the liberty to do that which was right and fitting and decorous. He did not consider that to be true liberty, the liberty to do what they liked, without any care for the wishes of others, without any respect for right and decorum. It was because he believed that these Rules, and this Rule in particular, would conduce to real liberty of speech in the House and to the facilitation of their Business that he gave it his hearty support.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he would admit that it was extremely difficult to carry on that debate, not, indeed, so much for want of arguments which might be adduced against the proposition with which they had to deal, but mainly from the fact that they had few arguments to answer adduced on the opposite side of the House. That fact gave them a foretaste of what they might reasonably expect when that Resolution was adopted. It was an anticipation, and a very evident proof, of the assertion of the force of that numerical majority which considered itself strong enough to disregard arguments in support of the propositions it brought forward. He should not have risen to address the House upon the question at all had he not felt, in common with many other Members on that side, that after the Resolution had been passed the opportunities for addressing the House would be extremely limited. Nor should he have ventured to address the House even for that, if he had not felt that they were on the advent of a period when might would triumph to a great extent over right. But, actuated by these feelings, which were shared by a very large number of persons outside the House, he considered that he should not be doing his duty to his large and important constituency if he did not intrude for a few moments on the attention of the House. They had seen all through the course of the debate marked inconsistencies on the part of the Representatives of Her Majesty's Government. One flagrant inconsistency occurred a few days ago, and he was glad to see that attention had been called to it by one of the leading Liberal journals. They were told that they ought to approach this question without the slightest bias of Party feeling, to regard it as intended only for the benefit of the House, and to treat it in a judicial spirit. Yet the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), in the debate on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), made use of these remarkable words—

> "It is necessarily a Party question. I cannot look at it otherwise than as a Party matter. I believe the Government of this country can only be conducted by Party."

And then the right hon. and learned Gentleman went on to warn the House that the rejection of the *clôture* would bring about the overthrow of the Government. But, afterwards becoming more alive perhaps to the real feeling of the country, the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in a speech at Burton on Saturday last, said that "he took that opportunity of saying that the Cabinet had no desire to make a Party question of this matter of Procedure," and that "it was out of the question that they should wish to do anything of the sort." He was aware of the skill of the present Ministers in changing the ordinary meaning of phrases; but he thought that even the Prime Minister, with all his ability, would fail to convince the House and the public that those statements were not diametrically opposed to each other. One of the most remarkable phases of this question was that the Ministry only seemed now, for the first time, to discover, not only the danger, but the existence of Obstruction; whereas Obstruction was evidently the child of the Opposition under the late Government. During the time of the late Government Obstruction was born, and its parents were those who now occupied places on the Treasury Bench, but who then occupied a conspicuous position below the Gangway on the Opposition side. At that period they never heard the Prime Minister or his Colleagues say that it would be necessary to introduce those stringent Rules which they were now endeavouring to force down the throats of hon. Members. He believed that if any such proposals had been made by the late Government, they would have been met with uncompromising opposition by the then Opposition, who would have been loud in their denunciations of this fresh proof of the tyranny of the Tory Party, who were endeavouring to crown their political crimes by stifling free speech. They would have also been opposed by many hon.

Members on that (the Conservative) side of the House. The aspect of affairs was very different now. Then the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were looking for power; now they had got it. It was a striking fact that in his remarkable Mid Lothian campaign the right hon. Gentleman had not included *clôture* in his varied Liberal programme; and the reason why he did not do so was because he knew that if he had, he would have alienated an enormous number of those who then enlisted under his banner. How, then, did this idea originate in the teeming and fertile brain of the right hon. Gentleman? That was a problem it would be interesting to unravel; and, having reflected on the matter, he (Baron Henry de Worms), had come to the following conclusion. When the right hon. Gentleman commenced his Radical campaign, he produced the old Liberal banner with the motto "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform," and that banner was carried in triumph through England and Scotland; but when the right hon. Gentleman found himself once again at the head of the Government, the words on the Liberal banner were changed into "War, Increased Expenditure, and *Clôture*." The right hon. Gentleman, in addition to "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform," had inscribed on his banner a programme of 30 odd Liberal measures, which he promised to carry if returned to power; but it seemed that this playbill of political varieties was subject, like other similar productions, to alteration, for scarcely any of these promised blessings of Liberal legislation had been yet vouchsafed to them. Was there anyone who could honestly say that the means now at the disposal of the Speaker would not have been sufficient to silence Obstruction? But what they would not be sufficient to do would be to gag the minority in their resistance to Radical measures being rushed through the House. When the right hon. Gentleman had to explain to his supporters why his Liberal programme was not carried out, a happy thought struck him—namely, to say that he would have carried those measures, had it not been for the Obstruction of the Tory Opposition. And now for the remedy. A further happy thought struck him—"Gag the Tory Opposition, and by that means we will be able to carry Radical measures." The House was entitled to some further explanations from the right hon. Gentleman of the extraordinary change of front which he had shown on this question. In May last, after the discussion on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), a terrible calamity befell the country in the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish. The question of *clôture* was consequently postponed, and the Prime Minister, having had an opportunity for mature reflection, came to the decision—at least temporarily—that it would be advisable to accept in a modified form, if not in its integrity, the Amendment proposed by his (Baron Henry de Worms's) right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). He should like to ask how it was that that Amendment, which the Prime Minister was at one time prepared to accept, suddenly appeared to him to be worse than useless for the purpose for which it was intended? He (Baron Henry de Worms) was at liberty to put his own interpretation on that remarkable change; and, in his opinion, it was caused by the following considerations. In the month of June the fortunes of the Liberal Party were somewhat clouded. They were then discussing whether they should have an Expedition to Egypt. That Expedition took place, the Peace-at-any-price Party was thrown over by the Government; and, somewhat unexpectedly, their success was remarkably speedy. But the change in the condition of Egypt was not more remarkable than the change in the Prime Minister. Before that the right hon. Gentleman was a man of peace; then he became a man of war; and from being an unsuccessful statesman he became a successful general. It was then that, imbued with military ardour, he adopted military tactics, and, instead of being willing to agree to a compromise, he insisted on unconditional surrender. *Clôture* would be one of the worst forms of despotism, because the Minister who was able to command a large majority at the hustings could always command the blind support of his followers in that House; and if that majority had the power of silencing the minority whenever the Prime Minister wished it, they might depend upon it that the minority would be silenced.

Then, again, they could not blind themselves to the fact that the Caucus was becoming a power in the country. The Birmingham Caucus bore the same relation to true public opinion that the Birmingham manufactures of spurious gold and spurious jewellery bore to the genuine article; but if the Caucus became a power in the land, and the Radical Millennium desired by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was established, they would be then reduced to this condition, that they would be governed by a Prime Minister obedient to the dictates of the Birmingham Caucus. Up to that time, every Member of the House was so thoroughly imbued with a belief in the fairness and impartiality of the Speaker, that there had been no feeling of rancour entertained by anyone when the decision of the Chair was adverse to his views; but the moment *clôture* was introduced there would be a latent feeling of distrust, as concerned the Speaker, on the part of the minority. Indeed, it was impossible to believe that, if this Rule were passed, a Speaker would ever again be chosen from the Opposition. He asked what would be the feeling of the minority, who, before going into the Lobby to record their votes, felt that during the debate much of what they wished to have said had been left unsaid, because they knew that they could have been silenced by the simple veto of the Prime Minister? Some hon. Members had stated as an argument that the *clôture* worked very well in Foreign Assemblies. Could those hon. Members look forward with equanimity to a repetition in this country of the scenes that disgraced the French Chambers, and to the prospect of being muzzled as Members of the German Parliament were? He asked the Prime Minister to read the Liberal organs of public opinion in Germany, France, and Italy. He would then learn how greatly astonished foreigners were at the proposal to introduce into this country a system which was so decried abroad. The *clôture* was not an English institution, and he protested against copying in the House of Commons the practices that existed in Foreign Representative Bodies. He regarded this measure as the death-knell of political liberty and freedom of speech. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that this weapon which the Government were forging would be used but seldom, and never abused. That he (Baron Henry de Worms) claimed as an argument against the Ministerial proposal, because if the *clôture* was to be used so very little, it must be so dangerous an expedient that they feared its use, and, therefore, would be better without it. But if they feared its use, why did they ask the House of Commons to sanction it? In his opinion, the introduction of the *clôture* was a mere arbitrary act—as furnishing a more speedy and effectual means of forcing through the House measures which the Government could not pass except after gagging the Opposition. It was intended to carry out the programme of the Prime Minister, to redeem all those pledges which he had left unredeemed, and to satisfy the Radicals that no one but a Liberal Ministry could carry out beneficial legislation. He was astonished that hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Liberal Benches could possibly lend themselves to a measure of this kind. If this Rule should pass, the Liberal Party would have immolated themselves and their principles in the arena of Party strife; and their "*Ave, Cæsar! morituri te salutant,*" uttered in their subservient and blind admiration of the Prime Minister, would meet with no more sympathetic response than the harsh "*Habet,*" which was the death-warrant of the wounded gladiator, as it would be the death-knell of Constitutional freedom.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, that the hon. Member who had just spoken (Baron Henry de Worms) had used but few arguments, and a great deal of declamation about the death-knell of Constitutional liberty. All that was proposed, in his (Sir Joseph Pease's) opinion, was that by the Resolution they were about to place in the hands of the Speaker such powers as were possessed by every chairman of public meetings. He held that there must be some limit to discussion, and that the House should have the power to fix the time when discussion should result in action. The Rule accordingly had been introduced to prevent the undue licence of speech, such as had been indulged in at one time by certain English Members, and latterly such as the Irish Members had indulged in, and not for the purpose of interfering with that freedom of speech which was the privilege and pride of the House. A system of Obstruction had grown up which had not only prevented the legislation which the Minister of the day proposed, but had rendered it impossible to carry measures of social improvement such as those connected with the extension of the franchise, the drink traffic, and other matters, to which many of them had devoted much of their Parliamentary life. Many of these important questions had to be left over for years, to the great detriment of the country, and the great annoyance of their constituents. It was to deal with that evil that these Resolutions had been proposed, and he believed that the constituencies generally were strongly in favour of passing them in their entirety. They were mistaken who supposed that the constituencies did not know what was going on in the House of Commons, and did not understand the Rules of Debate. Many hon. Members had heard their constituents reproach the House for not having the same Rules of Debate which they were subjected to in their Charitable Associations, Boards of Guardians, and Town Councils. The great bulk of the people were undoubtedly at the back of the Government in this matter. If there was one subject, at the present time, in which his constituents took an interest, it was the passing of these Clôture Resolutions in their entirety; and Memorials had been sent up by them, both to the Premier and to himself, supporting the Resolutions. It was impossible that these Resolutions could ever be used as a Party weapon; and if he thought for a moment that they could be so used he should decidedly vote against them. It would be a suicidal policy to forge a weapon which would be more likely to be used with effect by a Conservative majority than by the present one, for he could not conceal from himself that the Conservative Party might, by again stealing the clothes of the Whigs, or by out-Heroding the Radicals, recommend themselves to the country, and again come into Office, when it would be a formidable weapon in their hands, if it really were of that dangerous character which was represented. But he was satisfied that it would not be so used; indeed, it was impossible that it could be used in any way which would be distasteful to a large or even a respectable minority, so long as debates were properly, fairly, and honestly conducted; for in order that it might be used as a Party weapon there must be an unscrupulous Minister, together with a demoralized Speaker and a demoralized Chairman of Committees—two conditions which he could not believe would ever exist in that House. The ruling of the Speaker on Monday night that the "evident sense of the House" must be the "evident sense of the House at large" would be handed down from Speaker to Speaker, and would be the line on which their decisions would be based. He could not, in practice, imagine any Speaker venturing to put the Rule into operation without having first satisfied himself that it was approved of by the two Front Benches and by the majority of both sides of the House. Much had been said about the possible deterioration of that Assembly; but he would beg of them not to compromise the dignity of that Institution, by rejecting a Rule devised to protect it, and to add to its usefulness. It was in a great degree losing its position in the country because it was unable to control its own debates within proper limits, and it was in order to restore to it that necessary power that he felt bound to vote for the Resolution.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he thought it might be said of the Irish Members lately that if they showed themselves, as the previous speaker (Sir Joseph Pease) had said, able to talk, they also showed, in the course of the present discussion, that they had the faculty of being able to sit silent. He was not surprised to find, however, that among certain sections of the House the silence of the Irish Members seemed to give as little satisfaction as their previous talking had done. Strive how they would, they could not elicit the approbation of the English and Scotch Members. If they spoke, they were stigmatized as Obstructionists; if they sat silent, their silence was as little to the taste of the House as was their loquacity. He did not intend to break that silence, such as it was, by occupying the time of the House for any lengthened period; but he wished to express his opinion, which he believed was the opinion of those hon. Members with whom he habitually acted, on the propositions of the Government as they now came before them, and he wished to express the reasons why they remained absolutely unchanged in their opinion with regard to the main question they had to discuss. He need hardly say that in neither the vote they gave last week, nor the vote they were about to give soon, they were influenced, in the slightest degree, by any manner of negotiations or arrangement with the Government whatever. In fact, there were none to influence them, as none such existed. The hon. Baronet who had just spoken declared that he supported the Resolution because he believed that it never could be used as an instrument of Party. The hon. Member, no doubt, was an authority in that House; but not so great an authority as the Members of Her Majesty's Government, who had already expressed a different opinion. For instance, they had heard the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department—not, he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) thought, in the House, but outside it, and to some extent, also, in the House—say that he regarded this strictly as a question of Party, and as the instrument of Party, and that it would be used for Party purposes. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the other night distinctly said it was all a question of majorities; that the work of enforcing the *clôture* principle must be the work of the majority of the House; and he seemed to attach a meaning of his own to the word "majority." He reminded him (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) of the worthy Parson Adams, in Fielding's novel, who said—

> "When I speak of Christianity I mean the Protestant religion, and when I speak of the Protestant religion I mean, of course, the Church of England."

The Home Secretary seemed in the same way to say—"When I speak of the country I mean the House of Commons, and when I speak of the House of Commons I mean the Liberal Party." He did not see how a weapon of that kind could be used otherwise than as an instrument of the majority, and, therefore, the weapon of the Government in power for the time being. The recent definition of the manner of applying this Rule—namely, that given by the Speaker, that the "evident sense of the House" meant "the evident sense of the House at large," which had been received with so much exultation by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), would not have the slightest effect in protecting the rights of the small minorities of the House. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) supposed that many hon. Members considered that these small minorities were not to be termed Parties at all, but merely nameless fractions of sections, and not entitled to any protection against the rude and sharp pressure of a Rule like this; but he submitted that they were the very Parties who ought to be protected. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) the other night spoke of the existence of a certain Party in the House, which was perfectly reckless what harm it brought on itself, so long as it brought harm on the interests and traditions of the House of Commons; and, as an instance, he quoted what his (Mr. Justin M'Carthy's) hon. Friend the Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) had said about Samson pulling down the Temple of Dagon to overwhelm his enemies. It was new to him (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) and his Friends to recognize in the hon. Member for Carlow a terrible anarchist of that description. He thought the words used by his hon. Friend had a much more simple and less startling meaning. So far as his acquaintance with any small minority in the House was concerned, he must say that he never heard of the existence of any such Party, and he did not believe it ever did exist. That sort of policy, which on some occasions had been carried on in that House, and to which the familiar name of Obstruction had been given, was a policy having a definite end—namely, to oppose and ever to delay the passing of certain measures which the hon. Members who pursued that policy believed to be injurious, not only to their country alone, but to the interests of the whole country. That was a kind of Obstruction which he held to be, in the highest degree, legitimate, and without which the House of Commons would be very different to what it was at present. He was tired of hearing of what was being done in foreign countries. They were continually being told—"Look at what Austro-Hungary is doing, what Spain is doing;" and perhaps some day, when Russia had a Parliament, they might hear of what sort of model they would find in Russia. He, however, had always understood that the great name and influence of this Parliament consisted in the fact that it was unlike those foreign Parliaments in the way of doing its Business; and that one great point of dissimilarity which strengthened its influence was, that the rights and voice of small minorities would never be suppressed. It was owing to the struggles of these small minorities that all the great reforms had been introduced into the House of Commons; and revolutions had been averted by those who had had the courage to stand up in that House and speak the truth without fear or favour. He was somewhat surprised to hear the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) treat this question last night with what seemed to him (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) a needless amount of levity. He had thought that his hon. Friend was exactly one of the men who would most have felt it necessary to secure the old principle of protection for small minorities. His hon Friend was a man who himself was in charge of various questions which did not commend themselves to the "evident sense" of the majority of the House. It seemed to him (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) that it was a very easy step from the position at which they had now arrived, and not by any means impossible that hereafter the Speaker might take on himself to say that a measure which had been debated over and over again in successive Sessions of Parliament, without making new converts in any Session, had been discussed adequately; that further discussion would be a mere waste of time; and that the evident sense of the House would be in favour of getting rid of what would seem to them a dull and dreary discussion, and bringing the *clôture* to bear upon the Member who had re-introduced the discussion, it might be on his hon. Friend himself. Accordingly, he might bring the debate to a close with the speech of the Mover and the Seconder, and the simple reply of an opponent. In such a case there would be a positive temptation to the Speaker to exercise his power somewhat sharply; and, indeed, it was difficult to see how a Speaker could preserve the rights of small minorities in a case of that kind. How, in the future, was any Speaker to resist the obvious and earnest demand of the majority to silence the small minority? There would be no escape for small minorities under the pressure of a Rule like this. Again, they were told future Speakers would be impartial like the present, and willing to do what they could for the small minorities of the House. But let them recollect that it would be by no means unlikely that the election of Speaker or Chairman of Committees might be made under different conditions, when this Rule was adopted, from those that now prevailed, and that, under such Rules, there would be an obvious and practical advantage to either side in securing the Speaker or the Chairman as one of their own. The result must be that the election of a Speaker or Chairman would, in the future, be disputed and made a matter of Party struggle. There would be preparations for the event coming on, canvassing and agreements, and stirring up of the Members on this side of the House and on that, and the election would be the occasion of unseemly struggles and unworthy faction-fighting in the House. And the result would be that the Speaker or the Chairman would go to his place distinctly marked and ticketed as an agent of a Party. That alone would change the whole condition in which they had hitherto carried on their debates. He had already repeatedly said that he did not think there was, or ever had been, any Party in the House anxious to obstruct for the mere purpose of Obstruction. But, supposing there was such a Party, they would still, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, be enabled to carry out the objects they had in view. Such a Party, not of open Obstruction, as had been shown, could, by interposing Questions and interfering not unjustifiably with debate, make their presence so felt as to delay Business without coming under the Rule. Obstruction would be carried on with a subtlety which would defy the efforts of the Speaker to characterize it as Obstruction; only a small minority, an honourable minority, carrying on an open struggle, and anxious to attain its own ends, would have their freedom of speech endangered. Obstruction was a very precious weapon of Parliamentary warfare, which ought to be used rarely, but which in no case should be altogether suppressed. It seemed to him that in putting this Resolution first the

Prime Minister had made an obvious, and he might say the vulgar, mistake of putting the cart before the horse. If he had put the other Resolutions first—which he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) would call the horse—it was quite possible that he might draw the cart, and if the cart was too heavy or cumbrous to be drawn, the cart could be left behind and the horse could go his way without it. There might be no necessity whatever for crushing the liberty of freedom of speech. It was idle to tell them that this instrument, once brought into efficacy, would not be used. It would be often used, and it seemed a certainty that, once the instrument was used, it never could be laid aside. One Session it would be employed in a case where, perhaps, some necessary Business was impeded, then for some measure on which the Government had set their hearts, until Members would come at last to accept without protest their position. They had often heard the familiar quotation from the Poet Laureate, which described the liberty of this country as "slowly broadening down from precedent to precedent;" but, under the operation of the *clôture*, that would be reversed, and they would see freedom slowly narrowing up from precedent to precedent, and the certain result would be the curtailing of the rights of minorities. That, he thought, was a consequence which might cause the most lighthearted of Her Majesty's Government to pause before agreeing to the passing of the Resolutions. He wished hon. Members on the opposite side, who had up to that time been mutes, would take courage and follow their conscientious promptings regarding the Resolution; but if they refused to assert their individual independence, they must bear with others who warned the House against the consequences they foresaw would follow. The Liberal Government had, indeed, done many strange things. They had been told again and again that they need not fear anything, because, under a Liberal Government, it was impossible for any harm to come. He, for one, from recent experience, found it hard to say what was impossible under a Liberal Government after what had happened. He had heard it said by an hon. Member, of their old programme, that they had given the country neither peace, retrenchment, nor reform. Certainly, they had not given them peace; they were also wasteful of the public money; but he could not agree that they had failed in retrenchment as regarded one point, for their liberty of speech was to be greatly retrenched. As to the reforms, they heard of reform in the dim and distant future; but the only reform they knew of at present was that change by which they were reforming off the face of creation one of the best and most useful possessions of a Parliament which called itself free, that which occasioned its debates to be free also.

Mr. BAXTER said, that, as one of the oldest Members of the House, and one who for many years had believed it not only to be desirable, but absolutely necessary to alter the Rules of Procedure of that House with a firm and unsparing hand, he wished to say a few words before the debate closed. The mild, carefully-guarded, very studiously, and scrupulously-limited Resolution which they were now discussing—["Oh, oh!"]—well, that was his deliberate description and opinion of it—would, perhaps, do something to expedite legislation in this House, although, in his opinion, it would not do very much. Therefore, he was prepared to vote for it with pleasure. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; because he believed that Business in the House at the present moment was at a deadlock; and, therefore, it was no strong statement to say he was prepared to vote for anything which would expedite legislation. He had been for 10 years an advocate for *clôture*. He advocated *clôture* when most of those who were now its present supporters would have nothing to do with it; and all the predictions of the awful results which would follow upon its adoption appeared to him, therefore, the veriest chimeras and imaginations of the brain. Why, they were only following, in a very feeble and hesitating way, the example set them by every Legislative Assembly in Europe and America, except those of Sweden and Hungary. An hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) last night said Spain had no *clôture;* but that statement showed he had not read the Paper issued last Session, which contained, on page 16, amended Rules for putting into force the *clôture* in the Spanish Chamber. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) said a good deal about the bad working of the *clôture* in the various European countries; but if those countries had found it work so badly, why had they not repealed it long ago? An erroneous impression prevailed in the public mind that the Government had been driven to alter the Rules of the House simply and almost exclusively in consequence of what had been called Irish Obstruction. Now, that was far from being the case. During the 28 years that he had had the honour of a seat in that Assembly, complaints had been constant and loud that that House of Commons, in consequence of obstinate adherence to antiquated and obsolete Rules, had not been able to overtake its admitted Business. Committee after Committee had been appointed to investigate the subject, with most lamentable, and he thought not very creditable, want of success. He had watched the discussions and read the Reports of those Committees with great care, and he must say he had always been struck with two things—in the first place, with the want of courage on the part of those Committees in proposing alterations and changes that it was obvious to many of them were inadequate, and some of which were incorporated in the Resolutions submitted by the Government; but what struck him most of all was that the leading statesmen on both sides of the House had failed entirely to appreciate and understand the great change which had come over the House of Commons during the last quarter of a century. Why, during the last 25 years, that House had undergone a complete and radical change; and, as he thought, probably the country was not fully aware of it. In former times, it was a sort of club, which was governed in many respects by a sense of unwritten law. The Members belonged chiefly to the aristocratic and landed classes. They were not brought nearly so often into contact with their constituents as now. They did not attend in their places as hon. Members did now, and the great majority shirked work instead of doing as hon. Members now did—going about in all directions to find a grievance to attack or an abuse to reform. They had changed all that. There had come into the House of Commons of late years a great number of earnest, vigorous politicians—men of business, men of common sense, who had been accustomed to speak in their localities, and they had not the slightest intention to come there to sit mute and inglorious upon these Benches. He had ventured to tell his constituents half-a-dozen years ago that the House of Commons would require to take measures of protection against these patriots; because it was quite out of the question to suppose, it was a mere venerable superstition to imagine, that Rules and Regulations which acted very well in the time of Pitt and Fox would be sufficient to guide a House of Commons constituted as it was now. Why, Rules which were amply sufficient to control a House where 40 Gentlemen desired to speak were entirely insufficient where there were 400 anxious to address the Assembly. Now, a great deal had been said about liberty of speech; and if he thought that one-fiftieth part of the dire consequences prophesied by the hon. Gentleman who spoke last would happen in consequence of this Resolution, he would be the last man in the House to vote for it. Could anyone who had sat for 28 years in that House, and could compare its state now with what it was then, when he (Mr. Baxter) entered it, stand up and be able to say that liberty of speech had not been grossly abused, and not by one Party only? He did not allude to the Irish Party alone. The "patriots" who sat on the Radical Benches, and who advocated great measures of reform, were apt to speak a great deal too long also, and probably there was too much long speaking by both the Front Benches likewise. The rights of minorities were excellent things; but he denied altogether that it was one of the rights of a minority to control and prevent the action of a majority. Now, there were great measures, no doubt, before them in the immediate future. They would be called upon to redistribute seats, to extend the borough franchise to counties, and probably to disestablish the Church. But he did not believe for one moment that any Resolution or set of Resolutions which they could pass would have the slightest effect in preventing all those great questions giving rise to prolonged debates and great Party conflicts. But he put it to every candid mind in the House, apart from those burning political questions altogether, was it not a fact that a vast number of social questions had been shamefully neglected of late years—not by one Party, or the other Party, but simply and solely because of the antiquated Rules of the House, enabling hon. Gentlemen to substitute superfluous, useless, irrelevant talk for useful legislation? The time of the House had been occupied by garrulous people instead of by those in charge of measures which the country ardently demanded. Would not hon. Gentlemen admit that, if the Rules had been altered, as they ought to have been long ago, they should not now have been in this position, that they could not get important Bills of a social character—such as Bills to alter the Bankruptcy Law, to put an end to Corrupt Practices, to supply our cities with water, to alter the Licensing Laws—not only passed, but even the opportunity for discussing them at all? He thought they were all very much to blame that the question of revising and reforming the Rules had not been made a first and a foremost question long ago. He did not think that was a blame which pertained to any particular Party. Their Leaders ought to have placed this question first years ago. Nearly 30 years ago Sir Erskine May published a most interesting article in *The Edinburgh Review*, in the course of which he said—hon. Members would forgive him for quoting a few sentences—

> "Very many circumstances have contributed to enlarge the powers and increase the activity of Parliament, which of late years has been continually working at high pressure. A vast arrear of legislation has long been accumulating upon us. After a century of inaction, and three and twenty years of war, the statesmen of our own time have to do the work of many generations, to unmake as well as to make laws, to check as well as to expose abuses, and to break down monopolies. But much as they have had to accomplish, and however speedily and well it has sometimes been done, the necessities of our age and country have still kept in advance of their utmost endeavours."

Here was another remarkable sentence in the same article—

> "In case, however, the question of *clôture* should come under consideration, we are able to offer what will be much more persuasive with the House of Commons than any argument—namely, a precedent. On the 9th May, 1604, or nearly 300 years ago, when an hon. Member offered to speak on this matter, it was resolved by the House that no more should speak."

The idea that, by means of what he presumed to call again that peaceable instrument, any Ministry would be able to gag the Opposition, would enable any one political Party to put down another, appeared to him utterly preposterous. The country would never for a moment permit such curtailment of debate. Any Minister attempting it would be at once hurled from power. That was not the danger at all. The danger was entirely in a different direction. The danger which the constituencies saw staring them in the face—and they understood the question perfectly, notwithstanding the imputations of ignorance on the other side—the danger which the great majority of the electors of this country saw staring them in the face was this—that the Rules of the House would enable Obstructionists to oppose a measure, and would allow loquacious people who were its friends to talk at such length as to prevent the passing, in any reasonable time, of any measure which the people of the country believed would be for the well-being of the Kingdom at large.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he objected to the description of the Resolution given by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Baxter). He denied, as the right hon. Gentleman alleged, that it was a Resolution drawn to protect the rights of minorities in that House. If he (Mr. O'Connor Power) had any strong impression at all about the character of the Resolution, that impression was in a totally opposite direction. He looked upon it as most absolute in its terms, most arbitrary in its character, and as likely to be most capricious and crushing in its effect on many occasions where it would be most desirable to prolong debate. Since the first day of the Autumn Session, the Government had shown, in regard to these Rules, the most unconciliatory spirit and attitude. It had rejected every attempt made, not only by private Members, but by the responsible Leaders of the Opposition, to modify this stringent provision. If the House was entitled to draw any inference from that attitude of the Government—as to the exercise of this power in the future—it would be very different from that which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had deduced. A most important proposal was made to exempt Committees of Supply from the Rule; but it was objected to, and Liberal after Liberal Member rose and tried to persuade the House that discussions in Committee of Supply were not at all matters of so much importance; and those declarations proceeded from hon. Gentlemen who, within his own recollection, in the last Parliament, held a very different opinion as to the duties of hon. Members when the Estimates were before them. All attempts to modify the Rule in the direction of proportionate majorities had been stoutly resisted by Her Majesty's Government. An attempt had been made to give Members dissatisfied with the closing of a debate an opportunity of recording a collective protest against the action of the majority, and that was treated in the same harsh and unconciliatory manner; and they were told that there was no use in relying on the power of a collective protest, because the system of protest was now growing obsolete even in the other branch of the Legislature. The attitude, therefore, of the Government, as regarded the manner in which they had treated the proposals of the Opposition, had afforded only too strong an indication that when they were armed with the *clôture*, it would be impossible for any part of the Opposition to fairly or fully record their objections to any proposal emanating from the Ministerial Benches. The Secretary of State for the Home Department, the other night, asked, could the House of Commons really do its work? That question had been answered a thousand times from the Irish Benches. He agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the House of Commons, as at present constituted, could not do its work. He never knew a time during his Parliamentary experience when it was really equal to its work; and the question was not whether it could perform its work with the present Rules, but whether the change proposed would enable it to do its work satisfactorily for all the great interests committed to its charge. In his opinion, the Government had approached the settlement of this question at the wrong end. The noble Viscount the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), in describing the great material growth of the United Kingdom, said that growth had increased ten-fold the material for legislation. If that was so, did it not follow that it was necessary for the House to relieve itself of the burdens which were now needlessly thrown upon it, in order that it might be free to cope with the increased demands made upon its time? The true remedy was not to be found in restricting the liberties of hon. Members of that House, which were essential alike to the proper transaction of Business and to the protection of the House; but in such a development of the principles of local self-government as would enable local public bodies, not only in Ireland, but in England and Scotland, to transact a large mass of Business which was now thrown upon the hands of the Imperial Parliament. He was opposed to *clôture* in every shape, but more because of the effect it would have upon political action outside of Parliament, than the effect it would have upon the debating power of the House. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) objected to a comparison of the Caucus system in this country with the Caucus in the United States. The only difference he (Mr. O'Connor Power) saw between formal political action in England outside the House of Commons and formal political action in the United States was that in the latter country they had perfected the machine, whereas in England they were but experimenting with a new invention. But, he would say, let the policy of closing debates in Parliament once be combined with that of intimidating Members outside by Caucus organizations, and things would soon wear a very different aspect. In that case, they might prepare themselves to hear the people asked to abolish the system of appointing gentlemen to public offices, and to vote not only for the election of those who were engaged in the Military, Civil, and Naval Departments of the country, but those who were engaged in the grave and solemn duty of administering the Law. When that time arrived and the Caucus had been fully developed, they would see then what the democratic millennium meant, in the perfect approximation of our political system to that of the United States, which he presumed not even the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets would venture to defend. No doubt, the House of Commons would survive the *clôture*; but it would not preserve, under that system, the dignity of character, and that consideration for the opinions of those who differed from them, which had hitherto characterized their public action in this country. As the result of the *clôture,* political action of all kinds would be deteriorated. There was one subject in connection with this proposal upon which he had found it utterly impossible to arrive at any idea as to the mind of the Ministry, and that was the subject of Irish Obstruction. The right hon. Gentleman who had preceded him stated that the Obstruction of the Irish Members had not at all been a chief agent in inducing the Government to adopt this policy; but other hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House took a totally different view. The noble Viscount the Member for Barnstaple said it was the presence of the Irish Party in the House, constantly talking about legislative independence, that induced him to support the proposal of the Government; but he (Mr. O'Connor Power) trusted that the noble Viscount had taken that unfavourable view of the action of the Irish Members through a want of knowledge of the objects they had in view, and of the results which had heretofore followed their policy, he would not say of Obstruction, but of determined resistance to proposals of which they did not approve. Their opposition was of an impartial character as between Liberals and Conservatives. He asked English Members, who regarded their action in that light, to try and realize that they had been sent into an Assembly which was not composed in any large degree of their own countrymen, which was composed of men who were separated from them by a hundred considerations, differing from the ordinary sympathies and motives of action which stimulated the people of Ireland. Then they had a minority, coming from a country where freedom of speech and freedom of the Press had been banned, a country which during the 82 years of legislative union had scarcely for one twelvemonth been free from coercive legislation. They saw that minority, in the first instance, trying to interest Members of that Parliament on Irish questions, after having first interested them by desperate efforts; then trying to induce them to accept the conclusions of the majority of the people of Ireland on questions exclusively affecting that country. That had been the position of the Irish Party ever since the Union; and it was only now and again fitfully, and after a period of excitement in Ireland, which it was not desirable should be made a necessary condition of legislative action, that Parliament had shown any disposition to concede the Irish demands. Looking at the matter in that way, he thought, on a fair and full consideration of the whole facts of the case, that the Irish Members would not be seriously blamed by candid and honest politicians for the determined action which they had occasionally adopted in that House. But if he tried to justify their position in that respect, he had still a higher claim upon the sympathies of Members of the Liberal Party. He invited them to look at the reforms which had been accomplished through the determined action of the Irish Members. To whose action were they indebted for the public attention which was directed to the question of flogging in the Army, and for the reform in the punishment of untried prisoners? He might go through a long list of cases in which similar effects had been secured through the same agency, and he might mention more than one case in which the English Government would have been saved from disgrace, if they had sense and foresight enough to regard the protests of the Irish Party. As an instance, he might justifiably refer to the case of the Transvaal, when nine Members of the Irish Party fought all night to save the House from the consequences of a mistake, their views, if not their tactics, being strongly supported by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), at that time a private Member. Looking at the unbending attitude of the Government in reference to every proposal coming from that side of the House, he was afraid that his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Durham (Mr. T. C. Thompson) told the truth when he said that a great deal of this policy had been stimulated by hatred of the Irish. ["No, no!"] Then if it was not stimulated by hatred of the Irish, it was stimulated by fear of the Irish; and, although they knew they could easily relieve themselves from all the embarrassments of Irish Obstruction, by allowing the people of Ireland the privilege of managing purely Irish affairs, they preferred to soothe their own fears, they preferred to indulge their own prejudices, than to do justice to those for whom the Irish

Party had vainly pleaded for the privilege of managing their own affairs in Ireland. If the Government were wise, they would have done better by embracing that opportunity of doing something to develop the principle of local self-government, when they had the attention of the whole country directed to the Business of the House of Commons, rather than to seek to put the House in a strait-jacket. They would have seized this occasion for making some concession to the principle which the Irish Party had advocated in that House, and which all the evidences of political action in Ireland showed must be substantially recognized in some form or another before contentment could be established in that country. He did not oppose the Resolution from any unworthy suspicion of the use to which it would be put; he had only to deal with the logical consequences of the policy initiated. If the Government passed that Resolution, they might depend on it, the thing would not stop here. There would be further and further encroachments from the outside. Fresh attempts would continually be made to dictate to Members of Parliament, and in that way Members of Parliament would lose their freedom. There was no end to the passions which they were arousing out-of-doors. It was said the Prime Minister had received bundles of Resolutions; but that would not justify the House in fettering itself. In any city, if politicians were willing to pay the price—if they only stooped low enough, and gave up everything like principle and conscience —they could always get a crowd of brutality and ignorance at their back. That being so, he did not think much weight should be attached to the opinion of the machined politicians outside, to whose noisy outcry the introduction of the *clôture* was so largely due.

MR. GLADSTONE: The proposition before the House, Sir, is that, having considered the 1st Resolution relating to Procedure for 17 nights, and having taken 17 divisions upon it, we shall, on the Motion of the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), dismiss that Resolution to oblivion and lose the fruit of all our labours; and on this proposition we are engaged in a lengthened debate. I rise, Sir, to take part in that debate, rather than wait for another day of its prolongation, upon the simple ground that my Colleagues do not, and I do not wish, by waiting for its termination in the more ordinary course, to become even tacitly committed to the proposition that we think the prolongation of the debate to be an expedient or useful expenditure of public time. The right hon. Baronet stated last night that there were a large number of Members anxious to address the House, and that statement was true; but it was not the whole truth. It was undoubtedly true that there were a large number of Members, if the reports which have reached me as to the lists in existence on the other side be correct, pledged to address the House; but it was equally true and no less important that there were an extremely small number of Members anxious to hear them. For, Sir, I have had the curiosity—having been, I believe, a patient auditor of this debate for, I will not say absolutely for the whole of the time, but I think for a larger portion of time than any Gentleman whom I now address—[MR. WARTON: No.]—well, except, perhaps, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, and I am by no means sure that I may not compete with him in the share of time I have devoted to this debate; but I have taken the opportunity, Sir, of noting, as the interest in the prolongation of the debate is supposed to rely upon the opposite Benches, I have noted the number of Members present on the opposite Benches at different periods of the debate, and at different hours of the night, taking care that the whole of my particulars shall relate to periods when Opposition speakers were addressing the House. Every one of these particulars is during the speeches of opponents of the Resolution. Well, now, on Monday night—I begin with half-past 11 on Monday night —the number of Members on that side of the House was 21 above the Gangway and five below—26 in all. And that was the bloom and flush and youth of the debate, which produced the number of 26. But yesterday at 7 o'clock—not a very bad period—I will not give the distinctions of above and below the Gangway, though I have taken them all down — at 7 o'clock there were 24; at half-past, 20; at 8—no wonder they were then sinking—there were 10; and at half-past 10, notwithstanding that one very distinguished

Gentleman on the opposite Bench who is always heard with interest, was speaking, I only observed 28. At a quarter to 12 there were 23, and at midnight there were 18. To-day, at 1 o'clock, there were upon the opposite Bench five Members above the Gangway, and one below the Gangway, and the one below the Gangway was the Member who was addressing the House. At 2 o'clock the total had fallen from six to five; at 3 o'clock, I admit, it had risen to 16, at half-past 3 it was as high as 17, and under the great attraction of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down 36 hon. Gentlemen were gathered upon the opposite side of the House. Now, this is the manner in which, in those quarters of the House where it is announced that the *clóture* is the death-knell of Parliamentary freedom, that a serious encroachment on public liberty is being perpetrated, and that the gag is going to be inflicted, the audience displays its interest in the fears which it professes to entertain. In these circumstances, I think I am entitled to say, on behalf of those hon. Members who do think it worth while to attend the House, that there is a good deal of misunderstanding as to the interest taken by the other side of the House in this dilatory rather than useful debate. I admit that, though I always had a high opinion of the speaking powers of the other side of the House, that opinion has been decidedly raised during this discussion, for I did not believe it possible for human ingenuity to have infused so much of at least galvanic life into topics so thoroughly exhausted as the present, and to have established plausible connections between the subject before us and others at what I should have deemed an immeasurable distance; to say nothing of the use of arguments which went far to show that when a numerous body of Members desire the indefinite extension of the debate there is plenty of power for the accomplishment of their end. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) disposed of this question with great facility by alleging that the difficulties of the House were all owing to the mismanagement of the Government. I admit that great authority must attach to the words of a right hon. Gentleman who has so much confidence in his own experience; but some of us on this side have sat in the House as long as the right hon. Gentleman—some of us, perhaps, sat here before he was born—and have had something, if not as much, to do with the conduct of Public Business, and we happen to differ from the right hon. Gentleman in our ideas of good management. However, if the matter is to be settled simply upon an *ipse dixit*, I will not waste the time of the House in discussing cases in which we think the right hon. Gentleman wrong and he thinks himself right. I heard yesterday the speech of an hon. Gentleman to whom, by reason of the blood that runs in his veins as well as his own personal merits—I mean the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. Herbert)—I can never listen without interest and emotion. The hon. Member stated that people outside the House do not know its Rules—I think he said that not 3 per cent of the people outside knew them—and if that be so, it is a very heavy blow to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill), who proposed that we should take the judgment of the constituencies on this question. I am disposed to admit that people outside are woefully ignorant of the Rules of the House; but there is no such widespread ignorance of the fundamental conditions of the matter. They know that the House has duties to do, and that those duties are not done; they know that in the meantime debates are carried on to a length that they are unable to measure; they cannot, in short, reconcile the redundance of our talk with the paucity of our actions. Therefore, they have made up their minds to instruct the House of Commons to this effect—"Do more and talk less; talk less in proportion to what you do." They know that we are generously expending our mental and physical forces on their behalf; but they know also that the expenditure is so mismanaged as to be attended with no adequate practical results. They wish that the results shall be in proportion to the labour, and my belief is that they have set their hearts on the accomplishment of this great reform. They know nothing of the details of the matter; but they do know that every subordinate assembly in the country has the power and capacity to regulate its own rules of procedure. They give us credit for a similar capacity, and they expect us to act according to the position in which we are placed. I need not dwell at length on the various arguments which have been urged in the whole course of this debate; but I will answer the question put to me by the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote). He asked, in substance—"How do the Government intend that this Rule shall be applied?" Well, of course, it is not a question of our intentions, and the better phrase would be—"How do we expect the Rule to be applied?" I expect that it should be applied according to the mind and discretion of the Speaker, honestly and intelligently interpreting the Resolution of the House, and that his interpretation will be accepted with respect and confidence by every section of the House. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) said last night that the repeal of the Rule would always be impossible. He only gave that as his opinion; but he stated that he would demonstrate that proposition. Singularly enough, after he had made that statement, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) rose and adopted a totally contradictory line of argument, and said—"Pass the Rule you may; but it will afterwards produce a frightful reaction, which cannot fail to sweep the Rule away." Now, I do not anticipate any such frightful reaction. My belief is, that if this Rule passes, as it will, and works badly, if it is found to alter the character of the House and to affect the traditions of the Chair, which are, in my judgment, an absolutely vital and inseparable portion of the traditions of the House, the House, as long as it continues to reflect, as it now does, the spirit of the nation, will find a speedy remedy for the mischief, and will take care that no such evil shall prevail. Our belief is that it will not prevail. But in face of all the intimidating prophecies with which we have been inundated, I say—"Have you no faith? You seem to have none in the Party to which you belong, or in the constitution of the House of Commons. Have you no faith in the people you represent, and do not you know, if these evils follow, the people, when they have to choose their Representatives, will find an effectual remedy?" Complaint has been made that the Resolution is not like a Bill, and that there are not the same repeated opportunities of discussing it. Well, Sir, if it is not like a Bill, it is still less like an Act of Parliament. It is quite true that two votes make a Standing Order of the House—that is, after a series of Amendments have been disposed of, there is a vote on the Resolution and a vote to make it a Standing Order; but there are thus three stages at which hon. Members can speak, and it should not be forgotten that a single vote suffices for the repeal of a Standing Order. It is not like an Act of Parliament, and the alarms and fears of irreparable mischief proceed, consequently, from an entire forgetfulness of the elementary conditions of the case. It is assumed at once that the greatest evils will be introduced by the Resolution, and that the House of Commons will never have the intelligence or the virtue by a single vote to apply the remedy. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) says that the Tory Party have a good war cry. I take this opportunity of thanking the noble Lord for the public service that he has done in his excellent argument as to the trafficking between the two Front Benches which must be the inevitable result of a proportionate majority. One great good has certainly been attained in the course of this debate, long as it has been; and that is the result that the proportionate majority, as a means of dealing with the subject of the closing power, will not, after what took place the other night, be heard of again. I thank the noble Lord for the contribution which he made to bringing about that result. But the noble Lord says that freedom of speech is a good war cry for the Tory Party. Free speech an excellent war cary! When has the noble Lord's Party wanted a good war cry? Was it not a good war cry against the Dissenters to plead the English doctrine of Church and State? Was it not a good war cry against the Roman Catholics—the interests of Protestant institutions in danger? Was it not a good war cry during the passing of the Navigation Laws—the Fleet, the ships, the Colonies, and commerce, which constitute the greatness of the Empire? If these inventions of war cries are to be the test of political wisdom and success, I at once bow to the noble Lord, and I grant that nothing can be more perfect. But we have two things to do—we have to inquire, not only whether freedom of speech is about to be invaded, but also whether it now exists. Our contention is that freedom of speech does not now exist, and that the House is in a very great degree enslaved; because by the use made of its Rules by a portion of its Members—I draw no invidious distinctions, I make no selections from one quarter or another—the House is incapacitated from working out the ends which it was sent here to accomplish. Therefore the House, as a whole, has not freedom of speech, insomuch as it has not the means of attaining its own essential purposes through the regular and legitimate organs of debate. But, Sir, I may make a protestation on behalf of a large portion of those who sit on this side of the House, and who, I do not hesitate to say, have been compelled, to a degree such as I have never known equalled, to forego the privilege, and even to compromise the duty of speech, for fear they should still more aggravate the difficulties of the situation. Sir, it is the unbounded licence of a few which has riveted this yoke upon the shoulders of the House, and the question is whether the House will make the necessary effort to break down that yoke. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) used a most extraordinary expression, and I do not know whether he had considered the meaning of his words—"It is not the question," he said, "whether injustice has been committed, but whether the minority think that it is committed." That, Sir, is a portentous declaration; that the criterion of proper actions is not to be found in the inquiry into the question whether the thing done is just or unjust, but is to be found simply in ascertaining the effect it has upon certain persons. I hesitate to accept that doctrine. If it is good for one portion of the House, it is good for all portions of the House; and I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, who has so much confidence in the opinions he delivers, and does not seem to think they can be in any respect the subject of question—I appeal to him to be allowed to enter a modest plea against that doctrine. We must, after all, have the power of examining into the bases of all these dismal prophecies—of everything that has been said about the Caucus, about the death-knell of Parliamentary liberty, about freedom of speech, the degradation of the Chair, and all the dismal topics which have been laid before us. They are but the different limbs of a body which has but one neck. Let us see whether that neck is a real neck, or a merely visionary one. What is the proof that freedom of speech is going to be interfered with? What says the hon. Member who has just addressed us on the part of the Irish Members. He says he does not understand in what respect his Party are charged in this matter. I am much surprised that he does not understand it. I should have thought, observing the speeches of the Government, observing that we have in no way founded ourselves upon the supposed misdeeds of any particular number of persons in the House, he must have known very well that we did not consider the basis of this measure to be the action of himself or his Friends—that is to say, the action of himself and his Friends as contradistinguished from all other Parties in the House. What we consider is that this disease is spread so far and wide that it has come to affect the general tone and manner of discussion in the House. Certainly, we thought there were gross and aggravated cases in that quarter of the House. But, looking back upon those cases in the calmness of historical retrospect, we are free to confess that the Gentlemen who hold such a position on behalf of the Sister Island are entitled to be judged in this matter with a peculiar indulgence. What is really the position of Ireland with regard to this matter? No doubt, if there is going to be a suppression of free speech, Ireland will suffer with the rest. But let us look at the question for a moment from another point of view. I will speak with frankness what is my own mind with respect to those Irish Representatives who are accustomed to term themselves the Irish Party. Among them it appears to me it is possible to discern two currents of feeling. They are all of them what is called Home Rulers. Their object is to establish, in some way or other, what they sometimes call a National, sometimes an Independent, it may be a separate, Legislative Assembly. Upon that point they are united. Now, Sir, let me make this frank admission. It has sometimes appeared to many of us that there is a portion, at any rate, of that Party who, to attain their end, wish to make the transaction of Business in this House, while they are in it, impossible; whereas there are unquestionably others —and it is our duty to believe that that is the prevailing current of feeling— who, believing it to be vital to the existence of their country that they should attain legislative independence, yet are extremely desirous to turn to the best account the machinery that exists, in order to supply, as they best can, the legislative wants of Ireland. Now, looking at the matter from that point of view, what are we engaged in? I venture to give my own opinion upon the interests of Ireland. About the Irish vote, I have no business, and very little inclination, to speak. But I have had to do for many years with Irish affairs, and perhaps I am entitled to give my opinion without being guilty of an undue amount of arrogance or presumption. And I submit this opinion—that a more complete or perfect system of Rules for the improvement of the conduct of the Business of this House is essential for meeting the wants of Ireland. If there be no time for English and Scotch legislation, there will be no time for Irish legislation. The English and Scotch Members are now exerting themselves to the uttermost as Representatives of the people for the purpose of enlarging the fund of time at the disposal of Parliament for the purposes of legislation. I wish to ask those Irish Members whom I have described as anxious to turn to the best account the legislative machinery of the House, what will be the effect upon the interests of Ireland, what will be the effect upon the claims of Ireland to a large allowance of time from the limited fund which is at the disposal of the House, if, while English and Scotch Members have striven and done their utmost to increase that fund, the Members for Ireland have done their utmost to diminish and contract it? That is my view of the interests of Ireland. It appears to me, not only equally with England and Scotland, but even more than England and Scotland, it is essential to Ireland that there should be a better arrangement of Business in this House, in order that her demands may be particularly considered and intelligently met. Was the hon. Member (Mr. O'Connor Power) in jest when he said—"Why do you not take advantage of this opportunity to advance the power of local self-government in Ireland?" Well, Sir, I tell the hon. Gentleman there is not a subject which I could name on which I personally feel a more profound anxiety than on the establishment of local self-government in Ireland, and local self-government upon a liberal and effective basis. But it is a mockery to say—"Establish local self-government in Ireland"—that is a great and difficult subject—and then to say, "I will, by my vote, by my speech, and by my influence, do my best to narrow the time during which alone you can give local self-government or any other boon to Ireland." I need not detain the House long with this question, which is capable of being brought to an issue more satisfactorily than by prophetic dispute and discussion. We say there will be no damage from this Rule establishing the principle of a closing power, and the answer of the Opposition is that that is no argument. They say there will be very great difficulty from the exercise of this closing power, and that they consider a very good argument. Our anticipations of the future are, I admit, only anticipations; but they are as good as those which come from other quarters. But I submit to the House that this matter does not depend on anticipation alone. We have had some trial of it, and we know what the House can do, and what the House does, under the operation of a closing power. It is not a matter of speculation or prophecy. We had the closing power enforced last year. Now, I call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) to this. The right hon. Member and his friends have been freely applying to our measure for establishing a closing power the invidious name of the gag. Some have even gone the extraordinary length of ascribing to us—and especially to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), as his own account of this measure, that which he quoted from a speech from the other side. Now, I want to know if hon. Gentlemen on the other side admit that last year, when they placed the Regulations of Procedure in the Speaker's hands, they assisted in applying the gag to Members of this House? [*Cheers from Irish Members.*] I am not arguing now with the hon. Members from Ireland, but with hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have freely bestowed this invidious and offensive name upon the measure which we propose. Last year they assisted us most cordially to put into operation a far more severe system of closure than this. It is quite true that the assent of three-fourths of the House was required; but that is nothing whatever to the purpose. ["Oh, oh!"] Before you determine by your murmurs whether it is to the purpose or not, perhaps you will allow me to say what the purpose is. The purpose is not to compare the means of putting this power in force; but simply to test the operation of the power, and ask the House whether it was a gag or not. I admit the means of putting it into operation were different; but with that I have nothing to do. I want to test the severity of the power we put in operation. Well, the power of last year was a far severer power than the power which is now proposed. [Mr. WARTON: It was only temporary.] Why does the hon. and learned Gentleman interrupt me with totally irrelevant remarks? I am only showing the actual effect of the power in operation. No doubt it was temporary. But I want to know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite did or did not impose a temporary gag upon freedom of speech? [Mr. WARTON: Yes.] Well, I am extremely grieved to hear that he did it with that intention. I have no such intention. But I want to show whether, in point of fact, the gag was in force, because that is the purpose with which I speak, and the test to which I wish to bring your prophecies—the test of fact and actual experience. The gag of last year was more severe, because while the first point, that of putting the Question, was in operation it was very much the same as it is now, yet the most stringent Rule was introduced that in Committee —a tremendous Rule—no Member might speak on any point more than once; and not only so, but a closure was introduced into that Rule—for which I am responsible — applicable not only to single debates, but to actual stages, so that those two vitally important stages of a Bill, the Committee and the Report, were liable to be closed by an arrangement under which a time was fixed, and if all the Amendments were not disposed of when the hand of the clock pointed to that hour, every Question must be put and decided without debate. So that the severity of that Rule, when it was in operation, was infinitely greater than that of the Rule now proposed by the Government possibly could be. Do not let it be said I am now pointing to the operation of that Rule as a measure of what the operation of the Government Rule will be. I am pointing to it as something infinitely beyond the measure of what the operation of the Government Rule can possibly be; and yet, so approaching it, I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite, I would almost ask the Representatives from Ireland whether it was really a gag? [Mr. HEALY: Of course it was.] Well, Sir, then I must say that if it was a gag it was an instrument more humane than I had been led to suppose, and the whole of this system is much more genial and approachable—not "harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose"—but less cruel and more humane than I think anyone would admit. We have never spoken of it as a thing in itself desirable. Then, Sir, it comes to this. Let us see what has happened under the operation of this infinitely severer system of last year. Last year the question of Irish coercion, it will be remembered, was discussed for 11 successive days upon the Address to the Crown, and many more days were spent on the very beginnings of the question. But at a certain date the Rules of Urgency were introduced, and then 16 days more were occupied in the discussion of the Bill under those Rules. It certainly was, Sir, a peculiar Bill, and one demanding the closest and most careful discussion. But it was a short Bill—it was a Bill the enacting part of which was comprised in two pages of the Statutes and in two clauses, certainly not complex in its provisions, but of a comparatively simple character. And 16 days were given to the discussion under the Rules of Urgency. Do not let it be supposed for a moment that I am now making this a matter of accusation. I am not doing anything of the kind. I am only showing the time spent on the Bill. There were four days on the second reading, eight in Committee, three on Report, and one on the third reading, making 16 days in all for the discussion of these two pages, under a system of *clôture* infinitely more severe than the terms of our 1st Resolution can by any possibility bring into action. Well, Sir, I say that though on that occasion it had become necessary, in the judgment of the vast majority, for the House to limit the freedom of speech in a degree in which I fervently hope we may never be driven to limit it again, yet, under these Rules so limiting it, 16 days were given; and it would, in my judgment, be absurd to say that those 16 days did not, on the whole, give to the Irish Members a fair opportunity, a considerable opportunity—I will not say a full one, for that would seem too much to recognize the arrangement as normal, but a fair and considerable opportunity of making known the merits of their case, and the wants and wishes—as they interpreted them—of their country. Therefore, the test of experience, applied to the actual case which we had in operation under our eye last year, reduces to insignificance and to futility the prophecies which we have now so freely indulged in as to the application of a far milder scheme to a far more powerful and a far more numerous Party. Well, therefore, Sir, looking at this as a matter of business, and endeavouring to get rid of all heat and passion and prejudice in the matter, I hold that our proposals have been justified from first to last. It is charged against us that we admit no Amendment. Yes, Sir; but whenever we admit an Amendment we are charged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) with vacillation and with want of decision. We have been glad to be able to admit certain Amendments; but, undoubtedly, we have steadily and stoutly refused, and shall steadily and stoutly refuse, to admit Amendments which appear to us to be inconsistent with the great purpose of these Resolutions. I may say, Sir, it is no longer a matter of mere prophecy and anticipation. We know what we are dealing with. We know it from experience. We know it from the experience of something more stringent and worse by far than anything that can be extracted from these Resolutions; and I fall back upon the striking passage in which Lord Salisbury, in 1877, described, in the House of Lords, the state of Business in the House of Commons, when, in language of the greatest power and vigour, he went over the whole circle of our mischiefs and our difficulties, and expressed his full and confident belief that the great Assembly intrusted with the representation of the interests and wishes of the people of this country would never suffer its traditions of 600 years to be lost in an atmosphere of futile talk.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, the Prime Minister had remarked that he did not think the prolongation of this debate had served any useful purpose; and, certainly, from the manner in which he had spoken of the speeches of Members on the Opposition Benches, without advancing any argument in reply to them, he should be disposed to agree with the right hon. Gentleman. Something had been said about so few Members being present during the discussion, a very dangerous argument from the Prime Minister, who knew that, as in the case of Indian affairs, the interest of the House ought not to be measured by the attendance; but the reason why so few Members were present was because, in consequence of the action of hon. Gentlemen opposite, the debate was an unreal one, no attempt being made to answer the arguments advanced against the Resolution. The Opposition must think not only of the small number of Members who came forward—of the small number who came forward to answer their arguments—but they were bound to think also of the country, which was listening to the debate with very great interest. If the debate did nothing else, it would help to clear away the confusion with which the question had been surrounded by the speeches of the Government. The Opposition agreed with the Government to the fullest extent in the desire to carry forward as satisfactorily as possible the Business of the House; but they denied that the particular proposal now under discussion was either the best or the wisest method, or, indeed, an adequate method, of dealing with the existing evil. The Prime Minister had told the Opposition that they had a very good war cry. Well, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. He thought they had a good war cry. Freedom of discussion was about as good a war cry as they could have. It was a pretty safe war cry too, and, for his own part, he felt inclined to stick to it; but the right hon.

Gentleman had in the speech just delivered raised a very dangerous war cry. The Prime Minister had spoken of the support which the Conservative Party gave to the closing power in the proposals of last year. He did not expect that they would have been taunted for having done so. [Mr. GLADSTONE: I used no taunts.] It was true that they supported that closing power. They supported the Government in carrying out what they had declared to be absolutely necessary in the interests of the country; but, so far from desiring to increase that power, he believed it was owing to their action that it was not applied in Committee of Supply. But with regard to the still more dangerous war cry the Prime Minister had put forward, the right hon. Gentleman had made, if not a bid, certainly a very good argument in favour of the proposition that the Irish Members should now come and vote with the Government. He had told them that if the proposal of the Government was carried their demands would be more easily considered and met; and he had put in the foreground of what should be considered the question of local self-government in Ireland. He had stated that no one regarded this question with more profound anxiety for its settlement upon a liberal and effectual basis. Why should the question of local self-government be put forward in this discussion on the question of Procedure?

MR. GLADSTONE: It was by the and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), who immediately preceded me, that the question was introduced.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that that did not make it more relevant to this discussion; and, at any rate, he could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman's pointed answer referring to local self-government was made unless it was for the very obvious purpose to which he had alluded. The affection of the right hon. Gentleman for local self-government in Ireland was of somewhat recent birth, because during his previous years of Office the only proposal his Government had voluntarily brought forward was one to enable the Local Government Board in Ireland to compel the Board of Guardians to pension their officers whether they liked it or not. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was no time for the discussion of Irish affairs, but that they might leave the Irish Members to find opportunity for such a discussion; but he had not the slightest doubt, whether this Resolution were passed or not, the Irish Members were quite capable of taking care of themselves. The Prime Minister had, on a former occasion, referred to the statement made by him (Mr. Stanhope) that the effect of the Resolution would be to put down the Tory minority. Well, it had not been disguised that, in the opinion of many Members, the Resolution had that object in view. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) had asserted that in the most pointed and conclusive manner. Of the Government itself, no two Members had put forward the same reason for the adoption of this Rule; and not an individual Member of the Government had maintained the same ground in the different speeches they had made. At the Mansion House last year the Prime Minister had said that its object was to enable the Government to pass a Bankruptcy Bill and a Floods Prevention Bill. Then he said it was to be introduced as an experimental Standing Order; then that a two-thirds' majority was to be accepted; then he backed out of that proposal; and now it appeared there were two classes of measures before the House, Party and non-Party measures, and that the object of the Resolution was to pass the Party measures. Then it was said that its object was to put down bores and to restrain the licence of a few. With that they agreed; but the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) told them that the *clôture* was to stop other people, and let robust Radicals have their way. Again, they were told that it was to put down prolix speeches and compress debate. They agreed with that, too; but that result would not be obtained by the Resolution before the House. The Speaker now chose those who were to address the House; and how, under this Resolution, were they going to keep out the more pushing Members in favour of the more modest Members, such as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)? They would not have any shorter speeches, though they might have fewer speeches. Then it was said that it would put a stop to dilatory Motions. It would have no such effect whatever. Then they came to Obstruction; but this Resolution went far beyond the necessities of the case. The absurdity of the whole proposition was that Obstruction was admitted to have been practised by a small minority, and this Resolution was drawn to protect a small minority, and to silence a large one, which had never been accused of Obstruction at all. It was said that small minorities would be protected by the Speaker; but the fact remained that absolute power was to be placed in the hands of the majority. In his opinion, there was nothing to stand in the way between the Tory Party and the Radical Millennium except the Speaker, and that appeared to him to be one of the most serious dangers with which they had to contend. So long as the present Speaker sat in the Chair they knew they would be protected; but, as he had said, they were in the hands of a mere majority, and Parliamentary life would undoubtedly change; indeed, it had changed already. It had been already urged that when this Resolution was passed the Speaker must at once use the *clôture* in order to pass the remaining Resolutions. When the progress of degeneration had once commenced its progress would be rapid, and it would be impossible for either the Speaker or the Chairman to resist a pressure brought to bear upon him. He should have liked to hear from the Prime Minister any proposal or suggestion that some time would be allowed to elapse before making this Resolution a Standing Order. The Resolution, if passed in its present form, must make a permanent change in the character of the House, and it would be the first step in the downward course of the House of Commons.

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at fourteen minutes before Six o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 9th November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

* * *

POOR LAW UNIONS (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF LUNATICS IN WORKHOUSES.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take action with respect to the better treatment and disposal of lunatics in Workhouses, in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission appointed in 1878?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Poor Laws Union and Lunacy Inquiry Commission recommended that the administration of the whole pauper lunacy in Ireland should be placed under a Department of the Local Government Board. That Report was made to the late Government as far back as the beginning of 1879, and the questions with which it deals are so extensive that I am not prepared at present to pledge the Government to any course of procedure on the matter. I will, however, look into it further on my return to Ireland.

EGYPT (EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES)—NUMBERS AND INCIDENCE OF COST.

Mr. SALT asked the Secretary of State for War, What number of British troops will remain in Egypt for the maintenance of order; and, whether the costs of such troops will be borne by the British or the Egyptian Revenues?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to state that at this moment the troops in Egypt consist of two regiments of Cavalry, six batteries of Artillery, three companies of Engineers, and 11½ battalions of Infantry, together with the necessary administrative services. Although I should be very glad to see the Force reduced, I cannot at this moment make any statement on the subject. My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury answered the second Question on the 2nd of November. I have nothing to add to that answer at present; but it is a question of policy which concerns the First Minister rather than myself.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER: May I ask whether the remainder of the Army Reserve who joined after the 1st of July will be retained in Egypt during this occupation, or be allowed to return?

Mr. CHILDERS: I cannot answer that Question more precisely than the Question as to the length of time the troops will remain. It must depend on circumstances.

CHINA—THE CHEFOO CONVENTION—OPIUM DUTIES.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether instructions have been sent to Her Majesty's Representative in China authorising him to ratify that portion of the Chefoo Convention which relates to the Duties on Opium, in the form in which it appeared in the Convention Articles of 1876; or, whether any conditions have been attached to the ratification of that Article of the Treaty, as suggested in the Despatch of the Government of India, No. 312, of 1881?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir Thomas Wade has returned to this country in order to consult with Her Majesty's Government on the subject; but no decision has yet been arrived at.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—RETIREMENT OF OFFICERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to his statement in the discussion on the votes for the Board of Works (Ireland), that he would in the autumn inquire into that office, If he has been able to do so; and, if it is a fact that he has received from Colonel M'Kerlie, the chairman, and Mr. Hornsby, the secretary, an intimation of their desire to retire from the service, in accordance with the recommendation of Lord Crichton's Committee of 1878, and if the Treasury has offered them facilities for doing so, and with what results?

Mr. COURTNEY: The subject of the hon. Member's Question has not been overlooked; but I am not yet in a position to make any definite statements in respect to it. I have not received from Colonel M'Kerlie or Mr. Hornsby an intimation of a desire to retire. No facilities would be necessary, as both these officers are entitled to retire if they wish to do so.

BOARD OF WORKS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST OFFICERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that legal proceedings are pending against an official of the Board of Works, and an auditor of the Local Government Board, being two directors of a bill discounting company, for certain transactions relating to the operations of that company; if he will satisfy himself as to the nature of these transactions; and, what steps he will take in regard to these two officials?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I cannot answer for the Board of Works; but, so far as the Local Government Board is concerned, the only auditor of that Board to whom that Question could point is Mr. Robert H. Jephson, who is a Director of the National Discount Company of Ireland, and he reports as follows:—

> "There are no legal proceedings whatever pending against me in connection with the National Discount Company of Ireland, nor have there ever been in connection with that or any other Company or person."

Mr. COURTNEY: As regards the Board of Works, it appears that the officer alluded to had ceased for some time to be a Director of the Company, and there is no knowledge of the existence of any legal proceedings against him.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether he considered it a proper position for the Auditor of the Local Government Board to occupy to be a Director of a Company of a speculative nature?

Mr. TREVELYAN replied, that that was a large question, about which there might be several opinions; but, as far as any Member of the Government could give an independent opinion, he did not think there could be any interference in the matter unless new regulations were laid down for the guidance of officers of the Civil Service.

IRELAND—KINGSTOWN—THE GRESHAM GROUNDS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the Board of Works has, since promise given last Session, restored the portion of the Gresham Grounds at Kingstown, which has been used as a kitchen garden, to its original use, namely, as a place of resort for the public?

MR. COURTNEY: I must remind the hon. Member that this ground was never opened to the public. When it ceased to be useful for the harbour works, it was disposed of to the Royal Marine Hotel Company, on condition that it should be used as an ornamental garden attached to the hotel. This condition was infringed by its being in part used as a kitchen garden; and the attention of the Hotel Company has been twice called to the fact. They have now promised to turn it into a pleasure ground as soon as the present crop shall have been consumed.

MR. HEALY was understood to say that a similar undertaking had been given before and not carried out.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONTABULARY—ASSAULTS BY POLICEMEN.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether four policemen from Kilkishen and Cullane, county Clare, visited Tulla on the 24th October, and, having got drunk on their way back, assaulted a man named John Howard and his mother, as well as a man named O'Dea; whether one of them struck Mrs. Howard with the stock of his rifle; whether O'Dea narrowly escaped a bayonet thrust; whether Howard went immediately to the police barrack at Tulla to report the outrage; whether he was told there he should make information of his assailants; whether he then called upon the deputy clerk of petty sessions to have informations made, and was informed by him that he would get no satisfaction, and that he had better go home and let the matter drop, or that he would receive annoyance from the police; and, what notice the Government have taken of the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have obtained a Report on this case; but I do not consider it a satisfactory Report, and I have directed further inquiry to be made.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—OMAGH DISTRICT ASYLUM—LIEUTENANT COLONEL BUCHANAN.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that His Excellency has appointed Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan (Clerk of Peace) to a seat on the Governing Board of Omagh Asylum; whether he was aware that Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan is County Cess Collector for part of Tyrone; that the asylum is mainly supported out of this cess; that Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan therefore will have the voting away of money which he collects, and out of which he is paid; if he will say on whose recommendation Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan was appointed by the Lord Lieutenant; and, whether, especially as this gentleman already has a brother on the board, His Excellency will make a new appointment, after local consultation on the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is the case that the Lord Lieutenant has appointed Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan to be a member of the Board of the Omagh District Lunatic Asylum. His Excellency informs me that he was not aware when he made the appointment that Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan was county cess collector for part of Tyrone; but the asylum is not mainly supported out of that cess. The County Fermanagh, as well as the County Tyrone, contributes to its support; and the contribution of Government is estimated at more than double the joint contributions of the two counties. I must decline to state on whose recommendation Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan was appointed; but it is the practice of the Lord Lieutenant to ascertain local views on such matters. I believe there is a brother of Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan on the Board of Governors; but His Excellency has no intention of making a new appointment, nor does he see that the appointment of barony cess collector is any bar to any person being appointed a Governor of the asylum for the same county.

CRIME (IRELAND)—ATTEMPTED MURDER OF MR. CARTER IN MAYO CO.—COST OF ATTENDANCE OF SURGEON WHEELER.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the sole reason of the Irish Government for postponing the settlement of Dr. Wheeler's claim for attending Mr. Shean Carter is the hope that he may recover the same from Mr. Carter out of the amount (if any) that may be awarded to him under the Act of last Session; when said application of Mr. Carter is expected to be disposed of; whether the Government have apprised Mr. Carter what they conceive to be his liability to Dr. Wheeler; and, is there any objection to produce the Correspondence between Dr. Wheeler and the Irish Government?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The consideration of Dr. Wheeler's claim to be paid out of the public funds for his attendance on Mr. Carter has been postponed, pending Mr. Carter's application for compensation under the 19th section of the Prevention of Crime Act, as Mr. Carter may, as the result of it, be in a position to pay Dr. Wheeler a reasonable sum for his attendence. Mr. Carter's application will, it is expected, be heard early in December. The Government have apprised Mr. Carter, through his solicitors, of what they consider to be their position towards Dr. Wheeler in the matter. [Mr. Gibson: What is that?] It is a very peculiar one. If the right hon. and learned Member wishes to move for the Correspondence, he can have it. As regards Dr. Wheeler's claim, the matter in question was arranged by the late Mr. Burke. I prefer to read the Minute which is on record—namely, that of Mr. Hamilton, who was empowered by Mr. Burke to communicate with Surgeon Wheeler. He says—

> "I did not find Surgeon Wheeler at home, but he called on the 18th of March at the Castle, and Mr. Burke authorised me to inform him that if Mr. Carter is unable to pay your fees for attendance on him in consequence of his having been fired at and dangerously wounded on the 13th instant, he shall submit your claim for such attendance to the Government, and it will receive every consideration."

That is the only evidence on record of what passed. There is no Minute that governs this question; and all one can say is that Mr. Burke, who at that time was working 11 hours a-day every day in the week, was occasionally obliged, no doubt, to transact some important business without due official safeguards. The recollection of the gentleman in the office is exactly that of Mr. Hamilton, that the assistance from the public funds was entirely dependent on the fact that Mr. Carter was unable to pay. Nor was there any definite sum mentioned, nor anything to show that Mr. Burke in the least contemplated these very large charges.

Mr. GIBSON said, as the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his Question in detail or categorically, he was obliged to ask him if on each occasion Dr. Wheeler did not report to the Government that he visited Mr. Carter, and the result of his visit, and was it not the fact that the Government on no one single occasion took exception to Dr. Wheeler's continued attendance on Mr. Carter, and that Mr. Carter distinctly apprised the Government within the last week that Mr. Carter's whole income, derived from rent not very well paid, to maintain his wife and children and himself was only £200 a-year; and whether the postponement of the settlement of Dr. Wheeler's claim was owing to the hope that he might recover the same from Mr. Carter out of the amount that might be awarded to him under the Act of last Session.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, those were Questions of which the right hon. and learned Gentleman should give Notice. All he could say now was that the offer of Mr. Burke to assist Mr. Carter in paying Surgeon Wheeler's account depended entirely upon whether Mr. Carter was able to pay or not.

Mr. GIBSON: Is it a fact that the Government send down leading Dublin surgeons on their own responsibility, and refuse to pay them unless they first send in an application to the person attended?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That Question is, in fact, a statement. The only evidence we have on the point is that Mr. Hamilton says Mr. Burke told him to inform Dr. Wheeler that if Mr. Carter was unable to pay him (Dr. Wheeler) for his attendance the Government would pay him. If Mr. Carter obtained compensation under the Act, that would enable him to pay Dr. Wheeler a reasonable sum. The Government conceive that Mr. Burke did not bind them to anything.

Mr. GIBSON: Then, am I to understand that the Government repudiate the engagement of Mr. Burke?

Mr. TREVELYAN: On the contrary, they intend to fulfil exactly the representation made by him.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CLERK OF PETTY SESSIONS (COUNTY LEITRIM).

Colonel O'BEIRNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of

Ireland, If he will state in what manner, and by whom, is the inquiry conducted, that is at present taking place, into the circumstances attending the election of Clerk of Petty Sessions for the districts of Dromod and Drumsna, county Leitrim, vacant since December 1881; and, when is such inquiry likely to terminate; and, if he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Correspondence and Report of the Inquiry?

MR. TREVELYAN: The matter is still under consideration by the Irish Government, and I cannot give a definite answer. I regret that I cannot answer the Question till next week; but I will let the hon. and gallant Member know as soon as the matter is settled.

LAND IMPROVEMENT ACTS (IRELAND) —IRON-ROOFED HAY SHEDS.

MR. GIBSON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that the Treasury refuse to advance money in Ireland for the construction of iron-roofed hay sheds save under special and high terms; and whether, if so, he will consider the propriety of encouraging such useful agricultural improvements?

MR. COURTNEY: Loans for iron-roofed hay sheds are made under the same conditions as other loans under the Land Improvement Acts; but as the Government are advised that such roofs can scarcely ever last for so long as 35 years, it has been necessary to require repayment of loans for them in the shorter period of 22 years—the only alternative offered by the Acts.

EGYPT—SURRENDER OF ARABI PASHA.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, To state to the House the circumstances under which Arabi Pacha surrendered his sword, and the statement made by him upon that occasion?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We have learned from Colonel Stewart that he was in possession of letters from the Khedive to the Prefect of Police at Cairo. The Prefect of Police was directed to make a prisoner of Arabi Pasha. Colonel Stewart offered to accompany the Prefect of Police with 30 men; but the Prefect said that he could make Arabi prisoner without British assistance. When the Prefect returned with Arabi Pasha the latter handed his sword to General Drury-Lowe, and began to make a speech in Arabic. General Drury-Lowe informed him that it was not in his power to discuss political questions with him; but that his duty, as representing the Khedive, was to make a prisoner of him unconditionally. We have no official report of the words of the speech in Arabic which Arabi Pasha had begun to make.

MR. BOURKE: Is it untrue, as *The Times'* Correspondent states, that Arabi Pasha declared that he surrendered to the clemency of the English?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I should not say it was untrue; but we cannot speak definitely as to the words, because the speech was made in Arabic, and there was no one there to report them.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—OVERCROWDING IN LUNATIC WARDS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been called to the evils arising from overcrowding in the lunatic wards of workhouses, especially at Saint Pancras and at the Dudley Union Workhouse; whether with reference to the latter he has noticed the following passage in the last Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, pp. 159, 160:—

> "Attention has been drawn by the Visiting Commissioners for several years past to the overcrowding of the lunatic wards, but it continues to be as great as ever, and nothing has been done, nor as far as I can learn is anything in immediate contemplation with a view to remove or abate the evil which in the male lunatic ward day room is indeed becoming worse every year;"

whether he has noticed the following extraordinary statement of the Commissioners:—

> "In the dormitories of this ward also the beds are so close that they touch each other at the sides, and the patients have to climb into and out of their beds over the bottom,"

with other observations of a painful character; and, whether he will take immediate steps to remedy the evils complained of?

MR. DODSON: My attention has been called to the evils arising from overcrowding in the lunatic wards of the St. Pancras and Dudley Workhouses, and I have not failed to communicate with the Guardians on the subject. As to St. Pancras, the Guardians have, during the present Session, obtained a Bill to acquire land compulsorily for the extension of their workhouse; the plans for remodelling it are now under consideration, and when the alterations are completed I trust that all cause of complaint as to the overcrowding of lunatics will be removed. As regards Dudley, the statement of the Visiting Lunacy Commissioners appeared so serious that the Local Government Board at once directed one of their Inspectors to make a special Report on the workhouse. This Report confirmed that of the Commissioners, and the Board accordingly urged the Guardians to take steps to remedy the existing defects. Plans were submitted which we held to be inadequate. Amended plans have, consequently, been prepared, and these are now under consideration. With respect to workhouses generally, there is no reason to suppose that the lunatic wards are overcrowded; and the Commissioners expressly state that, as a rule, progress is noticeable in the manner in which lunatic inmates are cared for by the Guardians.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PART V. — PURCHASE CLAUSES — ADVANCES TO IRISH TENANTS.

Mr. GIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Land Commissioners have refused several applications for advances to enable tenants to purchase their holdings under Part 5 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," when the holdings sold are jointly subject to a fee farm rent, or other head rent; and, whether the Commissioners decline, or allege they have not power to apportion such fee farm rent, or other head rent, and refuse to sanction the mode of indemnity in such cases adopted by the Landed Estates Court; and, if so, will the Government take steps to remove this serious restriction to the operation of the Purchase Clauses?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Irish Land Commissioners have refused to make advances in certain cases on holdings which it was proposed to sell subject to head rents bearing a large proportion of the annual value, on the ground that the security was insufficient. They have in other cases refused to grant loans of three-fourths of the purchase money of holdings subject to head rents, but have granted a smaller proportion of the purchase money, holding that, owing to the existence of the head rent, an advance of three-fourths would not be sufficiently secured. They have no power of apportioning rents, and they inform me that they have not refused to accept an indemnity where the indemnity was sufficient and satisfactory.

Mr. GIVAN: Will the Government bring in some measure enabling them to do so?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I cannot answer that Question at the present moment.

INTOXICATING LIQUOR (LICENSING) ACT, 1872—SECS. 14 AND 15—BEERHOUSES IN CHATHAM.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has seen the Return, No. 375, moved for by Mr. M'Laren,

> "Giving the number of Public Houses and Beerhouses respectively used as Brothels within the districts subjected to the Contagious Diseases Acts;"

if his attention has been called to the Return for 1881, on page 32 of that Return, where it is shown that in the town of Chatham there are eight licensed public houses known by the police to have been used as brothels for periods of from 12 to 17 years; and, since it appears from the same Return that the authorities of Chatham have never proceeded against these licensed public houses during the long periods in which they have been known to the police as brothels, if he will take steps to cause the provisions of the 35 and 36 Vic. c. 94, ss. 14 and 15, to be carried out?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; I have seen the Return. The police have made representations to the local authorities, which I hope will put things upon a more satisfactory footing.

INLAND NAVIGATION (IRELAND)— THE RIVER BARROW.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Mountmellick Board of Guardians on the 28th ult. to the effect that the state of the River Barrow is such as to make it impossible to keep the town of Portarlington in a proper sanitary condition; and, whether he will obtain and lay upon the Table of the House an official Report upon the injury done by the river to the town of Portarlington, and to the land on its banks in the barony of Portnahinch, in the Queen's County?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen a copy of the Resolution referred to by the hon. Member. It is dated the 28th ultimo, and was forwarded by the Board of Guardians to the Local Government Board. That Board have instructed one of the Medical Inspectors to report whether the sanitary condition of the town of Portarlington is injuriously affected by the state of the River Barrow. When I receive that Report I shall be able to judge whether or not it ought to be presented to Parliament.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT) — OVERHEAD TELEGRAPH WIRES IN THE METROPOLIS.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Postmaster General, What progress has been made during the present year in reducing the numbers of Post Office overhead wires in the Metropolitan area, and to inform the House of the numbers and lengths of such wires on the 1st January, 1st July, and 1st November 1882, as well as of the numbers and length of wires laid under ground at the same periods within the same area?

MR. FAWCETT: When the hon. Member asked me for information as to the extent of overground and underground wires in June of last year I stated that within a radius of four miles of the General Post Office there were belonging to the Department in March of that year 4,388 miles of underground wires and 500 of overground. At the present time the underground wires within the same radius have been increased to 4,953, and the overground to only 519, and this latter small increase is chiefly due to the doubling of existing wires, in consequence of private telegraph wires being converted into telephone wires. Within a radius of a mile of the Post Office, which of course includes the most crowded part of London, the proportion of underground to overground wires is still larger, the figures being 1,822 miles of the former to not quite 58 of the latter. I have detailed Returns, which show that by far the greater number of the overground wires belong, not to the Post Office, but to private telephone and other Companies. Thus, over one thoroughfare in the City there are 97 overground wires, and only three belong to the Post Office.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — COMPENSATION FOR MALICIOUS BURNING OF DWELLING-HOUSE.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at a recent special Sessions held in Athenry, county Galway, the sitting magistrates awarded Lord Dunsandle the sum of £30 as compensation for a house accidentally or maliciously burned; and, whether Mr. Martin O'Halloran offered in open court to rebuild the house for the sum of £8 15*s*., at the same time tendering two solvent persons as bail in £100 each as security for the due and proper performance of the work?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the facts are correctly stated in the Question, except that the house was certainly maliciously, not accidentally, burned, and that Martin O'Halloran's tender was for £7 15*s*. I understand that the magistrates considered the tender altogether inadequate, and did not accept it, as they knew it could not be fulfilled. In any case the matter is not one in which the Government has any power to interfere.

ARMY — RETURN OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE FROM EGYPT—THE 84TH REGIMENT.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to the following statement, which appeared in the morning newspapers of November 7th, dated Aldershot,

> "That on the arrival of the 84th Regiment from Egypt this evening, amid a great downfall of rain, not a bed, or any food or fire, had been provided for them in any shape or form, and 1,000 men, wet and cold, marched into empty barracks, utterly destitute of the smallest comfort;"

and whether the statement is well founded?

MR. CHILDERS: This is a matter within the responsibility of the commanding officer of the battalion, under

Section 15 of the Queen's Regulations. I have made inquiries, and I find that in this instance the barracks were ready for the reception of the men, and that tea and bread were issued to them on their arrival, and beer and cheese later. Four blankets per man were also provided. The Regulations appear to have been properly observed by all concerned, and are, no doubt, sufficient for ordinary cases of home reliefs; but I am not satisfied that they make sufficient provision for cases like the present, of a battalion being moved into barracks at once on landing from foreign service, without giving time for sending on an advance party to take over the barracks, and arrange for the reception of the battalion; and I have given orders to have these old Regulations reconsidered.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER: May I ask whether there was firing, and wood and coal provided for them?

Mr. CHILDERS: I stated that I thought the Regulations on the subject of fire had been observed; but I do not think they are adequate Regulations, and I shall take care to have them revised on that point especially.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE IRISH MILITIA.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the Government to call out the Irish Militia for training in the year 1883?

Mr. CHILDERS: I am not in a position to answer the noble Lord's Question at present. The calling out of Militia regiments for training is never settled till the Estimates are framed.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE COUNTY COURT JUDGE OF LEITRIM—APPOINTMENT OF COURT VALUERS.

Mr. BRODRICK asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the case that Mr. Waters, Q.C. County Court Judge of the county Leitrim, appointed a person named Bernard Kane as Court Valuer for the Ballinamore Quarter Sessions district in cases of fixing judicial rents to be heard by him; whether Mr. Kane is a tenant farmer residing in the same district; and, whether his annual valuation exceeds £15?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Question of the hon. Member is one of a series of similar Questions which have been put to me by hon. Members on that side of the House. I think I cannot deal with the matter otherwise than by reading an extract from a letter addressed to my Secretary by Mr. Waters, on the 30th of last month, in reference to one of the Questions put on the Paper by the noble Lord the Member for Down (Lord Arthur Hill). The extract is as follows:—

> "I would put it to the consideration of the Chief Secretary whether I should answer any more such Questions. If I do anything wrong in my official position let them move in the proper manner to have me dismissed."

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the case that a number of the resident magistrates in Ireland have recently been informed by the Lord Lieutenant that he had no further occasion for their services, and were dismissed from their offices without reason or cause being assigned; if it is true that several of these gentlemen, being still in the prime of life, and under sixty years of age, protested against such proceeding as arbitrary, and requested to be informed on what grounds they were removed, but received no reply beyond being informed that the decision of the Lord Lieutenant was final; if it is also true that some of them requested to be granted an interview either with the Lord Lieutenant or the Under Secretary, and were refused; whether there is any precedent for the course which has been adopted; and, whether there is any objection to lay upon the Table the Correspondence which has taken place on the subject between the Under Secretary and Major Percy, Captain Wynne, and Mr. Denvehy?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Twelve Resident Magistrates have recently been required to retire. It was the same retirement as that which was announced to the House at the earlier part of the Session. Of these, seven were superannuated on the ground of age, it being stated in the letter sent to them that the Lord Lieutenant considered it essential that gentlemen of advanced age should no longer remain in active service as Resident Magistrates. Five others were required to retire, as it was considered desirable to replace them by more efficient men. Four of the five protested against retirement, and were informed that His Excellency found himself unable to alter his decision, which had been arrived at after careful consideration. Two of these gentlemen had interviews both with the Lord Lieutenant and the Under Secretary. In one case, the magistrate who applied for an interview was informed that His Excellency did not think any good result would follow from an interview. There are numerous precedents for the course which has been adopted, which is entirely within the spirit of the provisions of Clause 7 of the Superannuation Act of 1859. It is not usual to lay copies of such Correspondence on the Table, and I think I must decline to do so in this case, but merely on the ground that it would be establishing a precedent.

MR. TOTTENHAM said, he would bring the subject before the House at the earliest opportunity.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1859 — CONDITIONS AS TO SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCES.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there is any power given to the Treasury by "The Superannuation Act, 1859," to grant superannuation allowances to persons under sixty years of age, unless upon medical certificate of permanent infirmity; if no such power, if he will state under what Act of Parliament pensions will be granted to the resident magistrates under sixty years of age lately dismissed by the Lord Lieutenant, and the amount of the pensions in each case; and, if he will also state the reasons why no intimation has yet been given to them of the amount of their pensions, though their dismissal took place in July?

MR. COURTNEY: Under the 7th section of "The Superannuation Act, 1859," the Treasury have power to grant to any person removed from the Public Service for the purpose of facilitating improvements in the organization of the Department to which he belongs a special compensation allowance, although such person may not have attained the age of 60. The Resident Magistrates in question will be dealt with under this power. The details of their cases have only recently reached the Treasury; but there will be no avoidable delay in dealing with them. I believe they remained on full pay until the 30th September.

POST OFFICE—POSTING LETTERS BY SUNDAY MAILS.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in view of the fact that a letter-box is attached to the Post Office carriage on mail trains, and is available at the station of departure as well as at all stations at which the trains stop on week days, and is not available at the station of departure on Sundays, although open at all other stations, he will endeavour to accommodate those of the Metropolitan public who are thus excluded, and who are willing to pay the extra fee?

MR. FAWCETT: The possibility of affording to the Metropolitan public the same opportunity which now exists elsewhere of posting letters in mail trains on Sundays as well as on week days, to which the hon. Member refers, has been considered; and, as I believe it will be possible to give the accommodation without any appreciable increase of Sunday labour, I may state that on and after Sunday next letters can be posted at the London railway stations by the mail trains on the payment of a late fee, in the same way as on week days. I think it will be well that the plan shall, in the first instance, be worked experimentally; because, if it should lead to any inconvenient increase in the work which has to be done in the travelling post offices, the subject will have to be reconsidered.

EGYPT—SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AND BAKER PASHA.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether telegrams were sent by Sir Garnet Wolseley to Baker Pacha, urging him to accept the appointment of Generalissimo of the Egyptian Army; whether these telegrams were of a pressing nature, and whether they had any influence in deciding Baker Pacha to quit the Turkish Army; and, whether Her Majesty's Government has been, or is likely to be, consulted by the

Khedive in the re-organization of the Egyptian Army; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will inquire into the circumstances attending Baker Pacha's departure from Constantinople before consenting to his appointment as commanding officer of the Egyptian Army?

Mr. CHILDERS: I have already informed the hon. Member, in answer to Questions on the 2nd and 6th instant, that no official communications passed between Sir Garnet Wolseley and Baker Pasha, either before or after the latter was applied to by the Khedive. I decline to be guilty of the impertinence of asking Sir Garnet Wolseley what his private correspondence may have been with any person; and I should, therefore, have been unable to answer the hon. Member's first Question had I not received spontaneously from Sir Garnet Wolseley, when he read the Question in the papers, a note saying that he sent no telegram of any kind whatever to Baker Pasha, and did not urge him in any way to accept the appointment in question.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—OUTDOOR RELIEF—THE GUARDIANS OF TULLA UNION, CO. CLARE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any communications have been made to him, or to the Irish Local Government Board, with a view to causing a surcharge to be made against Guardians of the Poor in the Union of Tulla, County Clare, in respect of out-door relief granted by the Board of that Union early in the present year, at the rate of six shillings per head per week, to tenants evicted from their holdings on an estate at Kiltannon; whether it is a fact that the President of the English Local Government Board has lately issued instructions that the Circular of the Poor Law Auditor to the Metropolitan Guardians, fixing the rate of maintenance of pauper children in Catholic schools at four shillings per week per head should be forthwith cancelled, and the sum of six shillings substituted; the money to be payable to the Guardians from the Common Poor Fund; also whether the St. Pancras Guardians unanimously voted the six shilling rate at a recent meeting; and, whether the Irish Executive will take steps to ensure that no charge shall be made against individual members of the Tulla Board of Guardians, in respect of the voting by their Board, to adults and others, evicted from their farms, and wholly deprived of their means of living, of a sum not larger than that allowed by the English Local Government Board for the maintenance of pauper children?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board in Dublin have received complaints as to alleged excessive expenditure on out-door relief in the Tulla Union. They point out that if the ratepayers of the Union consider that there has been illegal or exorbitant expenditure in the cases referred to, it is open to them to bring the matter before the Auditor. The Local Government Board, however, have no power to cause a surcharge to be made. The 95th section of the Irish Poor Relief Act leaves the question of disallowance or deduction entirely in the hands of the Auditor; and the Board would have no power whatever to limit the charge which may be made by an Auditor against a Guardian or Guardians in respect of illegal or exorbitant relief granted by them. With regard to the proceedings of the English Local Government Board, I have ascertained from that Department that the Board did not issue any such instructions as those referred to. The Local Government Board have, under an Act passed this Session, sanctioned the sum of 6*s.* a-week as the payment which may be made in respect of any pauper child sent to a Metropolitan Catholic certified school by the Guardians; and in the case of the St. Pancras Guardians they have resolved to pay 6*s.* a-week in respect of each child so sent.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MEMORIAL OF RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Government have taken into consideration the memorial of the Irish resident magistrates presented on the 18th of November last; and, whether the Irish Government have arrived at any decision in reference to it?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Irish Government has considered the Memorial of the Resident Magistrates presented on the 18th of November last, and have no present intention of asking for legislation to increase their salaries. As regards their allowances, the 15*s.* a-night formerly allowed to them when absent on duty has been increased to a guinea, and in place of a commuted allowance for travelling the actual expenses are now repaid.

OFFICIAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (IRELAND)—CASE OF MR. CARTER, CO. MAYO.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the custom to send experienced surgeons from the Castle to persons wounded in Ireland, whether by the police or from agrarian causes; if not, on what principle one was sent to attend to Mr. Shaen Carter, and out of what fund their fees are paid, supposing poverty on the patient's part?

MR. TREVELYAN: In several cases during the last two or three years experienced surgeons have been employed by the Irish Government to attend upon persons in indigent circumstances injured by the police or from agrarian causes, and their fees have been paid out of the Vote for Law Charges. I am told they were all for moderate amounts.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Arabi Pacha is to be tried under special conditions agreed to by the prisoner's counsel, after certain special modifications have been introduced to meet their views; what is the sanction and authority giving these conditions and modifications the effect of Law; can these conditions modify the Articles of the Egyptian Code; and, have these modifications been introduced expressly for the purpose of Arabi Pacha's trial?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already given all the information we possess with regard to the conditions of procedure agreed to for the trial of Arabi. I must decline to enter into questions of Egyptian law. The trial is by a court martial; and if privileges not usually allowed by the procedure under Egyptian law have been conceded to the prisoners in this case, it is, and at the instance of Her Majesty's Government, for the sole purpose of securing the prisoners a fair trial; and Her Majesty's Government have no reason to suppose that the prisoners or their counsel are dissatisfied with the conditions laid down.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will inform the House what Article of the Egyptian Code refers to the first charge against Arabi Pacha of having abused the Flag of Truce by withdrawing troops and by pillaging and burning Alexandria while it was flying; and, what Article refers to the third charge against Arabi Pacha of having continued the War after Peace was concluded?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The charges mentioned are under the Ottoman Military Code; but I must decline to answer further Questions as to the charges against Arabi Pasha pending the trial, which is being conducted by an Egyptian court martial, and not by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BOURKE: Will the hon. Baronet give us the means of ascertaining where these Articles are to be found? I understood the hon. Gentleman to refer me the other day to the work of Aristarchi Bey; but I find there was no copy of the Egyptian Code in the library?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: If the right hon. Member desires the information, I shall be glad to see if we can get a translation from Egypt of the Articles of the Ottoman Military Code. I have seen copies, both of the Ottoman Military Code and the Ottoman Penal Code, and I believe they are to be found in the Public Libraries of this country.

MR. BOURKE: I beg to give Notice that on an early day I will move—

> "That this House regrets that, after the unconditional surrender of Arabi Pacha to British authority, he was delivered over to be dealt with by Egyptian Tribunals?"

MR. O'DONNELL: Can the hon. Baronet inform the House whether the Egyptian court martial possesses any authority, or is it backed up by any force in Egypt other than the authority and force of the British Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already declined, on several occasions, to answer Questions of that description.

MR. O'DONNELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall ask the Question again on Monday.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What was the date of the telegram in which Lord Granville laid down the rule that in the trial of Arabi Pacha

"No arguments or evidence as to political motives or reasons in justification of the offences charged should be admitted, but only such as go to establish or disprove the truth of the charges made;"

and, was he then aware that the second Article of charge against Arabi was "for having incited the Egyptians against the Khedive's Government," and that part of the fourth Article was "for inciting the people to Civil War"—both said Articles involving necessarily the consideration of political motives and reasons?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The date of the telegram was October 16. The charges were received on the 22nd of that month.

Mr. GIBSON: On the receipt of the charges did Lord Granville think it necessary to make any modification in the rules laid down?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give Notice of the Question?

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: If the trial of Arabi is taking place under the Ottoman Military Code, will it be in the power of the Sultan to pardon him?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I did not say it was taking place under the Ottoman Military Code.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Well, the Egyptian Code?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; the trial is not taking place under that Code either. The trial is taking place under court martial. I stated that certain of the Articles of the Ottoman Military Code were quoted and referred to; but the trial is not taking place under that Code.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I should like to ask whether, in the event of a capital sentence being passed upon Arabi Pasha, Her Majesty's Government will take any steps to prevent the sentence being carried out?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Baronet knows I have made it a rule not to answer Questions on this delicate subject without Notice, even though the answer might appear perfectly simple. This is, moreover, a Question that has already been put.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Will the hon. Baronet answer the very simple Question—under what Code is Arabi being tried?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: My hon. Friend cannot have been in the House a few minutes ago when I stated the fact clearly. Arabi Pasha is being tried under special conditions, which are to be found in no Code whatever. Those conditions have been agreed upon between the Egyptian Government and the prisoner's counsel.

Mr. GORST: Have these special conditions been framed since Arabi Pasha was taken prisoner, and have they received the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The answer to the first part of the Question is sufficiently obvious; the second part of the Question has already been answered.

Mr. DAWSON: Have the Government conveyed to the Court about to try Arabi Pasha that already a verdict has been pronounced in this House that he was the leader of a military rebellion?

[No reply was given.]

THE ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will consider the advisability of reverting to the old system of appointing Regimental Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons to every Regiment in Her Majesty's Forces?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Baronet, I have to remind him that the present arrangement of the Medical Service, commonly called the General, as opposed to the Regimental, system, was finally decided upon by the late Government when Lord Cranbrook was Secretary of State, so recently as in 1878. Lord Cranbrook's words were:—"The Regimental system has gone, and it would be impossible to recall it." If that system should appear to me faulty, I shall not hesitate to reform it; but at this moment I have no intention to revert to arrangements so recently condemned.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs, If he will state to the House the date of the first representation made by the English Government to the Government of Spain, with respect to the kidnapping of the Cuban Refugees, and if he will state the general purport of that representation?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The date of the telegram to Sir R. Morier giving the substance of an answer in the House was October 30. It was received the same evening late, and communicated privately to the Spanish Government early the next day. On November 4 Sir R. Morier was further instructed on the subject; but until we receive the Report of the inquiry at Gibraltar, it is difficult for him to approach the Spanish Government.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Are we to understand that the Government took no notice of this matter until a Question was put on the subject in the House of Commons?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: In one sense the English Government feels itself unable even now to take any notice of the matter, not having received any reply. They cannot take official notice of it until they do.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS—RULES AS TO ACTION.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to a prosecution by Charlotte Blackman, a supernumerary at a theatre, against a loan office keeper named Taylor, and a solicitor named Boyne, for conspiring together to defraud her of £50; to the committal of these two persons, at the Bow Street Police Court, for trial; and to the Grand Jury at the Central Criminal Court having, on returning a true Bill against them, made a special presentment that the Director of Public Prosecutions had been wanting in his duty in not having taken up the case; and, whether, as the prosecutress is penniless, he will state what course he intends to adopt in the interests of justice?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, his attention had been directed to the case. The Director of Public Prosecutions came to the conclusion that this case could not be taken up under the existing Rules; and he rather thought the decision of the Director was a correct one. He would take care the attention of the Treasury was called to the case, so that no failure of justice might ensue. He did not think the Grand Jury were made aware of the Rules by which the Director of Public Prosecutions was bound. He was now considering whether those Rules, which were framed by the late Sir John Holker, could be improved.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Could those Rules be laid on the Table of the House?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there was no objection to laying them on the Table, if they had not already been presented.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — COUNTY COURT JUDGES — MR. WATERS, COUNTY COURT JUDGE OF LEITRIM.

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Mr. Waters, Chairman of the County Leitrim, did, at the October Quarter Sessions at Manorhamilton, on the application of defendants, stay execution on a large number of decrees for rent granted by him at the previous April and June Sessions which were already in the hands of the sheriff, and some of which were partially executed; if he will state to the House under what statute a County Court Judge can stay decrees granted by him at previous sessions, after such decrees have passed into the hands of the sheriff for execution; and, whether, by such action, Mr. Waters has exceeded the powers conferred upon him by statute?

MR. HEALY: Before this Question is answered, I would ask whether it is not a fact that Mr. Waters was only following the excellent example set him by Judge O'Brien?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I have submitted this question to the learned Judge. If he will favour me with an answer I shall communicate it to the House; but I must observe that County Court Judges in Ireland are purely independent functionaries, in no way responsible to the Attorney General or under his control, and I have no means of requiring them to furnish the information required. If the learned

Judge's decision is wrong it may be remedied on appeal; and if, in his judicial office, he misconducts himself, he may be removed by a Petition to Parliament. Under these circumstances, I would put it to the House whether it is fair to put these Questions every day?

Mr. LEWIS: In consequence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's answer, I shall put the Question again on Monday.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ASSAULTS BY POLICEMEN.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the assault and arrest of Mr. Thomas Cunningham and Mr. John Sweeny by the Police, at Loughrea, on last Thursday; whether two sub-constables, one partly and the other wholly under the influence of drink, on that night rushed up to three farmers and a woman, as they were getting on a car to go home, and declare that they constituted an illegal meeting; whether Messrs. Cunningham and Sweeny were set upon by the two sub-constables because they remonstrated with this abuse of power; and, whether, in the interest of the peace of Loughrea and its neighbourhood, he will order the punishment or removal of these two policemen?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the matter referred to was to be investigated by the magistrates at Loughrea to-day, and he had not yet learnt the result of the proceedings.

EGYPT—MISSION OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he could, without inconvenience, state generally to the House the object of Lord Dufferin's visit to Egypt; whether, in the instructions to Lord Dufferin, any provision has been made for consulting the wishes of the Egyptian people in respect of the institutions under which Egypt is henceforward to be governed; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will be able to make a statement, before the prorogation of Parliament, as to the arrangements proposed to be made for the settlement of Egypt, and the length of time during which that Country is to be occupied by Her Majesty's Forces?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In regard to the first part of this Question, I may state that the object of Lord Dufferin's mission to Egypt is to conduct, with the assistance of Sir Edward Malet, the necessary communications with the Egyptian Government in respect to the future arrangements for the security of Egypt. I am not aware of any machinery by which such a process as consulting the wishes of the people could be conducted, and we are not at all convinced that it would lead to any substantive result. If any portion of these arrangements separate from the rest should be completed before the Prorogation, and no objection in the public interests should exist to its being separately stated, we should be most ready to state it as far as we could. Much must depend on what is likely to be the period of the Prorogation; and with respect to that period I am not in a position to give any information. Probably the hon. Gentleman can give more than I can.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Are we to understand that the arrangements for the future government of Egypt are to be imposed on the people of that country without consulting their wishes, and by means simply of communications between Lord Dufferin and the Khedive?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It does not follow that there would be no reference to the wishes of the people because there is no formal machinery for consulting them. There is a legal Government in Egypt, and the Ruler of that country has been distinguished since his accession to the Throne, under the auspices of the late Administration, by his faithful adherence to the engagements under which he took the Throne, and his study to promote the well-being of the people; and we have not the slightest apprehension of conflict between the arrangements that may be made and the wishes of the Egyptian people.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked whether one of the instances of the Khedive's faithful adherence to his obligations was his condemnation of Arabi Pasha for not making a more successful defence of Alexandria?

Mr. MACFARLANE: Are we to understand that the wishes of the people were consulted previous to the establishment of the Dual Control?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not aware.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Does there not exist in Egypt a Chamber of Notables, through which the wishes of the people may be ascertained?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I am not aware of any Chamber authorized to enter into an arrangement with reference to the security of the Egyptians.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: May I ask whether it is true, as stated in a telegram this evening, that the Dual Control has been abolished?

MR. GLADSTONE: We are not responsible for that telegram. I cannot say that it is authentic, or connected with us in any way. Whenever the arrangements with respect to the Dual Control are in a state to be communicated to Parliament, my hon. Friend may rely upon it we shall be glad to make it known.

PUBLIC OFFICES — CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN IN CONNECTION WITH FINANCIAL UNDERTAKINGS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Where the rules regulating the connection of the Civil Servants of the State with financial and commercial undertakings, and their acceptance of paid offices under private bodies, are to be found; and, if these rules are not already accessible to Members of the House, whether he will cause them to be laid upon the Table?

MR. J. G. HUBBARD asked, Whether officials in the Public Service are at liberty to engage as promoters, trustees, or directors in financial, commercial, or industrial adventures, a failure in which might involve them in pecuniary embarrassment, or in personal discredit, entailing a reproach upon the Public Service, and possibly endangering our relations with other States; whether the Public Servants of this Country are adequately remunerated for the services to which the State has an exclusive claim; or whether there exists any excuse or sanction for men already in the service of the State supplementing their official salaries by private engagements; and, whether, in the event of there being no excuse or sanction for the practice, the right hon. Gentleman will take effectual means to announce and enforce his disapproval?

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that, as both these Questions had arisen out of a Question put by him on Monday, he desired to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman had received any information from Sir Rivers Wilson that he had resigned, or intended to resign, his position as Trustee of the Eagle Pass and Air Line Railway?

MR. GLADSTONE: On Tuesday night, after the first Question on the subject was put by my hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), Sir Rivers Wilson wrote a note to me which reached me in this House on that day, but too late for me to make use of it within the regular time. In that note, without at all retracting what he had previously stated as to the soundness of this undertaking and the compatibility of the functions he should have to discharge with his official duties, he used these words—

> "I cannot for a moment think of retaining it"—the office of trust in question—"after learning that the propriety of my doing so has been openly called in question in the House of Parliament."

I think the House will appreciate this feeling on the part of Sir Rivers Wilson. He does not wish that any action of his which might appear inconsistent with the efficient discharge of his public duty should be persisted in. With regard to the general Questions of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hubbard), whether the public servants of this country are adequately remunerated for the service to which the State has an exclusive claim, perhaps he will excuse my answering it; but there is no doubt that the claim of the State is exclusive. With respect to the various points in his Question, and that of my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell), I have to state that this is a subject which, from time to time, has in my experience been regarded as one of considerable difficulty; and undoubtedly the great multiplication and extension of joint-stock enterprises has rendered it a subject of greater difficulty than it was in former times. There is a rule of the Treasury—and it is construed as an absolute rule, though I do not know that the terms absolutely amount to that—that no person in the Treasury, as I believe and am informed, takes any office or employment whatever of this kind outside the range of his official duties. But my right hon. Friend seems to be under the impression that it is in my power to issue an order obligatory on the entire Civil Service. That is not so. The power of the Treasury is strictly limited to certain special Departments, and it is in respect of these that we enforce the rule. During the long time I held the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, the question never came before me until the last day or two. But the rule does not prevail throughout the Civil Service. I do not know that there are many cases at variance with the rule; but I cannot say that the observance of it is uniform. What I propose to do is to lay on the Table the Treasury rule, together with a Paper which refers to the investigations of an official Committee. Sir Ralph Lingen, Permanent Under Secretary of the Treasury, who is known, as he deserves to be, as a most able and experienced officer, happens to have paid great attention to this subject. I believe a few days ago he commenced his short vacation, and has left the country for a few weeks. But upon his return I propose to confer further with him on the subject.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—THE INTERNATIONAL COURTS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the early expiry of the obligation of the Egyptian Government to accept the jurisdiction of the International Courts, Her Majesty's Government will at present refrain from again giving to Courts, practically Foreign, jurisdiction over the Government and revenues of Egypt, and power to seize and sell the lands of the Egyptians, free from the control of any Egyptian Legislature, and will reserve these questions till the position of the Egyptian Government and Legislature is settled?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The period of the duration of the international tribunals in Egypt was prolonged by agreement to the 1st February, 1883. The International Commission appointed to consider what amendments might advantageously be introduced in their constitution, and procedure, and in the laws which they administer, has not concluded its labours, and a further prolongation will probably be agreed to. Her Majesty's Government are only one Power out of 14 having a voice in this matter.

THE LIEUTENANCY—PRIVILEGES OF LONDON AND DUBLIN.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has seen the announcement that Her Majesty has accorded to the Lord Mayor of London the privilege of nominating several gentlemen to fill the office of Lieutenants for the City of London; and, whether, in pursuance of the policy of equal treatment of the two Countries, it is his intention to advise Her Majesty to accord a like privilege to the Lord Mayor of Dublin?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, The Government had no supervision over the municipal privileges of the City of London, and had no direct and distinct information of these privileges in particular. Nor was he aware whether its extension would, under any circumstances, be advantageous. He had not been able to learn, so far as the Department of the Irish Government was concerned, that there was in Dublin any institution or mode of action more than there was in Edinburgh which would enable them to extend to the other Sister Kingdom a privilege analogous to that in the City of London. He believed that if there was such a privilege there would be little jealousy with respect to it.

Mr. DAWSON asked if there was not an analogous privilege connected with the Lord Provostship of Edinburgh?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not aware of it.

Mr. HEALY asked, were they to understand that the Queen conferred this privilege on the Lord Mayor of London without the advice or concurrence of Her Majesty's Ministers?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not wish to enter into the law of the case; but he was not aware that Her Majesty conferred the privilege on the Lord Mayor.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for War, whether it was not a fact that these appointments were submitted to the Treasury or the Secretary of State for approval?

Mr. CHILDERS said he should have had Notice of the Question; but he might state that, to the best of his belief, the appointment of gentlemen to the Lieutenancy of the City of London was recommended by the Lord Mayor, and approved by the Secretary of State for submission to Her Majesty.

MR. DAWSON gave Notice that he would ask the Prime Minister, whether, in pursuance of the rights of the City of Dublin, he would instruct himself in the law of the case, and, having done so, advise Her Majesty accordingly?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to ask the Attorney General for Ireland, whether, under existing law, the Lord Mayor of Dublin had not the power of appointing Lords Lieutenant when a Lieutenancy became vacant?

[No reply was given.]

MR. DAWSON: Perhaps I can answer the Question. Not only has the Lord Mayor not the right —— ["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman can put any Question he thinks proper; but he cannot enter into a debate.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to put the Question to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dawson).

MR. DAWSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to answer that Question. ["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman cannot put a Question to the right hon. Member for Carlow, because it does not relate to any subject or Motion before the House.

MR. DAWSON said, he therefore begged to give Notice to the Prime Minister of a Question on the subject.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

MR. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Egyptian Government have in the trial of Arabi and the other political prisoners adopted the rule laid down by Lord Granville in his Despatch to Sir Edward Malet of 23rd October 1882, that

> "No arguments or evidence as to political motives or reasons in justification of the offences charged shall be admitted;"

whether this condition will, in accordance with another rule laid down in the same Despatch be "rigidly enforced" against Arabi's counsel; and, whether the Correspondence between Arabi and persons of influence in Egypt and Constantinople will be thereby excluded from the consideration of the Court?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question, I must refer the hon. Member to what has already been said by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, because it seems to me that the Question appears to be prompted by the idea that the general rules of proceeding in the Court are fixed by us, which is not the case. Her Majesty's Government have declined to take any part in the conduct of the trial, though they will watch the proceedings on the principles upon which they have already acted. The Court must determine all questions with respect to the relevance of any arguments or evidence that may be offered with reference to the charges against the prisoners. Her Majesty's Government do not propose to dictate to the Court in any way as to the manner in which they shall deal with such questions, and they have laid down no rule, although they have stated their views of the principles on which they think the powers of the Court ought to be exercised, and made general suggestions which are already known to the House.

MR. GORST: Is the House to understand that the rules laid down by Lord Granville in the despatch to Sir Edward Malet, of the 23rd of October, 1882, have been absolutely and unreservedly withdrawn?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that they have.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEES.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he intends to submit to the House any regulations as to the quorum of the proposed Standing Committees?

MR. GLADSTONE: It will be a matter for consideration when we come to those Rules whether we should ask the House to insert in the Rules any specification of a quorum. As is well known, the quorum is usually fixed at the time of the appointment of a Committee. I do not say there should be no deviation from that course; but I am not aware of any fundamental objection to it. It is quite plain the quorum ought to be much more considerable than with an ordinary Select Committee. I should suppose the time of the appointments would be a convenient and suitable one to consider it.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT: Will the Government put down a proposition to that effect on the Paper?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would consider the matter.

EGYPT (ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION).

Mr. O'KELLY asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government has been, or is likely to be, consulted by the Khedive on the re-organisation of the Egyptian Army?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already informed the House that Her Majesty's Government expect to be consulted on the subject.

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—HARBOUR AT FAMAGUSTA.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked, If the Government intend to act on the recommendation of the Governor of Cyprus, and to construct a harbour at Famagusta, in accordance with one of the plans submitted by Mr. Brown, the Government Engineer, in the Blue Book presented to Parliament; and, if so, which plan will be proceeded with?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Government have no present intention to construct a harbour at Famagusta. Their views cannot be more shortly stated than by a passage from the Secretary of State's despatch to the Governor on the 22nd of February (page 74 of Blue Book), after the receipt of the plans in question—

> "I do not propose now to discuss these plans in detail, as Cyprus has not the funds for carrying into effect even the most limited of Mr. Brown's proposals; and I do not consider that the circumstances would justify an application to Parliament to supply funds for the construction of a commercial harbour in addition to the heavy annual charge which, in the present financial position of the Island, must be borne by the Imperial Treasury in aid of the local revenue."

COAL MINES — THE RECENT EXPLOSION AT CLAYCROSS—NUMBER OF CASUALTIES.

Mr. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he could give any information with regard to the explosion at Claycross Colliery, and whether he could state the exact number of lives lost; also, whether some legal gentleman would be sent to the inquest to represent the Home Office?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir. I have to say I have received the following telegram from Mr. Evans, the Inspector of Mines in the Claycross district:—

> "Claycross, 3 o'clock.
>
> "Twenty-five bodies brought out of the mine. Explorers are hard at work, and we hope to get all the bodies out of the colliery to-night. So far as can be at present ascertained, it is thought the deaths are about 40. Further inspection with view of ascertaining the cause cannot be made for some days. Coroner opened inquiry this day and adjourned it. I will send a written report as soon as possible."

With reference to the last part of the Question, I may say I have already ordered the Home Office to be represented at the inquiry.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — POOR LAW GUARDIAN QUALIFICATION.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state what is the present qualification for the post of guardian in the Clifden Union, and if the Local Government Board will consider the propriety of reducing the money qualification required in that union?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The qualification for the post of Guardian in the Clifden Union is £30. The Local Government Board inform me that one of the Guardians gave notice of bringing forward the question, and showing reasons why the qualification should be reduced. On receiving a report of the proceedings, the Board will carefully consider the matter.

CRIMINAL LAW—INFLICTION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON ADULTS UNDER THE VAGRANT ACTS — SUBSTITUTION OF BIRCHING FOR FLOGGING.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is lawful to substitute, as is done at the Surrey Sessions, beating with the birch rod for the whipping of adults under the statute 5 Geo. 4, c. 83, s. 10; and, whether the whipping mentioned in that Act was not a public flogging with the lash?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he was asked whether the person who received the punishment described underwent a whipping? Speaking from general impression, he was inclined to answer in the affirmative.

MR. HOPWOOD said, the Question was, whether the whipping was a public flogging with the lash?

SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AND THE IRISH REVOLT.

MR. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the following statements appearing in the "Freman's Journal" of to-day, which have been telegraphed to the London papers, containing two allegations with regard to Sir Garnet Wolseley? The "Freeman's Journal" said—

> "We do not speak without knowledge when we say that it is a matter of common gossip that last year during the debates on the Coercion Bill, Sir Garnet Wolseley expressed the hope that if Irismen revolted he might be sent to quell the disturbance, in order to teach them what war really meant. We do not speak without knowledge when we assert that Sir Garnet Wolseley declared when going to Egypt that he only felt one alloy to the pleasure of that military promenade, and that was, that the Irish might take advantage of his asbence to rise, and he not there to suppress them."

MR. CHILDERS: The hon. Member takes a most extraordinary course in asking me to answer without Notice a Question in reference to something in a newspaper which I have not seen; but I followed as well as I could what he quoted, and out of courtesy to him I will answer him to the best of my power. The extract from the newspaper refers to something which, it is said, has been stated in common gossip. Now, I believe that common gossip commonly lies. I, therefore, do not credit for a moment statements founded on such a basis; but I will go further, and say that during the long time I have known Sir Garnet Wolseley—and certainly since I have known him whilst holding the Office of Secretary of State—he has never said anything which could, by the remotest construction, be construed to afford such a meaning as that which has been suggested.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [EIGHTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

VISCOUNT SANDON said, that illness in his family, as well as personal illness, had prevented him for a long time from taking any active part in the general Business of the House; and he had not, therefore, been able to express any opinion on the question of the *clôture*, which was now under discussion. This was far more than a Party question. It was a question of the highest public moment, and he would endeavour to look at it solely from the public point of view. If, indeed, he were to regard it from a Party point of view he should not be sorry to see the Resolution passed, as it was proposed by the Government, because he was confident that when the next appeal was made to the country the Conservatives would be benefited by the circumstance that their opponents had made this experiment. Moreover, if he had any hostility to hon. Gentlemen opposite—which was not the case—he might also wish the Resolution to be passed, because he was confident that when hon. Members opposite had to give their account to their constituencies the Liberal Associations in the various boroughs would regard with suspicion those who had voted for this great sacrifice of freedom of speech, and who would be found to be such tainted candidates that they would have little chance of being again returned. This was, however, only a prediction which might or might not be justified by the event. But, putting aside the Party advantages which might accrue from the passing of the Resolution, he could not help feeling real and genuine alarm at the probable result of the change proposed by the Government. There was very great confusion in the House and the country as to the real position of the Conservative Party in regard to this great question. Hon. Members opposite had asked them what plan the Conservatives had to suggest for dealing with acknowledged Obstruction. Well, the real position of the Conservative Party with regard to Obstruction was simply this. In any National emergency, when the lives of their fellow-citizens were in possible danger, and the Government of the day declared that they could not be responsible for the public safety and peace, or if any question affecting the security of the Realm from outside was involved, the Conservative Party would always be willing to vote Urgency. As regards the personal misconduct of Members, they were willing that a Member who used offensive expressions and who insisted in making irrelevant remarks or indulging in needless repetitions for the purpose of Obstruction should be silenced. Again, they were prepared to strengthen the Resolution originally passed by his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon that any Member who wilfully disregarded the authority of the Chair, or was, in the opinion of the Chair, guilty of Obstruction, should be suspended for a considerable period. On these points, therefore, the policy of the Conservative Party was clear, sharp, and defined. Over and over again the Leader of the Conservatives had announced that they were ready to consider favourably all the subsequent Rules of Procedure proposed by the Leader of the House. It was, therefore, most incorrect to state that the Conservatives were not prepared to deal effectively with Obstruction. They had never yet had an explanation why the Government, knowing that these were their inclinations, had not consulted frankly and fully with the Leader of the Opposition. If the Prime Minister had taken that step, he would have had the apportunity of carrying, not only the Opposition, but the whole House with him; while, without that general assent, he believed no Minister, however powerful, would, in the long run, be able to carry his measures. Then there would have been no need of an Autnmn Session nor of any interruption of Public Business. Every proposed modification had been refused, and they were now brought to the last discussion on the principle of doing away with freedom of speech in that House. The Members of the Government had taken very diverse lines on this question. Some had jested with the fears of the Conservatives, some had treated them with contempt, some had solemnly adjured them to give way; but one thing was indisputable, that the Government considered the matter one of the gravest importance, and not slight and trifling. What could be the meaning of the Prime Minister's extraordinary declaration yesterday afternoon? What could be the meaning of his reversing all the habits of former debates, and coming down on Wednesday, in the middle of a long debate, and delivering his speech there and not at the end of the discussion? What was the kernel of that speech? It was one which should be pondered well, and which showed strikingly the importance which he attached to this Resolution. Speaking in answer to an hon. Member from Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "There are two currents of feeling in the Party which is called Home Rulers. Their object is to establish, in some way or other, what they sometimes call a National, sometimes an Independent, . . . it may be a separate, Legislative Assembly. There is a portion of that Party who wish to make the transaction of Business in this House impossible. There are unquestionably others who, believing it to be vital to the existence of their country that they should attain legislative independence, still turn to the machinery which exists to attain their purpose."

Again, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have my own opinions upon the interests of Ireland. I have had to do for many years with Irish affairs; I believe a complete and effective system for the Business of the House is essential for meeting the wants of Ireland. If there is no time for English and Scotch legislation, there will be no time for Irish legis-

lation. . . . Well, Sir, I tell the hon. Gentleman there is not a subject which I could name on which I personally feel a more profound anxiety than on the establishment of local self-government in Ireland, and local self-government upon a liberal and effective basis."

Could anyone in his senses believe that this allusion, vague as it was, to local self-government in Ireland—coming as it did after a definition of the Home Rulers—was not meant to hold out hopes to that Party of the gravest and most serious kind? It was almost surprising that some hon. Gentleman did not get up and move the adjournment of the House with a request to the Prime Minister to explain the grand new scheme with which he was about to convulse Ireland, or to calm the anxiety of the Home Rulers. That was the most important declaration that had been heard in that House for the last two or three years, and showed the intense gravity and importance which the Prime Minister attached to the Resolution which was now hanging in the balance. But there were other Parties who seemed to attach importance to it. A Circular had been issued by the National Liberal Federation early in the present year. What was the occasion? The hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) was bringing forward a Motion, not on the Resolutions generally, but against the *clôture* by a majority. The Federation remarked upon the threats of opposition from another quarter than the Conservative Party, and said that the Government must receive the united support of the Liberal Party. Liberal organizations had expressed their determination to put forward the whole strength of the Liberal Party on behalf, not of the Resolutions generally, but of the *clôture* in especial. That enormous importance attributed to the Resolution justified all the discussion and all the alarm of the Conservative Party. It was thus agreed on all sides that the change was an enormous one, and it was almost preposterous for the Government to blame them for the want of confidence shown in refusing to pass that Rule. They were asked to put confidence in the safeguards by which the Resolution was surrounded. What were the safeguards? First there was to be adequate discussion; adequate discussion was to be the watchword of the Liberal Party. But how was it to be interpreted? From the nature of the case the authorities of the House would be disposed to look upon a very short discussion as adequate. The Minister of the day whose policy was impugned, or who had charge of an important Bill over which many hours of labour and many Cabinet Councils had been held, or who was accused of extravagance, would be disposed to regard very cursory debate as quite sufficient. The first authority to whom the Prime Minister would look to get through the Bill was the Whip, and would he not be inclined to suggest to that official that a limited interpretation should be given to the word "adequate?" Was it not also only human nature that the authorities who sat at the Table, wearied with a long discussion, should help to increase the official feeling that there had been an adequate discussion. To go to a still higher authority, it was not unlikely that future Speakers, failing to imitate the strict impartiality of the present occupant of the Chair, would feel disposed to shorten debates. Even in a Speaker weary human nature might succumb to influences which ought to be resisted. Then there was the highest authority, because it was the most energetic—namely, the majority, which would certainly be in favour of curtailing discussion. The fate of the Prime Minister might be in the balance; the promises given at the hustings were to be fulfilled; and it was only human that this greatest authority should be in favour of curtailing discussion. Then he came to the "evident sense of the House." To his mind, it would have been much more straightforward if the Prime Minister had used the words "evident sense of the majority," instead of those which appeared in the Resolution. That was really the meaning of the whole thing. He rejoiced at the Speaker's famous ruling, which would certainly become historical hereafter, that the evident sense of the House meant the evident sense of the House at large. The Speaker had thus declared himself in favour of freedom of speech, as the occasions would be rare on which both Parties would unite to put down freedom of debate. But the Government had refused to insert words into the Resolution which would embody the Speaker's interpretation of the Rule, although they might have done so had they wished.

We had, therefore, a right to say that the Government did not agree with that interpretation. Then they were told that they ought to trust the Government, and believe that they would do nothing in an arbitrary spirit, and that they would be tender to minorities. On what grounds? They might be asked to display such confidence in a Government which had adhered steadily to its principles. But was the present Government stable in its principles, and had it adhered to the professions under which it took Office? They professed principles of retrenchment and great economy; but they had been proved to be the most extravagant Government on the face of the earth. The Government said repeatedly our responsibilities in the Colonies were too vast and great, that they must contract instead of expand them, but they annexed North Borneo; they said that the whole principle of the Liberal Party was never to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, but they asked the House to pass a Vote of Thanks to a victorious Army for putting down a rebellion in Egypt of the subjects of the Khedive. If there was one thing in which the Conservative Party most trusted the Liberals it was as regards political morality. But they had seen, almost within a year, the Duke of Argyll leave the Cabinet, on account of its defections from the principles of political economy; and another, the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), because it had tampered with the principles of political morality? The right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), too, had deserted his Colleagues on account of their desertion of the ideas of international justice. How, then, in the face of such facts, could the Government ask the Conservative Party to feel confidence in the principles of the Government, when these principles resembled quicksands rather than rocks? He would not even trust his own Party with such arbitrary powers. With respect to the Speaker, there could be no doubt that hereafter the Speaker would be chosen on strict Party principles, and would be a partizan, and would naturally be disposed to assist in the curtailing of a debate. Then they were told that the system worked so well in foreign countries. As regarded that point, he could not help alluding to a remark of the hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor), who quoted the case of M. Guizot in the French Chamber. M. Guizot had said that he rejoiced in the *clôture*—in fact, he did not see how French Business was to be managed without it. But what happened in that Chamber? That which exactly exemplified what would happen here. Other times came under the Reign of Napoleon III., and, the *clôture* being still in force, the whole of the Orleanists were constantly subjected to it, the effect being that the free voice of some of the best men in France was entirely closed. That was what was got by the *clôture* in France, which was introduced by the well-meaning, but not far-seeing, M. Guizot. As regarded America, there were two famous instances of the application of the *clôture* in recent years. In the one case, the Civil Rights Bill was passed by the President's veto, independent Members begging to be allowed to discuss it, but permission being refused; and in the other case, a lawyer of the Southern States—which were, of course, in the minority—was precluded by a Bill from carrying on his profession. In this case, the Democratic Party begged to be allowed to discuss the Bill; but the Member who introduced it, relying on his Party, only granted them 10 minutes. He hoped the Liberal Party would take these matters much to heart. His own view was that whether Liberals or Conservatives were in power, their only safety lay in keeping in their own possession the key of freedom of debate. But he should like to ask, whom did they expect the Rule would affect? Who had spoken most in the last few years? He found, on reference to the pages of *Hansard*, that in 1880 the Conservatives had spoken 2,080 columns, the Home Rulers 1,540, and the Liberals 4,170; and that in 1881 the Conservatives had spoken 3,280, the Home Rulers 4,400, and the Liberals 6,300 columns. The Rule was not to affect the Home Rule Party for what he might call obvious reasons; and the Prime Minister had stated that it was not to affect the Liberal Party. So recently as on the 1st of November the Prime Minister was reported in *The Times* as follows:—

"The chief business is to get rid of tedious speaking. Those who are opposed (in politics) to the gentleman who thus offends express more or less inarticulately that the debate should close; but the party friendly to him remains silent, and, if a division is taken, they cannot afford to vote against him."

Therefore, it was clear that it was not to affect the Liberals, at any rate while they occupied those Benches. Whom was it, then, to affect? There was only one Party left whom it could affect. Was it possible that an arrangement such as that could work? Another question he should like to ask was—Was the rule to be applied frequently or not, and to what sort of Business was it to be applied? A great part of the Business of the House consisted of small matters. Was it proposed to apply the *clôture* in money matters, or on Members' Motions, or upon crotchets brought forward through associations out-of-doors? Was it to be brought into requisition in Committees on Bills or upon Privilege questions? He ventured to assert, should this power be used frequently, that the state of the House would be one of such intense irritation that no Minister would be able to advance one foot or the other. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) told them the *clôture* would create a sort of terrorism in the House, though the Prime Minister, on the other hand, said it would be so gentle that no hon. Member would know it was operating at all. Would it silence the bores, or the bold, fearless, ambitious men who were climbing the ladder, and who were determined to make themselves a name? It was perfectly absurd to suppose it would. The class of men who would be silenced would be those men who had given a lifetime to commercial affairs, and, therefore, the most valuable Members in the House. As for the young men, what probability would there be of a modest young Member coming to the front under pressure of the Government Whip, and the frowns of the Minister of the day, backed by the *clôture?* Would the *clôture* be confined to great occasions? If so, what had we to expect? We had had a good deal of drastic legislation of late years which there was reason to hope we should not have in the future when we should consider such matters as the Bankruptcy and Patent Laws. The President of the Board of Trade, however, the other day, after lightly dismissing the question of improvements in our commercial law by remarking that he had 20 commercial measures ready for introduction, proceeded to observe that we were on the eve of great political changes. When the Ministry got the *clôture*, then, said the right hon. Gentleman, they should be able to proceed with these 20 measures. There was reason, he (Viscount Sandon) believed, to fear that the discussion of these questions, when they came, would be conducted only by adequate discussion, and not that free and fair discussion which had hitherto distinguished the debates of this House. When a Minister of the Cabinet went to his constituents and made these statements, he (Viscount Sandon) thought it was only just and proper that they should ask the country to consider whether the people would like to have these great political changes discussed with only that discussion which might be doled out to the House under this Rule, or that free, fair, and unfettered discussion which had made this House so prominent an example to the world. But he would go further than the President of the Board of Trade in that congenial atmosphere of which he announced himself as being a Member, and cite the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). What did he say? He said that he "represented not only the Radical ranks but the new Democracy," and that when the House had ousted the Moderate Members of the Treasury Bench they had a hundred and more measures they were about to propose. Now, was this a time of day, when we had these prospects of political change in view, affecting, as they would, doubtless, affect, our political institutions, to dispense with full, free, and fair discussion? He thought that even in the ranks of the supporters of the Treasury there was beginning to be a little dread and fear of over-legislation, for the Postmaster General himself had warned the people against trusting too much to legislation instead of helping themselves. The whole proposal of the Government appeared to him to be based upon erroneous appreciation of the situation. From beginning to the end in the course of the Premiers' speeches he thought it would be admitted that the right hon. Gentleman had greatly exaggerated the position. As a Conservative, he even ventured to say that it was the grossest exaggeration in the world to have designated the last Session a barren one. It was far from being so. Many and important measures had been passed last Session. In the first place, rightly or wrongly, they had passed two great and grave Irish measures, and, further, they had passed the Conveyancing, the Settled Land, the Scotch Entail, the Scotch Educational Endowment, the Bills of Exchange, the Bill of Sale, the Electric Lighting, the Corn Returns, the Artizans' Dwellings, the Boiler Explosions, the Beer Dealers, the Retail Licences, the Parcels Post, the Government Annuities and Assurance, the Married Women's Property, and the Public Offices Site Bills. Surely it was an exaggeration of no ordinary kind to describe the last Session in those circumstances as being a barren one. Had it not been for the time consumed in passing the Irish measures, several other English measures of importance might have been passed without the necessity for this vast change in their procedure being felt. In his opinion, it was undesirable that legislation should be applauded for its quantity. He would just ask the House for a moment to listen to the words of the Prime Minister himself—words of singular wisdom, and well worthy of attention—made in a speech with regard to the Divorce Bill, in which the right hon. Gentleman exhibited a great and keen interest. Speaking in 1857, the right hon. Gentleman, pleading for delay in the case of that Bill, said—

> "My noble Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Lord Stanley), who seemed to know a great deal more about our motives than we know ourselves, told us most ingenuously that his reason for not wishing to delay the Bill was, we might be able to show that we had done something, that we should not be compelled to present a blank roll of legislation to the country. . . . . But we have no right, I maintain, to make a character and reputation for the House by passing a most important measure without the full consideration and importance it demands, simply because it is pressed upon us by the Government."—[3 *Hansard*, cxlvii. 828.]

And the right hon. Gentleman went on to observe—

> "We are not to hurry on an important subject lest it should be said out-of-doors that we are idle, and lest in the estimation of the public we should lose caste. Are we likely to recover or preserve our estimation in the country by such an attempt to keep up appearances? No! Believe me, our estimation in the country depends, not on the quantity and rapidity, but on the quality and wisdom and stability of our legislation."—[*Ibid.*]

They should consider, moreover, what the effect of this attempt to tether freedom of speech would be out-of-doors. The procedure of that House was usually looked upon as an example to be followed by Boards of Guardians, Vestries, local Boards, and Municipal Councils; and the result of this change would be to create a new feeling of bitterness in discussion in all those assemblies by inciting the majorities to use their brute force of numbers rather than to rely upon arguments and free discussion. What effect would this example have upon the Colonial Legislatures? Would not such a measure be likely to inflict a great wound upon the cause of freedom of debate, and create, as in England, an inclination to subject the minority to the intolerance of the majority, and thus crush a healthy, full, and free discussion? What would be the effect in Egypt of the adoption of the Rule? The Prime Minister had said that there was no such thing as a Chamber of Notables now. [MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The noble Lord is mistaken.] Then it appeared that there still existed a Chamber of Notables. Well, what would be the effect of the Rule upon that Chamber? The following was one of the Rules of that Assembly:—

> "The Chamber must respect the opinion of the minority and hear their observations. In Committee Members may speak as often as they may wish."

When the Rule should have been passed, one of the first things the Government would have to do would be to instruct Lord Dufferin to induce the Chamber to alter the Rules under which they now acted, in order that they might no longer respect the opinion of the minority, and no longer listen to their observations. Despotism, he admitted, had its advantages. It was probably a better ædile than freedom, and it was often a better general. Long since, however, our fathers had decided that liberty of speech possessed paramount advantages, which, in their opinion, could not be again said. Let them remember that liberty had always raised its voice for full and free discussion, while despotism had ever murmured, "Let discussion be adequate only." He could not but hope, and almost believed, that when the Liberal Party pondered and thought over this very great issue, they would hesitate before they put their names for ever to an Act which would destroy freedom of speech; and that, as on former occasions, the instinct of a great Party had acted in supreme and critical moments to save the Government from making great mistakes, so now it would prevail in preventing the Government from taking a fatal step, which would not only damage their Party, but be prejudicial to the country to which they belonged.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, in reply to some observations that had fallen from the noble Lord, that, in his opinion, Members who had special knowledge of certain subjects would be in a better position than at present when the New Rules should have been passed. Now they were often silenced by the operation of an informal but very severe *clôture*, and there was great difficulty in making constituencies understand the state of the case. Under the proposed Rule, if anyone were prevented by its operation from giving his opinion, he would be able to explain the reason of his silence, and thus remove from the minds of his constituents the idea that he was himself responsible for his reticence and deficiency in pluck and enterprize. The noble Lord had drawn a terrible picture of the Speaker of the future. The noble Lord might, however, derive some comfort from the thought that a person such as he had imagined, endowed with such an abnormally nervous organization would not be able for a single month to endure the anxieties and labours of the Speaker's Office. The Speaker of the future must possess common sense, tact, and discretion, so as to be able to collect from all sides of the House its evident sense, and he would be chosen for his possession of those qualities. Much had been said in the course of the debate about that time-worn theme the Caucus, and he had himself been alluded to in connection with it. He might therefore be pardoned for saying that he represented a constituency which acted in the wholesome belief that every constituency ought to be able to manage its own affairs, and which resented any dictation from a distance. He believed the House of Commons was doomed to a decrepid and inglorious old age if for one moment it lost touch with the democracy or constituencies or people of the United Kingdom. In order that the House might do its work as in the past, it seemed to him that the democracy should be in full sympathy and harmony with its Representatives in the House. In the first place the constituences should be able to believe in the dignity of the House; and, secondly, in its efficiency. He thought the dignity of the House had been guarded with equal fidelity by both the great Parties of the State, and the debates had formerly been conducted in a manner such as might have been expected from an assembly of gentlemen; but of late years they had witnessed an unwonted departure. They had become accustomed to unseemly struggles and trials of strength, and the object of these New Rules was to make those scenes no longer possible and so restore, at any rate, the dignity of the House of Commons. As to the efficiency of the House, that had always been the special care of the Liberal Party ever since 100 years ago, when Mr. Pitt brought forward his Motion for Parliamentary Reform. He was one of those who deeply regretted that that efficiency had in recent years become grievously impaired. The country had displayed great patience during the three years that had been occupied with Irish measures; but that stock of patience was rapidly running out, and the confidence of the constituences in this House would be rudely shaken if any further delay took place in passing those measures which their Members were sent here to discuss. In order to have these measnres passed, it was necessary that the House of Commons should have more command over its own time. The Rules now introduced with that object had been recommended by the Prime Minister and all those who were associated with him in the work of Government, and he could not believe that with a consensus of opinion like that the deliberations would be fruitless. He supported this Resolution, because he believed it would conduce to the desirable end of restoring the dignity and efficiency of their debates; that it would enable them, by crushing disorder and terminating indecency, to walk worthily of the illustrious traditions they had received, and by giving them fuller command over their own time, and more scope for legislative activity, it would enable them to use their time for the greater advantage of those who sent them to that House.

Mr. BRODRICK said, he must congratulate the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell) on having approached the subject from a National, and not a Party, point of view; but he differed from him on one point. The hon. Member seemed to think there would be nothing so advantageous to hon. Members than that they should at all times and all seasons be called upon to go and consult their constituents, and explain to them the course they would have adopted had they succeeded in obtaining the ear of the House. The hon. Member had, however, afterwards supplied the negative to his own argument, because he said the country was ignorant of the Bills which were introduced into Parliament, and, therefore, it had acquiesced in the shelving of certain Bills of the advantages of which they were ignorant, and had preferred Bills not, perhaps, so desirable. He (Mr. Brodrick) did not, therefore, perceive the advantage of explaining to constituencies their views on the clauses of a Bill which was perhaps not understood or read by their constituents. With regard to this Resolution, he did not believe it would have the effect anticipated. The only result would, in his opinion, be that some hon. Members whom the House did not care to hear would occupy the time of the House with speeches of inordinate length to the exclusion of other hon. Members whose views the House would be glad to hear. He was sorry to see that the matter had been placed in so many different points of view by the Government, and the speech of the Prime Minister on the previous night had been a direct attempt to neutralize the importance of the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had been anxious to show that the Opposition had been instrumental in bringing the gag to bear on the Irish Members last Session, and had argued that, because the Conservative Party had been instrumental in placing a severer gag on the Irish Members last Session which had been efficacious, they might, therefore, be invited to co-operate with him in putting a less generally efficient check upon the whole of the House. If the Prime Minister's argument were true, there was no question that it was proposed they should adopt a practice which was not efficient. If debate was to be shortened, he thought it would be necessary to adopt more stringent Rules as regarded individual Members. That was the form of *clôture* to which he would confess he entertained very much less objection than the one contained in the Resolution, which, in his opinion, would not meet the real evil—that of Obstruction. He did not believe that the country would acquiesce in an Autumn Session merely for the purpose of enabling Rules to be passed to stop discussion. The strong feeling of the country was, in fact, directed not so much against the prevalence of discussion as against persistent Obstruction. There were many ways in which the Government might use the Resolution, without any persistent Obstruction being displayed. They might make the debate a one-sided affair as they were doing now, by taking no part in it, and so induce the Speaker to suppose that the debate could be legitimately closed. The President of the Board of Trade was one of those who had used the Forms of the House for the purpose of forcing his way into the notice of the House, and upon the principle, he supposed, of a poacher making the best keeper, the Liberal Party considered him the best man to introduce these Resolutions. Throughout the whole debate the matter had been strictly regarded in the light of how it would affect the Party. There was absolutely no independent testimony on the matter; indeed, he had heard the *clôture* described as an ingenious machine for keeping the Radicals in power. The key of the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was—"If you desire to put down Obstruction, you must vote for the 1st Resolution." That was to say, if you desire the end you desire the means; but it was possible to desire the end and yet dislike the means proposed to be employed. Hon. Members opposite did not see that they were putting a log round their necks which would most seriously hamper them if anyone holding such opinions as the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) came into power. They would then wish they had considered the future a little more, and had not for a Party advantage surrendered their consciences to the dictates of the Caucus.

MR. SLAGG said, that the hon. Member had alluded to the silence of the Radical Members; but though they were silent, he could assure him they had not accepted the Resolution without much consideration. The fact was, the arguments against the Resolution had been so often answered that to go on repeating the same line of thought was simply a waste of time. The reason why they had accepted the Resolution was because they were wholly dissatisfied with the present position of the Business of the House, and because they felt that they were at present sent there for very little purpose and without fulfilling the duties which the constituencies desired them to perform. He was therefore perfectly convinced that any step which the Government might take, and he believed the one they were now taking was sufficient, would commend itself alike to Members and constituencies who wished to see the present unsatisfactory condition of things removed. Very few speakers on the other side of the House had refrained from asserting that there was no evidence as to large constituencies being in favour of the *clôture*. He should like to know what hon. Members considered to be evidence. In his own constituency political action and political thought were exceedingly lively, and whenever any step was taken by the Government with which they were not in accord they had a very plain way of making their objections known. Their dissent was expressed by personal interviews and deputations to their Members, and at public meetings; but no such dissent had been expressed in regard to this Resolution. On the contrary, all the expressions he had heard had been entirely and heartily in favour of the step which the Government were now taking; and, further than that, there was no real or substantial evidence of dislike to these Resolutions on the part of the large body of Conservative electors. A desperate attempt had been made during the recent holiday to whip up some indication of that sort; but it had been a signal failure, and he thought they might conclude without the slightest misgiving that the whole body politic of this country was in favour of the application of some remedy for the present state of things. The constituencies at large did not understand the intricate Rules by which Business was conducted in that House, nor the arithmetical puzzles which had been imported into these debates—probably very few Members of the House understood them—but they did understand that measures in which they were concerned were brought forward without result, and that other measures in which they would be interested were not brought forward because it was utterly hopeless to gain for them any adequate attention. With regard to the argument that under the *clôture* the private Member would become little better than a nonentity, he contended that the private Member was little more than a nonentity at present, his position being most disagreeable and almost of a useless character. He was not a little surprised to hear, and he should certainly bear the admission in mind, that a prominent Member of the Front Opposition Bench was satisfied with the work done by the Government during the last Session. He would, however, ask the noble Lord (Viscount Sandon) to remember not only the measures that had been passed, but the number of measures that had been withdrawn and slaughtered. He (Mr. Slagg) had a lively consciousness of the measures which he and his Friends connected with commercial constituencies would be only too glad to bring forward if they had the opportunity of doing so. The hon. Member for Mayo, (Mr. O'Connor Power), in the course of this debate, assured them that there was no attempt, so far as his experience went, of an organized kind to stop the Business of the House. It occurred to him (Mr. Slagg), when he heard that declaration, that the hon. Member had a very short memory indeed. He did not refer at that moment to the pressure put upon the House in various ways at various times by the Irish Party. He considered that their action, directed mainly as it was to an opposition againt coercive policy, was insignificant, nay, even praiseworthy, compared with the conspiracy to defeat the Business of the House by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and his Friends. He (Mr. Slagg) had occupied a rather active position in the politics of large constituencies for a great number of years, and he could honestly declare that he knew nothing whatever about Caucuses. The Caucus had not influenced any section of constituencies, and had not influenced him in the slightest degree. He begged the House to accept that declaration, and he believed he was in the same position with regard to Caucuses as other hon. Members whose constituencies were near his own. His own sense of duty was cordially to support the Resolution, believing that there would always be ample and sufficient opportunity for fully expressing opinions in that House, and that it would help to place their affairs on a better and more business-like footing, and add not only to the dignity of the House, but in a very large measure to the advantage of the country.

Mr. T. C. BRUCE said, he objected to the Resolution as going far beyond the necessities of the case. It was not merely a restraint upon licence, but an attack upon freedom of speech, which was important, not only because it enabled subjects to be threshed out, but because it gave all parties perfect confidence in the decisions of that House. He believed that the introduction of the *clôture* would do a greater injury to the country than would be caused by any delay in the conduct of Business. What had been the result of the *clôture* in France? It was this—that no minority ever thought of appealing to the Chamber, but invariably had recourse to other means, so that the whole apparatus of Constitutional Forms had no force whatever. He was certain that if this Rule were applied, the decision of the Speaker would be called in question all through the country, and his person, which ought to be held in respect, entirely independent of all Parties, would be exposed to attack, which would be almost intolerable. They had been told by Liberal Members that there was no danger of the Rule being harshly applied; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) on one or two occasions assured the House of his belief of the extreme moderation of the Liberal Party. Everyone who knew the right hon. Gentleman knew his amiable disposition. But it was strange that a right hon. Gentleman who had filled so many public positions and spent a year at Constantinople, should have taken so rosy a view. The right hon. Gentleman must in his studies have been impressed with the political importance of the part played by mutes in the Turkish Empire. They had been employed to carry out the most drastic form of *clôture.* They did not silence opposition; they strangled it. And it was strange that the vacillation of the Turkish Government should have coincided with the relaxation of that wholesome institution. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, actuated by a mandate which, apparently, nobody had received, but which everybody obeyed, maintained a solemn silence during the greater part of these discussions. He was not doing Liberal Gentlemen a great injustice in assuming that they would rather hear their own voices than those of others. But if the power which they obeyed was great enough to prevent them from speaking, it would be great enough to make them prevent their opponents also from speaking. He had been struck with the difference of opinion expressed by Gentlemen who represented the Liberal Party of the past or present as compared with those who represented the Liberal Party of the future. They had been told by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) without any hesitation what was the use he and his Friends would make of this measure, and in a very interesting and able speech the hon. Gentleman described what the Parliament of the future was to be. It was to be like a huge sausage-machine, whose business it was to turn out a certain quantity of indigestible food out of any materials at hand for the moment. The hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) made the statement that this measure was not imposed by the Prime Minister upon his Party, but was urged by his Party upon the Prime Minister. That was very likely, because the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his great career, had accustomed the country to many surprises, some of which appeared to bear the impress of a less experienced mind. He had observed that the Home Secretary, whose wide sympathies laid him open to every impression, went further than the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. He regretted that the Prime Minister, who, during the 50 years he spent in the House, had taken a large part in all the great measures that had been passed, and, perhaps, in the most active period in the history of the House, had amply availed himself of the right of full discussion, should have thought it necessary to bring forward a measure which was fraught with the greatest danger to the Assembly he had so long adorned.

MR. WODEHOUSE rose to say why this Resolution had been spontaneously and warmly supported throughout by one at least who did not regard it as a stepping-stone to the Radical Millennium which was contemplated with so much delight by that sanguine and guileless enthusiast the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere.) Even the calm vision of the hon. Member who had last spoken was haunted by the spectres with which that debate had made them so familiar—the spectres of a partizan Speaker, an overbearing Minister, and intolerant majorities voting in bondage to the wire-pullers of a Caucus; and after all that had been said on these topics, it was vain ;o hope that any argument which he (Mr. Wodehouse) could use could remove those apprehensions from the minds of hon. Members opposite. But he would remind them that this was not the first time the procedure of the House of Commons had been altered, nor was it the first attempt that had been made to reduce redundant discussion. When the right of making speeches on presenting Petitions was taken away, Mr. Brougham declared that with that innovation freedom of debate in the House of Commons had ceased to exist. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) had commenced the discussion that evening with an eloquent speech; but its first and its latter parts were inconsistent with, and contradictory to, one another. The noble Lord began by saying that from a mere Party point of view he desired nothing better than that this Resolution should be passed, because it would be fatal to the political existence of every Member who voted for it. But the noble Lord devoted the latter portion of his speech to demonstrating that if the principle of the *clôture* were once introduced into the House of Commons, Municipal Councils, School Boards, and all other similar public bodies throughout the country would soon be infected by this hateful principle. Was not the one part of the noble Lord's speech answered by the other? If the *clôture* was as hateful to the English people as the noble Lord represented it to be, they would not adopt it in all their assemblies, but they would return a House of Commons pledged to rescind the Resolutions at once, and banish the *clôture* for ever. He (Mr. Wodehouse) was not more enamoured of *plébiscites* and imperative mandates than hon. Members opposite. He agreed with them that the House of Commons was the Grand Inquest of the nation, and that its floor was the proper area for the settlement of great political controversies. But it would be folly to close their eyes to what went on outside their doors. As an arena of political discussion Parliament no longer stood alone; its once conclusive ascendency was now shared by the Press and the local council or public meeting. If it was to retain an undisputed pre-eminence it could only do so by the quality, and not by the quantity, of its debates, and by the unquestioned superiority of its discussions to all discussions elsewhere. Now, what was it that worked like a slow but sure poison on the excellence of their debates and sapped away their prestige—what made the most repulsive burden of Parliamentary life—what threatened to drive from the House in weariness and disgust men of high station, and wealth, and culture, and practical capacity—what was it but tedious, insufferably tedious, repetition? On great occasions the debates of the other House were admirable models of discussion; but would not their quality deteriorate, and their effect on the country diminish, if they were doubled or quadrupled in length? There could be licence in the quantity of debate as well as licence in the quality, and it was licence in respect of quantity with which they were then concerned. The 5th of the proposed Rules would strike at tedious repetition by the conscious Obstructive who repeated the same arguments and assertions over and over again for the palpable purpose of wasting time; but it would not reach those more innocent or more artful and scientific Obstructives who persisted in sustaining a stale discussion long after the subject had been completely thrashed out, to the entire exclusion from discussion of other topics which were fully ripe for Parliamentary deliberation. Against these Obstructives nothing would avail except a power of closing debate. No individual *clôture* could be made an adequate remedy except by stretching the principle of constructive and cumulative Obstruction to the widest possible limits; but such an individual *clôture* would generate more exasperation than a general *clôture*. Hon. Members opposite had said that legislation would be less stable in the future; but if it were so, it would be owing to other causes than the *clôture*—the change would come because instability of legislation was a common infirmity of democratic communities, and whether their destinies were to be shaped by a great Tory or a great Radical democracy, more and more democratic they would undoubtedly become. It was said that the *clôture* would inflame political passions, and increase the friction of Parties, and injuriously weaken the sense of responsibility felt by the Opposition; but they might depend upon it that means and opportunities for mutual exasperation would never be wanting when political Parties were disposed to use them. The temper of Parties was determined by other conditions than Rules of Procedure; and while the British people retained their temper of political moderation, and their spirit of political compromise, those qualities would never disappear from their own Representative Assembly. Then, what did the responsibilities of the Opposition for the conduct of Business amount to? He would answer that question by a reference to the events of last year. The Opposition had then co-operated with the Government as regards coercion for Ireland; but would they ever have granted Urgency for the Irish Land Bill? He did not believe they would ever have done so. Anyhow, the Opposition refused Urgency for Supply. It was true that the Supply was obtained without Urgency, and the Opposition were able to taunt the Government with having made unnecessary and unreasonable demands. But the Supply was obtained without Urgency, only because there came a lull and respite in the dilatory tactics of the Irish Members. If there had been no such lull, and the Supply had not been obtained within the requisite time, would the Opposition who refused Urgency have had the candour to take upon themselves any blame for that failure in the conduct of Business? Not they; they would only have made it a fresh charge against the Government. He was far from denying that the Opposition acted under a certain sense of responsibility; but what was its source? Was it not the consciousness that they acted in the presence of a public opinion which called both majorities and minorities to account; and that if they surrendered themselves to passion or resentment they would alienate public opinion, and remain in a minority at the next General Election. From that restraint the *clôture* would not liberate them. They would remain bound by the inherent pressure of their own interests, hopes, and aspirations to court the favourable judgments of public opinion. They must never forget that the House of Commons was not a mere debating society whose sole function was futile talk. It was more than a place for the discussion of grievances; by the absorbtion of vast powers it had become the most vital part of the Imperial Government; and if, through the unchecked flow of superfluous speeches, the House were smitten with a creeping paralysis, there was not a corner of the Empire, however remote or secluded, in which their fellow-subjects would not learn to curse its impotent existence. He agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), who said, in 1880, that of all the fates which could await such an Assembly as the House of Commons the worst would be to sink into contempt, and of all the deaths which it could die the worst would be to die because it had come to be despised by the people of this country. He (Mr. Wodehouse) believed that the proposals of the Government were well devised to avert that calamity, and, therefore, they should have his hearty support from the 1st to the last Resolution.

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK said, if he now ventured to trespass for a short time on the indulgence of the House, it was with a view chiefly to protest against the assumption that those who would vote against the 1st Resolution were to be held to be opposed to any measure which might have for its object the facilitating of the progress of Public Business. He admitted at once the gravity, the nature, and the extent of the evils from which Parliament was at present suffering. But he should vote against this Resolution for three reasons. In the first place, he should vote against it because he had not yet been satisfied that the proposal would be entirely effectual against that particular form of Obstruction which had for its ultimate object the entire paralysis of Public Business; in the second place, because, while he believed it would be ineffectual to attain that object, it would have possibly, and even probably, an injurious effect in limiting discussion on subjects of great public interest; and in the third place, because if it was necessary at all, he believed it should be, not the first remedy, but the last resort. To obtain an accurate idea of what this delay in the proceedings of Parliament resulted from, the causes must be considered, and they were chiefly three. These three causes he believed to be distinct in their origin, their object, and their character, and, therefore, required different treatment. In the first place, they had wilful Obstruction, which presented this novel and very grave feature, that it was aimed, not at one Party, not at one policy, not at one class of measures, but had for its sole object the paralysis of all Public Business whatever. But while that was, no doubt, a very important cause in the delay of Public Business, they must not shut their eyes to the fact that there were two other causes of very great importance which also tended to produce the same result. There was a delay in legislation which was the natural and legitimate result of the existence of Party in the country and in the House. This fact of Obstruction or delay in Public Business, arising from the existence of Party, was not a new thing. It was one of the disadvantages—or inconveniences, perhaps he should say—attending the existence of free Representative Institutions. It would be found in every part of the world, and in every age where there had been even an approach to Representative Institutions. They would find it in the Senate of Rome, and they would find it in the records of the House of Commons frequently occurring. More than 100 years ago, in 1771, a notable instance of it occurred, when the then unprecedented number of 23 and 24 divisions were taken in one night on the question of printing reports of discussions in the House—an event which caused no less an authority on political matters than Burke to say, in his place in this House, that posterity would bless the pertinacity of that hour. While Party in the House had certain inconveniences, it would be wrong and improper to deny that it had certain very great practical advantages, and he was not sure that this same delay in legislation was not itself rather an advantage than a disadvantage. During the 50 years that had elapsed since the passing of the Reform Bill, the country had undergone the great changes that had occurred with perfect safety, while changes not so fundamental in France had brought about the collapse of the French Monarchy, merely because these changes had been introduced in France suddenly, before the country was prepared for them. There was another important result from the action of Party. Measures assumed to a certain extent the nature of a compromise, and the result of it was that when measures became law they were assented to by the whole country. That arose from the fact that when in this House these measures received not only adequate, but full and fair discussion. There was a third cause which he thought went to make up a diagnosis of the political disease under which they were suffering. There was no doubt that now there were a greater number of hon. Members who desired to take part in the debates of the House. Those who looked back to a period of 25, or 30, or 50 years ago would find that most of the Business of the House was transacted by 30, 40, or 50 Members; but now, from causes which he did not require to particularize, because they were perfectly well known, a larger number of Members desired to speak, and a larger number of constituencies wished their Representatives to take active part in the Business of the House. If any measure passed by this House had a tendency to check that legitimate and proper and laudable desire, it would be, to a certain extent, a political misfortune. These were the three principal causes which, in his opinion, went to form a diagnosis of the political disease under which this Assembly was suffering, and to deal with them they had the proposition of the Prime Minister that in certain circumstances, and under certain conditions, a majority, and not only a majority, but even a bare majority, and possibly only a mere Party majority, might have the power of stopping a discussion altogether. That proposition had come upon the country and upon the House to a certain extent as a surprise. While it aimed at dealing with the first symptom of wilful Obstruction to which he had referred, it appeared to be to some extent uncertain in its operation; because those who had been in the House, and had seen the ingenuity and perseverance displayed by the hon. Members who usually sat below the Gangway on that side of the House, could hardly doubt that even though this measure were in operation they would be able still to seriously impede the necessary Business of the country. But his objection to the measure went further. Not only did he believe it would be ineffectual, but he believed it would seriously interfere with that amount of delay in legislation which proceeded from legitimate causes; and one reason why they should pause before accepting as efficacious the remedy suggested by the Prime Minister was to be found in the reasons adduced in support of it. The reasons which had been given in support of the proposal of the Prime Minister divided themselves into two classes. The Prime Minister had derived part of his argument from political reasons, and part of it from practical experience. That part of the argument derived from political experience was mainly founded upon this—that it was a sound principle of this House that the majority should prevail. Now, he (Mr. Cochran-Patrick) thought it would be admitted that if this principle was in itself valid, it went very far to strengthen the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman. On the other hand, if this fundamental reason were found wanting in any part, then it went very much to weaken the position of the right hon. Gentleman. With regard to this proposition, that the majority should prevail, he ventured to say it was not a proposition of universal application. There was a large and well-known class of subjects with regard to which this proposition was not only unsafe, but perfectly unsound. But it might be said it was sound in legislation at all events, and in active politics, and so it was; but it was not sound there merely by reason of the majority, but by reason of an implied compact, or understanding, consciously or unconsciously, that after the minority had been fully and fairly heard the matter should be decided by the action of the majority. He was the more surprised that this argument should have fallen from the Prime Minister, because it was not a new argument in the history of politics. It was an argument which had frequently been heard, and which had often been exposed. Even *The Westminster Review*, which was an advanced Liberal organ, had pronounced against that argument. It had, in a recent number, said that it was one thing for the opinion of the majority on a particular question to prevail over that of the minority, but it was quite another for that majority to decide that the minority had sufficiently expressed their views, in spite of their assertion to the contrary. With regard to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, two questions arise. In the first place, was it the only means of meeting this evil; and, in the second place, was it the best means? He ventured to say that no one who had listened to the debates on this subject would be prepared to assert that this was the only means that could be suggested to meet this evil. Wilful Obstruction had been analyzed, and it had been shown that it could be summed up in three forms—speaking against time, raising frivolous points of Order, and continued Motions for adjourning the House. All these three principal forms were dealt with by the other Resolutions which were to be proposed, and therefore he might say that the 1st Resolution was not necessarily the only means. But even if it were not the only means, perhaps it might be said to be the best means. That raised the question, what was the criterion or standard by which, in matters of this sort, they were to judge better or worse; and he thought it would not be denied on any side of the House that the only criterion they could admit in dealing with the privileges of an ancient Assembly of this sort was that they should endeavour to achieve the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of disturbance. Judged by this standard, the proposition of the Prime Minister did too little, and it did too much. It did too little, because it failed to touch the principal object it was meant to attain; and it did too much, because it would inevitably or, at least, probably have effects which were not contemplated, and were not desirable. It was perfectly open to anyone to say that it was the desire of the country. He admitted at once the force of the argument; but he doubted whether the argument really existed. What would be an indication of the feeling of the country would be if the Prime Minister could show that any Municipal Corporation, or other representative body whatever, who, hitherto having accepted the Rules of the House as a model for conducting their deliberations, had now resolved that, when this measure came into law, they would be prepared to carry it out in their own deliberations. There was one other consideration to which he would allude before he sat down. No one who had wielded the destinies of England could afford altogether to ignore the ultimate judgment of posterity. No Party in the House, and, above all, that great Party opposite, to whom the country owed so much, who had done so much for freedom and for humanity, could afford to ignore altogether the verdict of history. But history dealt with causes; it dealt with results; it looked at and brought into prominence great effects; it took little heed of arguments, and it ignored altogether specious excuses. History would record, when the annals of this time had been written, that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had achieved a certain success. History would record that he had succeeded in doing that which cost Charles his Crown, and Cromwell his character —the attempt, namely, to abridge the Privileges of the Parliament of this country. History would record that the first blow which had been made at the liberties of that House came, not from the tyrant or the usurper, but from the greatest Minister of modern times— every word and every act of whose long career would be the most lasting and the most effectual protest against the measure which he was now forcing upon an unwilling House and an unfortunate country.

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MR. STANTON proceeded to observe that the adoption of these Rules was the only way to put a stop to the scenes that had disgraced that House last year. While admitting that hitherto the Party opposite had not resorted to actual Obstruction for the purpose of delaying measures which they disliked, he pointed out that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) had in his letter, which appeared in the newspapers a day or two ago, suggested that in the future sections of the House other than the Irish Party might resort to it. Another noble Lord opposite (Viscount Sandon) had that night praised the work of the Liberal party last Session; but he did not think that the country was satisfied with it. A further argument in favour of these Rules was the action which the Speaker deemed it expedient to take against the Irish Members during the Session. Although the House approved of that action under the circumstances, it was necessary that it should protect itself against its recurrence. He would only add, in conclusion, that a change in the Procedure of the House was rendered necessary in order to enable the Ministers, who were responsible for the government of the country, to pass those measures which were demanded by the constituencies.

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Member had gone on to say that he believed the Conservative Party in Manchester were in favour of the proposal; but if he had said that the Party were in favour of assisting the Government in making such alterations of the Rules of the House as would enable it to get on with the Business in a more efficient manner, he believed that the hon. Member for Manchester would have represented the feelings not only of the Conservative Party of Manchester, but of the Conservative Party of a great many other towns. Speaking on behalf of Leeds he might say that a meeting, not actually called for the purpose, but attended by nearly 4,000 persons, had unanimously adopted a resolution, approving the action of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and the other Members of that House who were strenuously opposing the introduction of the *clôture* by a bare majority. An hon. Member, who spoke a short time previously, referred to the action of the Conservative Party in that House last year, when they assisted the Government in a time of very great difficulty to pass the Rules of Urgency. It was not the first time that allusion had been made to the matter, and he (Mr. Jackson) would like to take that opportunity of saying that he considered the action of the Conservative Party on that occasion had been rather ungraciously referred to. He thought the Prime Minister had been rather ungrateful to the Conservative Party for the action which they had taken on that occasion; because he (Mr. Jackson) was not overstating the case, if he said that the condition of Ireland was such that, unless the Conservative Party had come forward and aided the Government, they would have been unable to have carried out those measures which they deemed necessary for the restoration of peace and order in Ireland. He, therefore, thought it a little ungracious that the Conservatives should be taunted with that action, which was as distasteful to them as it could have been to any Party in the House. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had gone pretty well over the whole question, and had pointed out the great delay which had taken place in the Business of the House. He (Mr. Jackson) entirely agreed with the hon. Member that a remedy for that state of things was wanted, and he was prepared to support the hon. Member and the Party opposite in so altering the Rules as to prevent further waste of time. The hon. Member also referred to a point which to him (Mr. Jackson) was a matter of very great difficulty, and that was the question as to how the "evident sense of the House" was to be taken, or, to put it in another way, how the Rule as at present constructed was to be, and would be, interpreted in the future, and how it was intended to be interpreted by the Government themselves. With regard to the question immediately under discussion, they had been chided for what had been called their unnecessary alarms as to the operation of the *clôture;* and he quite believed that hon. Members opposite were sincere in their belief that those alarms were groundless. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had, in fact, taken great pains to allay their fears, by assuring them that if passed in its present form the Rule would very seldom be put into operation; but they could not help feeling alarm when they remembered the refusal of the Prime Minister to accept the Speaker's own interpretation of the phrase, "the evident sense of the House." It had been one of the great influences held out to them to induce them to approve of the Rule as it stood, and their position resembled that of a patient. Fears were not shared by the dentist; but when the wrong tooth was pulled out, it became difficult to remedy the mischief which had been done. The question before the House was really whether the *clôture* should be passed by a bare majority; and they were told, on the authority of the Prime Minister himself, that if a proposal had been put before the House, asking it to consent to this Resolution without some safeguards, it might have been considered an unfair Resolution, and likely to work injustice; but his difficulty with regard to these so-called safeguards was this—that the other night, fortunately for the House, his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) asked the Speaker how he would interpret the Rule as it was at present constructed, and the Speaker favoured the House with his opinion, for which hon. Members on that side of the House would for ever feel grateful. He (Mr. Jackson) thought he was not alone in thinking that that question was far from being clearly and definitely settled; at any rate, they were far from any positive or satisfactory knowledge of what was the intention of Her Majesty's Government in the matter. The Leader of the Opposition desired to obtain some recognition of the Speaker's interpretation of the Rule; but the Prime Minister distinctly refused to accept that interpretation of the Chair as being in accord with the views of the Government. He (Mr. Jackson) considered they were entitled to have an interpretation of the Rule from the Government; and he thought it would have relieved the anxiety that existed in many people's minds if the Prime Minister had given them the assurance that "the evident sense of the House at large" would be the interpretation of the future; and he was confident that, by his refusal, the Government had lost many votes which they would otherwise have gained. The Prime Minister desired them to rely on another safeguard—upon the traditions of the House—but he (Mr. Jackson) could not help thinking that the Resolution itself was a distinct declaration that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the traditions of the House must no longer govern the action of Members, except the Member who occupied the Speaker's Chair and the Chairman of Committees. They had heard that this Rule was, in the first place, designed to put down Obstruction; but he was one of those who believed that the subsequent Rules would tend much more to facilitate the conduct of Business than this Rule. He believed it was on record that the Prime Minister, speaking on this question, said he was not aware that he could put his finger on any case to which the word Obstruction could apply. Besides, it had to be borne in mind that the Business of the past two Sessions had been of a very exceptional character, and that the measures introduced had been likewise exceptional; but now, as far as he was able to judge, the measures which were of pressing importance were measures which would come under the category of non-Party questions—measures for the relief of restrictions upon trade, and measures relating to our social and commercial relations. For such measures no *clôture* was necessary. He believed that, without the *clôture*, but with certain Amendments in its Procedure, the House was quite competent to carry out the Business of the country, especially as regarded measures about which it was in earnest, and that was another reason why he felt bound to oppose the Resolution. He would remind the House of an old saying in Yorkshire, that "Bad workmen always found fault with their tools;" and he was afraid that the Prime Minister, in asking for an axe to cut away the obstructions in his path, would use it to clear away trees that interrupted his view. Reference had been made to America in the course of the debate; and though he (Mr. Jackson) did not want to trouble the House on any opinion of his own, yet, having just returned from a brief visit to that country, and having had an opportunity of conversing with some of the most prominent men in connection with the political Parties there, as well as of seeing the working of what was formerly termed the "Caucus," but which was now termed the "machinery of Parliament," he wished to express his belief that the people of this country, if they had had the same opportunities of judging, would hesitate before, in any sense, copying the system which was in operation there. He could not vote for the Resolution, because he maintained that it would not facilitate the Business about which the country was in earnest; because, if granted, the power might be abused; because no safeguards were afforded which were reliable; because the Prime Minister had refused to sanction the interpretation which had been put upon the Rule by the Speaker; and because he believed it was an encroachment upon the rights and liberties of minorities in the House which was calculated to work great mischief in the future, and bring ruin upon and reduce the House from that proud position it had hitherto occupied as a Legislative Assembly which had been without an equal in the world.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, that as the problem of the Irish difficulty was to remove the causes of discontent in that country, and as their removal was to be obtained by full and fair discussion in the House, any proposal affecting the freedom of debate had a special interest to an Irish Member. The first thing to be remarked in the proposed Resolution was, that it was aimed, not against the Irish minority or any small minority, although the Conservatives had tried to turn it into one of that nature, but against each of the great Parties in turn, when they were in a minority. The *clôture* which the Opposition wanted was a far more invidious, more offensive, and more dangerous affair than the general *clôture* proposed by the Government. Both sides were in favour of a *clôture.* The Conservative Party, through the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), demanded a *clôture* by two-thirds' majority, avowedly for the purpose of affecting an Irish minority. ["No, no!"] Then, he repeated, they were in favour of a far more invidious and dangerous thing—individual *clôture* directed against small minorities. When that had been rejected by the Liberal Party and the Irish Representatives, the Conservative Party objected to the proposed general *clôture* altogether, and, without any concealment, said that a system under which the mouths of individuals could be closed would be sufficient as a *clôture* against the Irish minority, and that nothing more was wanted. He (Mr. O'Shaughnessy) believed such a system, directed against the individuals forming a small minority, was the most facile and dangerous form of *clôture.* It might be said that the Government Resolutions included these proposals against individuals. But they would operate very differently, according as they were with or without general *clôture.* If unaccompanied by general *clôture,* they would be used as *clôture.* If, as the Resolution proposed, accompanied by general *clôture,* there would be no necessity for using them for purposes of restriction, but only for the purpose of keeping hon. Members within the Rules of Debate and Procedure. On the whole, as between the Conservative *clôture,* aimed avowedly and exclusively against the Irish Representatives, and the general *clôture,* available against the great Parties, he preferred the larger measure, because he believed it would be less frequently put in force than the smaller one, owing to the fear which each of the great Parties would have in Office that if they enforced the *clôture* against the other Party it might be put in operation against themselves when they in turn were in Opposition. As to the practical effect of the proposal, it would be absolutely impossible to pass the reforms required by Ireland, as well as by England and Scotland, which could not always be neglected for the sake of Ireland, with the present Procedure. The House had to choose between admitting its inability to do necessary work, or reforming its Procedure so as to make legislation possible. It was said that *clôture* would weaken the defence against unjust Coercion Acts. But the Coercion Bill of 1881, which the Irish people were assured would never be allowed to pass, was passed, although no Rule for *clôture* existed. The presence or absence of *clôture* could not affect the certainty of any Bill, just or unjust, supported by the vast majority of an Assembly, passing. Prolonged discussion might delay for a day or a week, but could not stop it. The *clôture,* therefore, could not add to the certainty of such Bills passing, if introduced. But, on the other hand, the *clôture,* by rendering reforms possible, would remove the discontent which led to the circumstances that caused coercion, and make coercion a thing of the past. The Bill of 1881 recalled to mind the grave precedent created at that time by the Speaker and confirmed by the House. It amounted to this—that the Speaker, of his own motion, without consulting the House, stopped a debate when he considered it had passed fair limits. That precedent was now a law of the House, and was the *clôture* in its most absolute form. For other times, under other circumstances, it was a precedent of the most perilous kind. It was impossible to annihilate it. In the absence of a more regular form of *clôture,* the House would refuse to condemn it, would uphold it, and would thus empower future Speakers to use it. The only way to save Parliament in the future from its dangers was to substitute for it a *clôture* under the control of the House, which would take its place, and render it unnecessary and impossible. On the whole, Irish Members had to choose between *clôture* directed against the Irish minority, which the Conservatives would enforce if in power to-morrow, and the general *clôture* applicable to the two great Parties. He preferred the latter. Some restrictive proposal was necessary, if necessary legislation for any part of the Empire was to be obtained. The present plan would not make coercion a degree more practicable than at present; but it would make it much more unlikely by securing reforms that would remove the discontent which led to coercion. For these reasons, he was prepared to support the proposal of the Government. He felt it would hardly be respectful to some of his

Colleagues representing Irish constituencies, whose ability and common sense he respected, and of whose services to their common country he had a due appreciation, to record his vote without giving his reasons. If there was to be *clôture* at all, he would prefer that it should be the *clôture* of a majority imposed on a minority, because it would be exercised on rare occasions and with a sense of responsibility.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: Sir, upon some of the topics entered upon by the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy) I have no desire to enter; but the main argument of his speech, like that of other hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House, is certainly based upon a thorough and complete misapprehension as regards the present proposal. He declared the Conservative Party to be in favour of *clôture*, and only desiring a two-thirds' majority to bring it into operation. I deny that statement entirely. The Conservatives, as has been said over and over again by them, are opposed to the *clôture* altogether; but it would have been obviously foolish to wait until the Resolution was put in its complete form before the House before endeavouring to obtain some modification of, and some relief from, so severe a measure. Again, it is said that the Tory Party are in favour of individual *clôture*. But it is idle to talk about an individual *clôture*. *Clôture* means closing a debate, and the term cannot be applied to disciplinary Rules, such as the 5th and 9th, which are intended for the purpose of silencing an individual Member who has abused the privileges of debate which have been given to him. We have no objection to them. I do not wonder that the Government are not at all anxious to hear speeches from their own side of the House, because nearly all their speeches have two characteristics. They begin by insisting on the difficulty in which the House is placed with regard to legislation, and with charging the Opposition with sympathizing with that difficulty, or, at all events, with not being sufficiently eager for its removal. I cannot, of course, speak for the whole of the Conservative Party; but I believe fully and sincerely that there are many men on this side as anxious and desirous that the Business of the House shall be properly conducted as any who sit on the Treasury Bench. Last Session cannot be called a satisfactory Session. I quite agree that some good Bills were passed; but they were smuggled through in the early hours of the morning, when they could not be discussed, or, if they should happen to have been discussed, were not able to be reported in the newspapers. That, I think, is a scandal to Parliament. It ought to be equally as necessary to discuss them as to insure their passing. My objection to the Rule is, that it does not really touch the root of the difficulty, and that it is likely to create mischiefs worse than those it remedies. The speeches, which begin as I have described, always go off to the point that the great difficulty we have to deal with is wilful Obstruction. I know that the Resolution has two objects—first, to prevent wilful Obstruction; and, secondly, to prevent the prolongation of useless discussions. I question whether it will be effective; and in regard to the Prime Minister's remark, that it is a contest of likelihoods, I have to say that, on our side, we have indications to guide us, which justify, I will not say our fears—because I have no great fears as to the results, even if it is adopted—but our remonstrances. The indications of its working which justify the protest hon. Members on this side of the House have thought it their duty to make are to be found —first, in the form of the Resolution itself; and, secondly, in the unbending attitude in which the Government have met proposals for its alteration, and also by the spirit in which Liberal Members below the Gangway show it is their intention to apply the Rule. It is said the Resolution was recommended by all the authority of the House; but that is far from being the fact, the proposal of the Speaker has been departed from in several important respects. When last year the Speaker drew a Rule for the guidance of our proceedings, he used the words, the "general sense of the House," and the Resolution could only be carried by a three-fourths' majority. In the Government proposal the word "general" is altered to "evident," and the three-fourths to a bare majority. Those alterations clearly show that the intention of the Government is not to put down a small obstructive minority, but to enable the majority at its command to clamour successfully for a discontinuance of the debate; and the adoption of the principle of the absolute majority lends force to that view. It is not enough that the Government should be able to silence one Party among its opponents; it must be able to silence all its opponents put together. Then, in the Rule framed by the Speaker, the Motion was left to the responsibility of a Minister of the Crown; whereas, under the present proposal, the Speaker is left to discover the "evident sense of the House." Again, when the Government were asked that certain safeguards should be inserted in the Rule, the Prime Minister answered that the minority would want no safeguard, as it might appeal to the public or the Press. But what can be more reasonable than that a defeated minority should have the right of recording on the Journals of the House a protest, drawn up by their Leaders with the greatest care, in order that the case may be put fully and fairly before the country? There is one other important incident in the debate; it was when the Speaker declared that, in construing this Resolution, he should hold the "evident sense of the House" to be the "evident sense," not of a Party, but "of the House at large." What is that but declaring that the Speaker, as long as he is in power, will put the Resolution in force as if the word "general" still remained part of it? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the other night, offered rather a curious prospect of the administration of the Rule, when he said that no one would think of stopping a debate if the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) wanted to address the House. So far as the administration of the Rule is concerned, I think, judging from that, it seems highly probable that, in the future, both sides of the House will have to hand up to the Speaker a list of those Members who wish to speak, and leave it to the right hon. Gentleman to make his selection, and say at what name he will draw the line, and declare that the "evident sense of the House" is that the debate shall proceed no further; but how the Speaker shall decide who is to be heard, I would like to hear some Member of Her Majesty's Government explain. I have no doubt that men of the position and stamp of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire will always obtain a hearing; but there are many hon. Members without his authority and position in the House, and without his power of speech, who will not be allowed an opportunity of doing so. Indeed, Members of Her Majesty's Government make no secret of their intention to make use of the Rule in order to sweep all such men aside, for the purpose of promoting legislation of a Party character. Only a day or two ago the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) gave a list of the measures to be passed next Session—household suffrage for the counties, improved government for the Metropolis, some legislation dealing with the City Companies; and, with the true instincts of a Radical, he smacked his lips over the mention of the £20,000,000 which belonged to those Companies. The hon. Baronet also spoke of the decayed Corporations throughout the country which had to be dealt with; how county government was to be transferred from the Justices to County Boards; how the Patent Law was to be reformed, a Corrupt Practices Bill to be passed, electoral reforms, and a new Ballot Act to be carried through. Having dealt with that rather comprehensive list of measures for a single Session, he added—"With these, and a few other important subjects, there will be ample work for the next Session." In that case we shall get a little further than the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) or the ideal Millennium comprising that complaisant Parliament which the hon. Member had shadowed forth would propose to go, because he and it would be content to carry measures which have been discussed by the constituencies, while the hon. Baronet would push forward measures which have not been discussed either in the constituencies or elsewhere. But the hon. Baronet has been forgetful of the fact that were it not for the discussion of the two Bills with respect to Ireland, and the time wasted by the Government itself on a frivolous Motion of Censure upon the House of Lords, the Corrupt Practices Bill and a Patents Bill might now have been a part of the law of the land. The hon. Baronet mentioned a Bankruptcy Bill as a measure which had been delayed by Obstruction. No doubt, there was Obstruction; but it was Obstruction by that practised Obstructionist the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain). A Bankruptcy Bill, which had been discussed year after year by the Associated Chambers of Commerce, was brought in, having upon the back of it the names of three Members of the Liberal Party as well as mine. Early in the Session that Bill passed a second reading in opposition to the President of the Board of Trade. Directly after its second reading, the President of the Board of Trade blocked it, and only took off the block on condition that the Bill should not be pressed forward until he had brought in his Bill. I do not say that the Bill in question was perfect; but, at all events, there were two clauses in it which would have been of some value to a commercial community, and would have made a greater improvement in the Bankruptcy Law, and given greater satisfaction to the country, than any that has been effected since 1869. The sole person responsible for the circumstance that that improvement was not made this Session was the right hon. Gentleman. I believe that the prolongation of this debate is a substantial service to the country and to the authority of Parliament, as it shows that there is no justification for this violent Resolution in the fantastic and cumbrous form in which it has been laid before the House. The argument as to justification from the practice of foreign countries and the Colonies has broken down, because no one has ventured to quote instances of the satisfactory application of the *clôture* in foreign countries, while hon. Member after hon. Member has pointed out the mischiefs which have resulted from it in France and the United States. The Prime Minister has said that foreign countries which have adopted the *clôture* have not given it up. The reason that foreign countries have not given up the *clôture* is, that it is an instrument in the hands of the majority; and the majority for the time being is always in the enjoyment of it. A parallel case is to be found in the administrative patronage of the United States, which still remains in the hands of the Government of the day, in spite of all the talk there has been about Civil Service reforms for the last quarter of a century. How narrow is the majority in support of the Resolution was seen by the division of the 30th of March, on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott)—the largest since the memorable division of 1873, when the Prime Minister found himself in a minority on the question of Irish University Education. On the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton, when 612 Members voted, the Government had a majority of 39; and that was obtained by the Government pleading that support of the Amendment meant opposition to their Resolution altogether. But of those who formed that majority of 39, 13 voted against the Government on the question of a two-thirds' majority, and that represents 26 votes on a division, which would leave the Government a majority of only 13; and how was the Government majority obtained? I am not much troubled about Caucuses; for, so far as they are good, the Conservatives have something like them; but we keep clear of the mischievous importations from America, which, by alienating independent thought from the Liberal Party, will do it as much harm as the organization will do it good. In the debate there have been three curious repudiations of outside influence. It is not to be expected that the people of Ripon would dictate to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), who does them the honour to represent them. Nor will the Liberals of Durham try it on with the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph Pease), who provides so much of their political machinery. As for the electors of Stoke, they could not dream that there is any chance of inducing one of their Members (Mr. Broadhurst) to abandon his obedience to the Government. But the most remarkable repudiation of all came yesterday from my own Colleague in the representation of Plymouth (Mr. Stewart Macliver). Fortunately, in that hon. Gentleman's case, we are able to see what has been the nature of the influence brought to bear upon him. In *The Times* of the 11th of February, there appeared a leading article which contained this remark—

> "If the *clôture* by a bare majority is proposed in any form, we shall give it our uncompromising opposition. As it now stands in the 1st Rule, it is not only objectionable, but ridiculous."

On that, the hon. Member for Plymouth wrote a letter to *The Times*, which was a good *résumé* of the arguments now being used by Opposition speakers. That letter was as follows:—

"Your timely and forcible article on this subject should make the Government pause ere it proceeds further in a course which, if continued, will certainly issue in discomfiture and defeat.

"By the 1st Resolution the Government, with the aid of the Speaker, could stop any debate by a bare majority, if the minority consisted of less than 40; and they could also stop a debate in which the minority consisted of any number, provided they—the Government—had a single vote more, and had 200 in all. I believe the Liberals would have fought to the last against the establishment of such a Rule had it been brought forward by Conservatives in a House in which there was a Tory majority. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Tories should oppose it.

"The whole object of these Rules is, or should be, to resist Obstruction and prevent wilful waste of time. They are not directed against the ordinary Opposition, and the Opposition will not believe that they ought to be included in penalties which should fall on the offending Obstructionists only.

"There are several reasons why it is desirable to give the Opposition greater power than is contemplated in the 1st Resolution.

"1. It is true Liberalism to require the fullest and freest debate on important questions, whatever may be the objections raised by either the Speaker or the Government of the day. This would be admitted by every Liberal if a Tory Government were in power.

"2. It is desirable that the Rules should have a permanent character. The House cannot be always tinkering its Procedure. Therefore, the Rules must command the approval of both sides.

"3. There is not the slightest reason why the question should be made a Party one. To give the question this aspect is to risk a defeat that a skilful captain would avoid.

"4. What injury would be done if it were enacted that a debate could not be stopped unless, after the initiative had been taken by the Speaker, there was a majority of 2 to 1 in a House of not less than 300, or where the Motion was opposed by less than 40? It may be said that this would enable the Opposition to continue a debate in spite of the majority; but nobody has hinted that these Rules are to check the Opposition—they are to check Obstruction. The Opposition, whether Tory or Liberal, ought not to be denied the right of fullest criticism.

"5. The Speaker would be much more likely to put the Rule in force if he knew it had the support of both sides. It is the interest of the House, and of the country, that he should on no occasion appear in the aspect of a partizan.

"The upshot of all this is this—that the 1st Rule is a proper subject for a conference between the Leaders of the two sides. This would be of especial advantage to the Liberals, as it would avoid the risk of a defeat. I do not believe the Government can carry the 1st Resolution in its present form. Their position would be not only awkward but ridiculous if they should be defeated on their chief Resolution."

From that it would appear as if, on the 11th of February, the hon. Member was not under the painful consciousness of his own weakness and the strength of the influence which might be brought to bear upon him. It was, however, only a short time after the appearance of that letter that a communication was sent to the hon. Member from his Association at Plymouth, requesting him to support the Government; and he then wrote a very humble letter to Plymouth in reply, in which he declared that it was his intention to follow the Prime Minister. That is an admirable and instructive illustration. Here you have the true Liberal "before and after" the application of the screw; before the screw he uses the arguments of the Opposition in favour of free speech; after the screw he is the obedient servant and follower of the Government. The case of the hon. Member is a conspicuous instance in which the reluctant support of a follower of the Government has been brought to their side; and it is an explanation of the fact that, with all the pressure they have been able to exert in this way, they can only, in a House of 612 Members, get a practical majority of 13. Condemned by experience and by the sense of the House, condemned by the Speaker's example in framing his Rules, and condemned by the reluctant support of their supporters, the Government may achieve a triumph in the coming division; but they have failed to show that their proposal deserves the support of the House, or the approbation and the sympathy of the country.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he could assure the House that he had heard nothing on the subject of the Resolution from his constituents except a hope, proceeding not from a Caucus, but from independent voters, that it would receive his support. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth who spoke last (Mr. Edward Clarke) had referred to the causes of legislative inaction in the House, and especially to the question of bankruptcy, during the last Session. But the measure introduced by the hon. and learned Member himself was an incomplete one; and, therefore, he (Mr. W. Fowler) thought his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade was perfectly right in not allowing it to pass. There was no doubt, however, and he would freely admit it, that an abundant crop of legislation was expected when the present Government came into power; but the fulfilment of that expectation had never occurred. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had often twitted them with not having carried more measures, and it was quite true that some Bills had been "rushed through" the House, simply because there was no possibility of adequately discussing them. A vast amount of Business came before the House apart from legislation; and, as had been admitted by both sides of the House, that fact made it necessary that their Rules should be readjusted in order to meet a state of things which did not exist when they were framed. A good deal had been said with regard to this being a one-sided debate; but he thought there had been a good deal of unfairness of another kind. The Prime Minister had been accused of advocating Home Rule in his speech yesterday; but the right hon. Gentleman had not said a single syllable about Home Rule in that speech. He had spoken about local government for Ireland, which was never intended to mean anything of the kind suggested. He (Mr. W. Fowler) was inclined to think that Conservative Members were far more afraid of this Rule than they had need to be, that their fears were extravagant and baseless, and that they were exceedingly alarmed at phantoms of their own creating, of which they could not rid themselves. For his own part, although he supported the Resolution, he would admit that he did not like *clôture*, and would rather have seen it done without, if it were possible. Indeed, if he thought freedom of speech were in danger, he would do everything in his power to defeat the Resolution. He did not believe that the anticipation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would be realized, that Party feeling in the House would become more violent, and that there would be strong irritation on the part of silenced Members. There were in the present House a large number of silenced Members who never found an opportunity of speaking. Nor did he agree with the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) that a Speaker would not venture to go against the majority. There were, moreover, so many opportunities of debate that there was no danger of any real interference with freedom of discussion. His only fear was that the Rule would be put in force very seldom, and that it would not effect so great a saving of time as was hoped and expected from it.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, there were many reasons which prevented him from supporting the Motion for the adoption of the Resolution, although he did not believe that freedom of debate would be destroyed by it. The succeeding Resolutions were really aimed at that end more than the 1st, and would do more harm. The 1st Resolution, if carried, would, however, make the Government the sole arbiters of legislation, and would break down all the barriers of Opposition; that was why he disapproved the proposal. A change was involved subversive of the Constitution of the House and the country. The position of the Government was that the minority ought not to have a veto on legislation. But during the last 600 years the minority had always had the power of veto, and because that power had been a safeguard. It made the minority responsible for legislation as well as the majority. The effect of this Rule would be not to remove individual Obstruction, but to maintain the absolutism of an individual—not to secure the dignity of Parliament, but its subserviency. The privileges and powers of the House were not the property of the temporary Assembly of Gentlemen who formed the present Parliament. They were the property of the whole country. The House, it was argued, was represented by the majority, the majority by the Ministers, the Ministers by the Premier. He, and he alone, would, in future, represent the will of the British people. What ought he to be called? Certainly, "Optimus Maximus" must be among his titles. He had already made himself familiar—rather too familiar—with the constituencies at the last General Election; and it was well known that no gentleman could appear before the electors in the Liberal interest unless the mark of the right hon. Gentleman was upon his forehead. The way in which the majority were treated reminded him of the story of the visit paid by the late Dr. Cumming to the Pope. Dr. Cumming asked—"May I argue?" His Holiness replied—"No, you mustn't argue; but you may kiss my toe." It was by resistance that Magna Charta was obtained, that the Bill of Rights was obtained, that the Hanoverian Succession was established, and that every one of their rights had been gained and retained. It was clearly the duty of the Opposition, if they supposed that hon. Members opposite were being coerced, or were acting from ignorance or stupidity, to resist the passing of these Rules of Procedure with all their power. That Resolution would be a death-blow to the moderation of the moderates among the Liberal Party, and to the responsibility of the Opposition. There would be an end of compromise, and they might as well eliminate charity from religion as eliminate compromise from the government of freemen.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, he could assure the House that he, for one, had not been coerced to support the Government in opposition to his conscientious convictions. The Liberals were charged with voting for the *clôture* contrary to their wishes, and contrary to their convictions; and he had to frankly confess that, though he should vote for the *clôture*, he should do so with a certain amount of unwillingness, for he very much disliked the innovation. It went much against his wish, and against the wishes of the whole Liberal Party; but he felt there was no hope for it, if they wished to bring back the House of Commons to its original character as a Legislative Assembly. The change was absolutely necessary, for the House must have more control in the future over its own Business than it had at present. That was the chief reason which induced him to give his support to the 1st Resolution; for while he believed that its adoption would not have the slightest effect in preventing the fullest and fairest discussion, it would enable the House to perform its Business more effectively and rapidly. It was an honour to have a seat in that House; but the honour was dearly paid for by the pain of listening hour after hour, and day after day, to long and interminable speeches, which hindered the performance of work. It was impossible for anything to be more dreary, or even dispiriting, for many hon. Members spoke merely because they felt it necessary to say something. Among other things that had been referred to, mention had been made of the fact that the Colonial Legislatures in general had not adopted the *clôture*; but that was because they had never experienced anything like the persistent Obstruction that had been witnessed in that House during the last few Sessions. He believed that the proposed measure would prove very effectual in facilitating the conduct of Business in the House, and that was why he supported it.

Mr. WARTON said, that believing that the Resolution under discussion, and, indeed, all the Resolutions, were calculated to give the majority an unfair advantage over the minority, he wished to enter his protest against them. A minority had a right to delay, and to defeat by delay, any measure to which they objected. It was because that Resolution would interfere with the right of the minority to use the Forms of the House, which had been handed down to them by tradition, in order to delay a measure, that he would vote against it. He voted for the Rules of Urgency last Session, because they were temporarily required to meet an exceptional difficulty; but that was no reason why he should now support a more stringent Rule, which had the great disadvantage of being permanent. It was nothing short of hypocrisy for the Members of the Treasury Bench—he did not see any Member of the Government upon it at present—to talk about putting down Obstruction. Whenever there was any charge of Obstruction against the Members of the Treasury Bench, there was always one, and that was the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who got up and said that he never obstructed; but the President of the Board of Trade was the first and chief Obstructionist in that House. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman meant, when he said it was not Obstruction, that it was only a Brummagem kind of article. The present introduction of the *clôture* was compared to the Speaker's action in putting an end to the debate; but there was no real similarity between the cases. One was a temporary expedient, and the other intended to be permanent. The Prime Minister had been guilty of many inconsistencies in relation to these Resolutions.

He had begun by saying that the "evident sense of the House" was to be the "general sense of the House;" and at last he had narrowed the expression down to the barest Party majority, so that the Resolution might be said to rest on false pretences. It was the irresponsible will of the Prime Minister that was forcing this measure through a reluctant House. Every argument had been answered, every fallacy exposed; but the imperious will of the Prime Minister they could not change. It was his (Mr. Warton's) candid opinion that the right hon. Gentleman would content himself with nothing short of being the Dictator of the country.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. O'Shea,*)—put and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 10*th November,* 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter past Four o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 10*th November,* 1882.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT—DESPATCH OF BRITISH OFFICERS TO THE SOUDAN.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL gave Notice that on Thursday he would ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that three British officers had been despatched on a special mission to the Soudan; and, if so, what arrangements he has made for their protection, having regard to the fate which so recently befell Professor Palmer's party in the desert?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I will answer that Question at once. Three officers have gone to the Soudan to make a report, not to take part in any military affairs. I consulted Sir Archibald Alison on the point whether it would be wise to send an escort, and he answered that it would not be wise. Therefore, an escort will not be sent with these officers.

THE CURRENCY—SMALL SILVER COIN.

MR. WIGGIN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that many complaints are being made of the difficulty in obtaining small silver change; and, whether the Government will endeavour to remove the inconvenience, by ordering an increased number of shillings and sixpences to be coined?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, I had heard nothing of any complaints of the scarcity of small change until I saw the Notice of my hon. Friend's Question. I now learn from the Governor of the Bank of England that it is true that the Bank have not been able to meet all demands for silver as usual, owing to the Mint being shut; but they have received no special complaints of a want of small silver coin. Arrangements have now been made for supplying them at once with £100,000 in silver, of which £50,000 will be in shillings and sixpences; and the difficulty will disappear when coinage is resumed at the Mint, which will be the case at an early date.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT, SOUTH KENSINGTON—IRISH TEACHERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether payment has yet been made on the results of the last May examinations of schools and classes in Ireland in connection with the Department of Science and Art, South Kensington; whether it is true that the English and Scotch teachers are usually paid at a much earlier period of the year; and, whether steps could not be taken to insure payment to the Irish science teachers at least before the re-opening of the classes in October?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, in reply to the first Question of the hon. Gentleman, about 85 per cent of the claims sent in from Irish schools have been already paid. English and Scotch claims are paid a little earlier than Irish, owing to the necessity of referring the latter to the Commissioners of National Education in Dublin. I should be glad if these claims could be settled earlier, and I will see if anything can be done to quicken the payment. Many of them are not sent to us till after the re-opening of the classes in October, and at this moment 24 schools have not sent in their claims.

MR. SEXTON said, he understood that the delay occurred through the Board of National Education. Could the right hon. Gentlemen consider whether the time occupied by that Board should be limited?

MR. MUNDELLA said, that was exactly the point engaging their attention, and they were in communication on the subject with the Board of Education.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—THE TRANSVAAL—PAYMENT OF AMOUNT DUE UNDER THE CONVENTION.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Transvaal Government has, according to the Convention, paid the sum of £100,000, agreed to be paid on or before the 8th August 1882, on account of the debt due to Her Majesty's Government, and made provision for paying the interest on the remainder of that debt; what amount has been paid by Her Majesty's Government on account of awards against the present Transvaal Government for injury to person or property during the war; whether the property captured by the agents of the present Transvaal Government during the war has, in accordance with promise, been realised, and the proceeds handed over to the British Resident in reduction of the total amount so paid by Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, what proportion the proceeds of such property bears to the total amount so paid by Her Majesty's Government; and, when Parliament will be asked to defray the balance?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, the Transvaal Government has paid the interest due on their debt for the half-years ended on February 8 and August 8, 1882. They have not as yet paid any portion of the £100,000. Her Majesty's Government have consented to wait till the end of this year, when, if the Estimates of the Transvaal Government are realized, they should be able to pay at least £50,000 in reduction of the capital of the debt. £136,960 12*s.* 1*d.* was the amount of the award made against the present Transvaal Government. The proceeds of captured property paid over to the British Resident amount to £10,000, which sum the Transvaal Government said exceeded the actual amount realized. That left a balance of £126,960 12*s.* 1*d.* Bills to the amount required have been drawn by the British Resident on the Treasury Chest Fund. When the accounts have been closed, and the exact balance required is known, an Estimate for the amount will be laid before Parliament and a Vote taken.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—"MOONLIGHTING" BY "EMERGENCY MEN" AT MURROE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that the emergency or property defence men, tried for "moonlighting" on the 23rd October at Murroe, were discharged, though three respectable witnesses fully identified them, and positively swore they were the men who with blackened faces demanded money and arms from them on the night of the 10th October; whether the only evidence to rebut this was that given by other emergency men, comrades of the prisoners; whether one of the accused, named Parker, is the individual a short time since charged with deliberately firing on some children in Cappamore, and who still more recently underwent a month's imprisonment for assaulting the police, and whether he had been only a few days out of gaol; and, whether the Government will allow such persons to carry firearms?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have submitted the Papers in this case to the Attorney General, and have been advised by him that the charge against one of these men, Henry Murdy, appears to have been properly dismissed, as there was not sufficient identification;

but in the case of the other two men, Parker and Eakins, he advises that fresh proceedings be taken, and I have given directions accordingly. Parker's arms' licence will be at once revoked, on the recommendation of the licensing officer, who is now also making further inquiry in Eakins's case.

CENTRAL ASIA—REPORTED RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will telegraph to the British agent at Meshed, in order to ascertain if there is foundation for the report that a Russian force has lately advanced to Sarakhs, i.e., two hundred miles beyond the boundary which he stated last April was to be the limit of their furthest advance?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, if any such advance had taken place it would undoubtedly have been reported by Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran; and I see no occasion to incur the expense of telegraphing to inquire as to a rumour for which there appears to be no foundation, except as regards the journey of the engineers, as to which I have already given information to the House.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Has the hon. Baronet seen the correction which has appeared in the Russian papers that this story of the advance is six months old?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I gave the facts as they came to us from Mr. Thompson. Of course, there is a conflict between these two statements.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Why does not the hon. Baronet answer the Question? I ask him whether he will not reconsider his reply, and send a telegram?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We are hearing continually from the Agent at Meshed, through Mr. Thompson, and it is not necessary to telegraph.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION — DESPATCH OF BUSINESS—CASE OF JAMES HARTE, OF RUSHEEN, CO. SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can say why the case of James Harte, of Rusheen, county Sligo (a tenant of Lady Louisa Tenison), entered a long time since in the Land Court, has not yet been heard, though the Sub-Commission has held two sessions for the county Sligo; and, if he can say how soon the case will be heard and decided?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the practice of the Land Commissioners is to list all cases for hearing in the order of the receipt of the application in their office, and James Harte's case has not yet been reached in consequence of the number of cases lodged before his, and which, consequently, must be heard before it. The cases having priority are so numerous, I understand, that his case will not be reached for a considerable time.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MISCONDUCT OF SUB-CONSTABLES MESCAL AND BARRY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that, as the result of a Constabulary Inquiry held on the 18th and 19th of September last, at the Constabulary Station in the town of Castlecomer, to investigate charges preferred by an Emergency man named Henslip against two sub-constables named John Mescal and James Barry, Mescal was fined £3, and Barry dismissed the Force; whether a charge arising out of the same evidence, and made by the same complainant, against Sub-Constable Mescal, was investigated by the Castlecomer Petty Sessions Bench, and dismissed on the merits by unanimous judgment of the magistrates; whether it is the fact that the case of Henslip rested on his own evidence solely, while the innocence of the sub-constables was testified by an auxiliary sub-constable and several civilian witnesses; and, whether the result of the Constabulary Inquiry will be reviewed?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the facts are correctly stated in the first paragraph of the Question. The sub-constables were charged with several grave offences against discipline. The charges were inquired into by a Constabulary Court of Inquiry, and both men were found guilty of most of them. Sub-Constable Barry's previous conduct had been bad, and he had been warned that his next offence would cause his dismissal, and he was dismissed accordingly; but Sub-Constable Mescal was leniently dealt with, as his previous conduct had been good. A charge of assault, which was brought against Sub-Constable Mescal by the man Henslip, was investigated by the magistrates at Castlecomer Petty Sessions, and a majority of them were of opinion that the sub-constable was not guilty. Several witnesses testified to the offences againt discipline with which these men were charged; but in the case of the auxiliary force policeman who swore to their innocence, the Court stated they could not give any credence to his evidence, as he swore a man was sober who admitted that he was drunk. The Inspector General informs me that he sees no necessity for reviewing the result of the proceedings; and, under the circumstances, I do not think it is a matter for Government to interfere in.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND — THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES—GRANTING OF DEGREES.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the fact that at the late degree examinations in connection with the Royal University of Ireland the total number of graduates in arts from Queen's College, Galway, was only nine, and the total number from Queen's College, Cork, was only twelve; whether the Government intend to continue the grant of £20,000 a-year to the support of institutions which only produce twenty-one graduates in arts this year; and, whether he will propose any measure for making the public endowments of the Colleges at Cork and Galway more useful in extending University education among the people of Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has been called to this matter by the Question of the hon. Member; but I have already given much interest and attention to the matter. The Government have no present intention other than to continue the annual grants to those institutions; but I think it right to point out that the number of graduates in Arts from those Colleges forms no estimate of the number of students who receive Arts instruction in the Colleges. Thus, the number of students in the Faculty of Arts during the last session in the Queen's College, Galway, was 57; but the Arts education was not limited to them, but was given to the 205 students who were attending lectures. It must be remembered that the number of students in Arts is an altogether inadequate test of the work of these institutions. The students in Arts number little more than a fourth in Galway, and little more than a sixth at Cork, of the whole body of students. The Queen's Colleges are, to a marked extent, places of scientific education.

EGYPT—SURRENDER OF ARABI PASHA TO THE AGENTS OF THE KHEDIVE.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Why Arabi Pacha, while a prisoner of war to British troops, was surrendered to the agents of the Khedive?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, if the hon. Member will refer to Egypt, No. 18, Letter No. 76, he will see that Arabi Pasha was surrendered to the Khedive in accordance with a decision of Her Majesty's Government communicated by Lord Granville to Sir Edward Malet on the 28th of August, in obedience to which Sir Garnet Wolseley acted. He was so surrendered because he was a subject in arms against the Khedive, and we were acting as the allies and mandatories of the Khedive in the whole operations.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Is not the principal offence for which Arabi is to be tried for his life his alleged misuse of the flag of truce, during the siege of Alexandria—an offence which, if committed at all, was committed against the British Army, and which, therefore, ought to be tried by a British court martial?

Mr. CHILDERS: I have nothing to add to my answer. I have already answered distinctly what the hon. Member placed on the Notice Paper.

EGYPT—ISMAIL SADYK PASHA.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will inquire whether Ismail Sadyk Pacha, Egyptian Finance Minister, who was sentenced to banishment to the White Nile, during the Joubert-Goschen Mission, still survives; and, if not, if he will inquire whether any agents of the British Government procured his condemnation?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is notorious Sir, that Ismail Pasha Sadyk, generally known as the "Moufettish," was arrested by order of Ismail Pasha, the late Khedive, and banished to the Soudan at the date mentioned; and that his death was officially reported. There is no foundation whatever for the suggestion that any Agents of the British Government procured his condemnation.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CASE OF MATTHEW SMYTH.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Matthew Smyth, a farmer residing at Coolarty, about three miles from Granard, county Longford, who went out on Thursday the 26th October with his gun, for which he is duly licensed, for the purpose of shooting plover; whether it is the fact that after once firing he was accosted by constable Lennon and sub-constable Moran, of Ballinalee, who ordered him to halt, and that on Mr. Smyth's becoming alarmed and running towards his own house, constable Lennon fired three shots from his revolver in rapid succession at him, but did not succeed in hitting him; whether the police then took the gun from Mr. Smyth, but gave it back to him the next day; and, whether the authorities have taken any notice of the way in which the constable made use of his revolver?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the facts of the case are these, as far as I have them; but there is an important point on which I have asked for further information. The two constables referred to were on duty in the townland of Coolarty at the time; they heard a shot fired, and at once proceeded to the place; a man rose from behind a ditch and ran away; they called on him to stand, shouting to him that they would fire if he did not do so. They called on him several times to surrender, and finally, as he continued to run away, one of the constables fired three shots for the purpose of compelling him to surrender. They then took his gun from him; but as he had a license for it, and is a man of good character, it was restored to him next day by order of the Resident Magistrate. I have called on the Inspector General to report on the matter, which is one for inquiry.

MR. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman know by what authority the police have taken upon themselves in Ireland to interfere in poaching cases, and perform the part of gamekeepers?

MR. TREVELYAN said, the allegation in this particular case, so far as he could see from the information given to him, was very different, for it was that the committal of outrage was the object, and not game.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOHN LALOR.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of a man named John Lalor, charged with assaulting a policeman, in which the original information was not produced; whether he has noticed that Major Hutchinson, R.M., is reported to have said "We'll have to report this Petty Sessions' Clerk as he is perfectly useless," and that Mr. McLeod the other R.M., said, on the solicitor for the defence complaining that he had not seen a copy of the informations, "That is a great disgrace;" and, whether the magistrates have reported the circumstance, and what was the nature of their report?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have obtained a report in reference to this Question, from which I find that the remarks mentioned therein were made by Major Hutchinson and Mr. M'Leod, and had reference to the original information in the case, which could not be found in the absence of the clerk who has been for some time in delicate health. The magistrates afterwards decided to defer action in the matter until the next Petty Sessions, when they considered that should the official documents not be in proper order, or the clerk not able to attend to his duties, some steps should be taken.

CONVICT LABOUR AND HARBOURS OF REFUGE—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. JACKSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will present to Parliament the report of the Departmental Committee on the Employment of Convict Labour and Harbours of Refuge?

Mr. WEBSTER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, before a decision is come to as to constructing harbours of refuge upon the coast, the selection of sites therefor, and the employment of convict labour for the purpose, the Report of the recent Departmental Commission on Convict Labour will be laid upon the Table of the House, and a full opportunity afforded of considering the whole questions involved, with reference to that Report, and to the recommendations in the Report of the Royal Commission of 1858 upon Harbours of Refuge; and, whether, in the view of its being thought desirable to construct harbours of refuge, such localities as may deem themselves interested in the selection of the site or sites will be allowed an opportunity of submitting their claims, and being heard thereon?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, I will answer the Question of the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson) at the same time as that of my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Webster). The Government will present to Parliament the Report of the Departmental Committee on Convict Labour, with the omission of some confidential matter. It should be understood that the first question is, how the convict labour shall be employed; and this, as I said the other day, is a matter of some urgency. Upon what particular work it should be employed depends upon many considerations—the importance of the work, its suitability for convict labour, and its cost as modified by local contributions. Any representations which may be made from any locality will receive careful attention.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the Report as to convict labour would refer to Ireland as well as to England?

Mr. COURTNEY: The inquiry did not apply to Ireland, as at present convict labour is pretty well occupied there.

EGYPT—THE DUAL CONTROL.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take any steps towards the re-establishment of the Dual Control in Egypt? He also wished to ask, Whether it is true that the Egyptian Government have issued a decree abolishing the Dual Control; and, if so, whether that decree has the sanction of Her Majesty's Government and the concurrence of the Powers who are parties to the Committee of Liquidation?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In reply to the noble Lord's first Question, I can add nothing to the statements which have already been made by the Prime Minister and myself.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: There have been no statements.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Oh, yes. There have been many statements as to the impossibility of making a statement. As to the second Question, I am able to say that, although a proposal has been made by the Egyptian Government with regard to the Dual Control, no decree has been issued abolishing it. The Control does not, as the noble Lord supposes, come under the Law of Liquidation. I presume when he says "Committee of Liquidation," he means "Law of Liquidation."

EGYPT — THE LATE MR. HERBERT RIBTON, C.E.—COMPENSATION.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have yet considered the memorial of Mrs. Ribton, widow of the late Herbert Ribton, C.E. (who was murdered at Alexandria on 11th June last), to be given some compensation for the loss of her husband, whose death deprived her and her family of their means of subsistence; whether any communication has been made to the Egyptian Government on the subject; and, if so, with what result; and, when it is expected that the claim of Mrs. Ribton will be considered and settled?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Mrs. Ribton's claim has been received at the Foreign Office, and inquiry has been made at Cairo whether it was understood that the claims for indemnities to families of British subjects murdered during the riots should be laid before the International Commission, or whether the Egyptian Government would prefer to deal with them separately.

Mr. GIBSON: Has any answer been received?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; the Question was only asked a few days ago.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE COMMISSION COURT-HOUSE, DUBLIN — INSUFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION.

MR. DAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the frequent complaints made by the Judges, Recorder, and Jurors of Dublin as to the want of sufficient accommodation in the Commission Court House at Green Street; and, whether, in consideration of the fact that this Court is used by the Crown not only for the Commission business of Dublin County and City, but also for the Winter Assizes of the county of Louth and City of Drogheda, and for the transferred cases from all parts of Ireland, the reconstruction of the present Court House, or the building of a new one, will be undertaken by the Treasury?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am aware, Sir, that the Judges, the Recorder, and the jurors of Dublin have complained of the want of sufficient accommodation in the Commission Court at Green Street. Important communications on the subject have been received within the past few days, and the subject will receive the early consideration of the Government.

STATE OF IRELAND—CAPTAIN DICKENSON AND JOHN RYAN.

MR. DAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following occurrence:—On the 23rd September, at Newport, county Tipperary, Captain Dickenson, 20th regiment, was charged with firing a loaded revolver at a man named Ryan. The complainant stated that he and some companions were returning to Newport on the 12th September. That the whip of the driver of the car fell. That the night being extremely dark they lit a match to look for it. That whilst so engaged they heard a car coming rapidly on. That they cried out to warn the occupants. Whereupon one of them, Captain Dickenson, fired a revolver amongst them. That the bullet whizzed past his head. That the case was brought before the magistrates. And after a cross case against Ryan for assault had broken down, the bench dismissed the case against Captain Dickenson for firing, and complimented him for not hitting any one, and, at the same time, cautioned Ryan against crying out so loud for the future; and, whether he will direct an inquiry into the grounds of this decision?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received the following report in reference to this case. On the 22nd of September last Captain Dickenson, of the 20th Regiment, was charged at Newport Petty Sessions, by John Ryan, with firing a revolver at him on the night of the 12th September, between Newport and Limerick. It appeared in evidence that the night was dark, and Ryan's driver dropped his whip; he got down and lit a match to look for it. Captain Dickenson and Lieutenant Charles drove up at the time; they saw a light suddenly extinguished, and, at the same time, a man leaped out from under the hedge, and, with a loud cry, rushed towards Captain Dickenson; another man rushed towards his horse's head, and Captain Dickenson, believing that they had got into a "moonlight" ambuscade, fired his revolver high over Ryan's head to show that he was armed. Both parties drove immediately to the Newport police barracks and reported the case. The case came before the magistrates, and, after a lengthened hearing, was dismissed by them. The Bench remarked that Ryan was fortunate in meeting so cool-headed a man as Captain Dickenson, as another man would probably have shot him. A cross case, brought by Captain Dickenson against Ryan, for assault, was also dismissed. I do not think any further inquiry is necessary in this case.

MR. DAWSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that it is in accordance with the administration of justice to fire revolvers on the highway without notice, and against the law? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to enter into a debate. He can only ask a further Question arising out of the answer already given.

MR. DAWSON said, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he thought it was judicious in Ireland to allow captains in Her Majesty's Army to proceed with loaded revolvers through the country, and to fire merely because they saw a party in the road crying out merely to save themselves from being driven over? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not regular for the hon. Member to ask for the opinion of a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he knew whether Captain Dickenson had a licence to carry arms?

Mr. TREVELYAN: As an officer in the Army, he would have a right to carry arms, and I should conclude that, whatever retribution the whole affair deserved, is probably effected by its publicity.

Mr. PARNELL asked, under what Statute the right hon. Gentleman considered that an officer in the Army was not bound to comply with the Arms Act of last Session?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I prefer to answer that Question on Notice. Speaking from my impression, which I am satisfied is a correct one, I think an officer in the Army would have a right to carry arms; but I much prefer to answer the Question on Notice.

POST OFFICE—EAST AFRICAN MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. SLAGG asked the Postmaster General, What steps he has taken to continue the efficiency of the East African Mail Service, in accordance with the assurance which he was understood to give to the House on the 4th of May?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in the debate to which my hon. Friend refers I gave an assurance that I would very carefully consider whatever evidence he or others interested in the subject might bring forward tending to show that a regular mail service to Zanzibar was impossible without a subsidy. After full consideration of the whole subject, it has now been decided not to renew the contract, as there is reason to believe that a sufficiently good postal service can be provided without it.

SCIENCE AND ART—SCOTCH STATE PAPERS (HAMILTON COLLECTION).

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If there is any truth in the report that the Scotch State Papers in the Hamilton Collection have been offered to the British Government; and, if there is any hope that these may still be secured for the National Collection?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, neither the Treasury, as a Department, nor my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has any information to the effect of the hon. Member's suggestion. If these documents are ever offered for sale by the German Government, the Trustees of the British Museum and the Government will doubtless have an opportunity of considering whether the whole or any part of them should be purchased; and, if so, how much may properly be expended upon them.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISCONTINUANCE OF RELIEF WORKS AT ARKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received a reply from the Secretary of the County Wicklow Grand Jury as to whether there was any undertaking to the effect that the improvements in the town of Arklow, which have been discontinued by order of the county surveyor at Lord Caryfort's request, were only to be carried out with the approval of all the owners and occupiers of property in the district to be affected, and whether any one else has objected to the proposed improvements?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received a reply from the Secretary of the Grand Jury, and find that the following is the wording of the Presentment passed at the Spring Assizes, 1882:—

> "To the parties to be employed by the county surveyor to lower a hill in the road leading to the railway station in Arklow, between Mr. J. F. Evan's house and the Town Hall, being 160 yards in length (N.B.—Provided the consent of the owners of houses adjoining be given before next assizes)—£40."

Lord Carysfort declined to give his consent to the execution of the work, on the ground that it would injure his property, where he has expended large sums of money.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the statement in the "Standard" newspaper of the 6th instant is true, that certain Cuban refugees were taken to the British frontier, near Gibraltar, and prevented from returning into British territory; and, if so, whether this proceeding was the subject of any previous arrangement, negotiation, or discussion, between the Spanish and British authorities; and, if he will forthwith lay upon the Table any communication, by telegram or otherwise, between the Colonial Office and the authorities at Gibraltar upon this subject?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, it is somewhat inconvenient—I was going to say very inconvenient—to have to state to the House information in fragmentary reports by telegraph on a matter which is under judicial inquiry, and in regard to which we expect the full details very shortly. The proper course would be that the Papers and the decision of the Home Government should be laid on the Table at the same time. In consequence of the Question put by the right hon. Gentleman the other day, we telegraphed to the Governor of Gibraltar, and I have the authority of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to read the reply to the House. Of course we telegraphed, hoping that the answer would be an absolute denial of the statement in *The Standard;* but I am sorry to say that it has not turned out to be so. This is the telegram received from Lord Napier, dated the 7th November—

> "If question as to previous arrangements between British and Spanish authorities means Governments, it should be emphatically denied. As regards Acting Police Magistrate and Chief Inspector, it is fully admitted Acting Police Magistrate ordered Chief Inspector to carry out instructions of Colonial Secretary's memorandum, 16th August. Both officers believed Colonial Secretary to mean that Maceo was to be expelled, as requested by Spanish Consul, in order to facilitate apprehension by Spanish police. Chief Inspector acted on his own responsibility, and without orders regarding the other persons whom he believed should be included with Maceo. He informed Spanish Consul that fugitives would be expelled before evening gun fire, and expected their arrest."

All I would add, in justice to Lord Napier, is that four days before the telegram was sent to him he sent a despatch, dated Nov. 2, in which he stated what I have already mentioned to the House, that he himself was absolutely ignorant of the whole transaction. He said—

> "I was unaware of the case until I saw it mentioned in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* some days after its occurrence."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the hon. Gentleman lay the Paper on the Table of the House?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I expect before a week is over the Committee appointed by Lord Napier to inquire into the subject will have given its Report, and then the Papers will be presented as soon as possible. The Committee is composed of Mr. M. Campbell and Major Hildyard, Brigade Major, and is presided over by Mr. Sheriff, the Attorney General.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The hon. Gentleman has referred to the Colonial Secretary. Will he be good enough to explain to the House what the Colonial Secretary had to do with it?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I meant the local Colonial Secretary, General Baynes. He was the recipient of communications from the Spanish Consul.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: But he himself was implicated in the transaction.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Undoubtedly he is one of the parties whose conduct is to be inquired into.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I shall repeat my Question on this day week.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What communications have taken place between the Spanish and British Governments on the subject of the Cuban refugees; what were the dates and substance of the first communication on behalf of the British Government; whether it was made by telegram, or otherwise; and, if he will forthwith lay any such communication upon the Table of the House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I answered this Question last night in reply to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). The first communication, as I have twice stated, was in the exact terms of the reply given on behalf of the Colonial Office in this House.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether it was true, as reported in that day's papers, that the Spanish Government had refused to surrender the refugees?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have received no document from the Spanish Government confirming the truth of the statement. We have had no communication from the Spanish Government up to the present time, and we have no reason to suppose that we shall receive any until we make official representations to them after we have received the Report of the Committee of Inquiry instituted by Lord Napier.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can state to the House under what clauses of Egyptian Civil Law, or under what article of Egyptian or Ottoman Military Law, Arabi Pacha is being tried; or whether he is being tried by an "ex post facto" Military Code and procedure formulated by the Egyptian Government and agreed to by Her Majesty's Government?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have on two previous occasions stated to the House that Arabi Pasha is being tried by Court Martial with privileges not usually allowed by the procedure under Egyptian law. Those privileges have been conceded to the prisoners in this case at the instance of Her Majesty's Government for the sole purpose of securing the prisoners a fair trial. Her Majesty's Government are not aware of anything in the procedure which can properly be described as formulated merely for the purpose of these trials, except those provisions in favour of the accused, of which the accused desire and intend to take advantage.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the hon. Gentleman to answer the Question on the Paper? He has answered a Question which is not on the Paper. My Question is, Under what clauses of Egyptian Civil Law, or under what article of Egyptian or Ottoman Military Law, Arabi Pacha is being tried?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have distinctly stated over and over again—I stated it four times last night—that Arabi Pasha is being tried not under any Civil Law or Code, but by Military Court Martial, under special conditions agreed upon between him and his counsel and the Egyptian Government.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman whether the trial of Arabi Pasha is not absolutely illegal, as being contrary to all known Codes of law?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am not competent to give an opinion on a legal question, but I have reason to believe that the trial is perfectly legal.

Mr. GORST: Will the hon. Gentleman state, if Arabi Pasha is not being tried under any existing Code, what law he is accused of having broken?

Mr. BOURKE: May I ask the hon. Baronet whether a few days ago he did not refer to the charges and the law under which Arabi was to be tried, and if he did not refer me to a Code which I think he said was to be found in a book? I asked him afterwards whether that book was in the Library. I found it was not there, and I understood, did I not, that he would have these clauses from this particular Code translated and laid before the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I gave that promise to the right hon. Gentleman because he appeared to attach great importance to the matter, and I thought it was a point not worth fighting about. I will get the translation; but I have stated over and over again that those clauses, although referred to in the charges, do not constitute the body of the law under which the prisoner is being tried.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: As I understand the hon. Baronet to say that Arabi Pasha is being tried under no Code whatever, I would ask whether the military tribunal which is trying Arabi is framed under a recognized Code or not?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I declined last night to answer Questions upon Egyptian law. I am not competent to answer those Questions, and it is not my duty.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I will not move the adjournment—["Oh!"]—if hon. Gentlemen wish it I will do so—but I wish to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether Arabi Pasha has not been handed over by Her Majesty's military authorities to be judged by a Court Martial which acts under no law whatever?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: He has been handed over under conditions which have been described to-night by the Secretary of State for War.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: May I ask the Under Secretary if Arabi Pasha is being tried by a law made for the occasion?

Mr. O'KELLY: Is the law to be manufactured by the Court Martial as the trial proceeds?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I did not catch the terms of the last Question. As to the Question of the hon. Member for Newcastle, he was in the House last night when I answered a Question put in exactly the same terms as the one which the hon. Gentleman now asks.

MR. GORST: I do not want to move the adjournment of the House; but the Question I put just now to the hon. Gentleman is a serious one, and ought to be answered. The hon. Gentleman has said there is no Code—Egyptian, Ottoman, or otherwise—under which Arabi is being tried. My Question, then, is, What law is Arabi charged with having broken?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have answered already fully on this subject. The replies which I gave on this subject last night were the subject of the most careful consideration, because we desired not to express opinions upon matters of Egyptian law, upon which we are not competent to speak. But we desired to give the House the fullest information possible, and the answers I gave last night on the subject were carefully considered by those who had framed suggestions to the Egyptian Government, the acceptance of which by the Egyptian Government, in the interests of humanity, has been the ground of all these Questions.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg to give Notice that, on Monday, I shall put a further Question on this subject, and if I do not receive an answer to that Question from the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I shall resort to the only course open to a private Member under the circumstances.

THE ESTIMATES — EXTRA EXPENDITURE (IRELAND).

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will state to the House his present estimate for the current financial year of the extra expenditure occasioned by the increase in the Constabulary, the administration of the Irish Land and Arrears Acts, and by any other administrative or judicial changes due to the exceptional condition of Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, I cannot give to this Question any other than a general answer. Of course, the proper time for discussing it with a view to full and clear information will be when the Estimates come before the House, and a regular comparison can be made. The growth of the Civil Expenditure in Ireland has been gradual, as may be readily understood from the gradual change in the circumstances of Ireland. Consequently, the figures I am about to state, unless understood with modifications, might lead to some exaggerated ideas, because in order to go back to a period when there was nothing in the nature of extra expenditure, we must go back to the years 1878 and 1879. The increase which has taken place since that time, taking the year of comparison as 1882-3, was estimated at less than £500,000; but it is even more than that. It is more than £600,000, and is comprised of great items—£450,000 for Police and £150,000 for the Land Court. There are also Naval and Military charges—I do not know that they are very great—but not included in the figures I have named.

EGYPTIAN AFFAIRS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can name a day for the discussion of the Motion with regard to the employment of Her Majesty's Forces in Egypt? I desire at the same time to call attention to a further Notice given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), with the concurrence and assent of his former Colleagues, with regard to the surrender of Arabi Pasha. I mention that because it might affect the answer the right hon. Gentleman may give me, and because we shall be anxious to press for a discussion of the matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: When this Notice was given by the right hon. Gentleman the late Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs yesterday, there was no sign of concurrence or participation in it by his late Colleagues, consequently I had no reason to give any special attention to it with reference to the present purpose of that Notice. I attended, however, to the Question of which Notice has been given by the right hon. Baronet, and I must say that we are not prepared to interrupt the course of these proceedings upon the Resolutions now before the House for the purpose of discussing the Notice which has been given by the right hon. Baronet; but, at the same time, I should like to add a few words to that statement. I think we shall be able in the course of three or four days to give some information to the House which will not occupy more than two or three minutes, which will throw some light upon the subject of the right hon. Baronet's Notice, so far as to assist him in judging of the proper course for him to take. The circumstances are not without precedent. The course that was taken at the close of the War of 1815-16, we think, is likely to supply in substance a proper basis for our proceedings; but I will explain the matter not later than Tuesday, and I hope then to be able also to give some information as to the actual amount of the force remaining in Egypt. Of course, if any further information is desired, I shall be glad to have Notice of the Question.

Mr. BOURKE: I beg to state that on Monday next I will ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government whether he will give the House a day for the discussion of the subject of my Notice.

EGYPT—REBELLION IN THE SOUDAN—CONTEMPLATED BRITISH ASSISTANCE FOR THE KHEDIVE.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to employ the Queen's Forces to suppress the Military rebellion in the Soudan against His Highness the Khedive, in order to preserve that province from the Military violence of the False Prophet?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. Her Majesty's Government have no intention of employing the Queen's Forces to suppress the military movement in the Soudan.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—THE HANGING GALE—SUB-SECTION A, SECTION 1.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a Report of the proceedings under the Arrears Act, before the Land Commission, in the "Freeman's Journal" of 28th October, where—

> "In the case of John Johnson, tenant, General Irwin, landlord, Mr. M'Gough mentioned that half a year's rent was paid on the 3rd May 1882, which, he supposed, the tenant would be entitled to take credit for under the Arrears Act.
>
> "Mr. Litton said he (Mr. M'Gough) would have to exercise his own discretion in that case, as the matter might be a subject for argument. If he found on investigation that he had lodged too little by taking credit for payment in May, and the investigation took place after the 30th November, the tenant would be left out in the cold. This was another of the shortcomings of the Act.
>
> "Mr. Vernon said this was a very great danger for the tenants to run. If they should be under the impression that they had satisfied the year's rent, and it should turn out at the investigation to be held after the 30th November that they had not legally done so, they would be out of court altogether;"

and, whether it is the fact that where the tenant claims he is entitled, in fulfilment of sub-section (a), section 1, to have rent paid in 1881 set to that year, and the landlord maintains that owing to the existence of a hanging gale no rent had at the time of payment become due for 1881, it will depend on the establishment or otherwise of the contention as to the hanging gale, whether sub-section (a), section 1, has been satisfied or not; and therefore, as this is a matter for the Court alone to decide, and appeals will lie first to the Head Commission and then to the Court of Appeal, so that a decision cannot be given before 30th November, he will say if he intends taking any steps so as to enable tenants, where a hanging gale which they dispute has been subsequently established, to amend or supplement their payments for 1881 after November 30th?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have no reason to doubt that the report mentioned in the Question is substantially accurate. It is undoubtedly true that in contentious cases the Court will have to decide whether there is a hanging gale or not; and, consequently, whether the conditions of Sub-section A, Section 1, of the Arrears of Rent Act have been complied with. To enable this decision to be arrived at as soon as possible, the Government, at the recommendation of the Land Commission, has sanctioned the appointment of a large additional number of investigators, amounting to 90 in all, by whose exertions it is hoped that a great many cases may be settled before the 30th of November; and the belief is entertained that provision may be made for enabling tenants in cases of doubt to lodge money provisionally in Court to abide the ultimate decision. A suggestion to this effect has been made; but the views of the Land Commission with reference to it have not yet been ascertained. I can hardly doubt I shall have those views by Monday.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether a lodgment of money in the Land Commission Court, as suggested by the Question of my hon. Friend, will protect the tenants from proceedings, in either the Superior Courts or the County Courts—proceedings in ejectment or for the recovery of rent? Perhaps I may be permitted to add, in explanation, that the proceedings suggested by the right hon. Gentleman are entirely proceedings in the Land Commission Court; but an entirely different set of proceedings may be set in motion by the action of the landlords in taking proceedings against the tenants in any of the other Courts of the country either in ejectment or for recovery of rent. Therefore, I desire to know whether the action suggested by the right hon. Gentleman in the lodgment of money by the tenant in the Land Commission Court is sufficient to cover the demand of the landlord in any case, no matter what the ultimate decision may be as regards the hanging gale?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. My belief is that the lodgment will not in itself stay proceedings; but the Court in which proceedings are taken has jurisdiction to do so, and I can hardly doubt that under such circumstances it will exercise that power favourably to the tenant.

MR. PARNELL: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether, in the event of a lodgment being made and the proceedings stayed, as predicted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, a tenant would be safe from the costs of the suit?

MR. LEWIS: Before the right hon. and learned Gentleman answers the Question——[“Order!”]

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I shall answer one Question at a time. The cost of a suit would, generally speaking, very much depend upon whether the tenant was right or wrong. If the tenant proved to be right, the cost of the suit would be paid by the other side; if, on the other hand, he should fail, the costs would be given against him; but where the matter is doubtful, and it can hardly be ascertained which party is right or wrong, the general practice is for the Court to exercise its discretion and not to give costs to either party.

MR. LEWIS inquired what money the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland referred to as to be lodged in Court?

MR. TREVELYAN: The money I referred to was the money that is to satisfy the rent for the year, which would govern the question whether the tenant's claim came within the scope of the Act or not.

MR. LEWIS: Does the right hon. Gentleman refer to the hanging gale?

MR. TREVELYAN: The matter refers to the hanging gale. The question which is now creating anxiety among the tenants is the question whether or not on the 30th of November they may lodge sufficient money to satisfy the conditions of the Act; and the desire of the Government, and I conclude the object of the Land Commission, would be to secure that the tenant who *bonâ fide* desires to lodge the rent for this critical year, shall come within the benefits of the Act.

MR. LEWIS: Really, I must call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman again to this matter. The right hon. Gentleman stated just now that the Government were in communication with the Land Commissioners to make arrangements that the tenant, upon depositing money in Court, shall have certain rights preserved to him. Reference was made to the effect which the hanging gale *plus* the year's rent would have.

MR. TREVELYAN: The question is, for instance, whether money that is paid in May, 1882, will go to pay the rent for 1881, in the case of an estate where there is a hanging gale of a certain date, in order that the tenant may not be ultimately refused the benefits of the Act. It is hoped that the Commissioners will adopt rules by which he will be enabled to lodge in Court the amount of money which will make him quite secure. I think I have stated the matter clearly.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE —INCOME TAX ON FOREIGN INVESTMENTS.

MR. MAC IVER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been called to a recently published statement of Mr. Giffen's (Import and Export Statistics, page 43, being a Paper read before the Statistical Society), that the income derived by persons in this Country from foreign investments is not less than seventy-five million pounds annually; whether any considerable portion of this escapes payment of Income Tax, and if any approximate information can be given with regard to the actual figures; and, whether, on the assumption that there is a large deficiency in respect of the Income Tax, which ought in fairness to be payable upon incomes derived from foreign investments, he can see his way to suggest measures for removing that unfair share of the burden of taxation which at present falls, directly and indirectly, upon the industries of this Country?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, the hon. Member is perfectly correct in reference to Mr. Giffen's statement. An estimate proceeding from Mr. Giffen is entitled to as much weight and attention as any estimate could possibly be. The Board of Inland Revenue are not cognizant of the basis on which Mr. Giffen has formed his estimate, and they will be glad to welcome from him, or from any quarter, any information that can be supplied in elucidation of this matter. They believe there is a certain amount of evasion of payment of the Income Tax on foreign dividends, and they have under consideration certain proposals, which they think it would be advantageous to submit to Parliament, for the purpose of correcting that evasion; but they do not consider that the difference between the amount actually assessed on Foreign, Colonial, and Indian dividends—namely, £30,000,000 — and Mr. Giffen's estimate of £75,000,000 and upwards, is a true representation of the amount which escapes the payment of the tax. They take it at a lower figure than that.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the several charges upon which Arabi Pacha is to be tried were officially or unofficially, directly or indirectly, submitted to the Government before their promulgation; and, if so, whether they were approved by the Government or on its behalf?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have to say on behalf of the Prime Minister that Her Majesty's Government had no knowledge of the charges brought against Arabi Pasha until they received from Sir Edward Malet the telegram giving a summary of them, which I have already read in the House. No opinion whatever has been expressed with regard to them.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that Arabi Pasha was a prisoner of war of the English Forces in Egypt, and was transferred by our Military authorities to the Khedival authority, the Government will object to the infliction of any pain or penalty upon Arabi Pacha unless the same shall be the result of a proper trial?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already stated the circumstances under which Arabi Pasha was captured. We have insisted on conditions intended to secure a fair trial.

MR. MOLLOY said, that in consequence of the incomplete and unsatisfactory reply he had received, he would repeat the Question on Monday.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am not aware that I have failed to answer any part of the Question. Without going into the accuracy of the terms used in its preamble, which I thought was unnecessary and should be inclined to dispute, I answered that I have already stated the circumstances of the surrender, and that we have taken steps and insisted on conditions calculated to secure a proper and fair trial.

MR. MOLLOY: In the event of his not getting a fair trial, what then?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We have insisted upon a fair trial. The other Question is wholly hypothetical.

MR. GLADSTONE: In addition to the answer of my hon. Friend near me, I wish to state in the most explicit terms that the Question of the hon. Member invites us to assume that the Egyptian Government, from which we have no reason to withdraw our confidence, will be cognizant of, and use its authority for, improper purposes. We do not believe any such thing is likely, and we will not consent to threaten a Government, which is a friendly Government, and entitled to our confidence.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask whether, if the Egyptian

Government is going to try Arabi Pasha under a Code or Law which is not known to Egypt or to any civilized community, it has not forfeited the confidence of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Egyptian Government is performing no act within our knowledge which tends to lead us to withdraw our confidence from it.

MR. O'DONNELL: If the Egyptian Court Martial sentences Arabi to death, will British soldiers be asked to supply the gallows' guard?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am astonished, I must say, notwithstanding the licence which prevails in that quarter, and which the hon. Member has enlarged, that he should put such a Question to me. Arabi is undergoing a trial under a Code of rules which we trust, and believe, will secure him justice. [*Loud Cries of* "No!" *from below the Gangway on the Opposition side.*] I must say, Sir, that the licence assumed in that quarter of the House is a very remarkable licence, and does not constitute an improvement in our course of procedure. I should presume, in this case, as in every other case of judicial investigation, that the sentence which may be pronounced on the prisoner of condemnation or acquittal, is likely to depend upon what may or may not be proved against him.

POST OFFICE—OCEANIC MAIL CONTRACTS.

MR. BAXTER asked the Postmaster General, If in making new contracts for the conveyance of Oceanic Mails he will consider the desirability of selecting for the service the fastest steamers of various Companies, instead of as has heretofore been the practice entering into engagements with one or more Companies which permit them to send the Mails by boats much slower than others in the same trade?

MR. FAWCETT: I can assure my right hon. Friend that the desirability of obtaining the quickest possible conveyance of the mails will be carefully borne in mind in entering into any new contracts. It is, however, well to observe that, besides speed, it is very important to secure as much regularity as possible both in the arrival and departure of mails; and, therefore, the efficiency of a service is not so much to be estimated by the exceptionally fast voyages vessels on a particular line may make, as by the average of speed and regularity combined.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS—A COMMISSION.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Prime Minister, Whether there was any truth in a statement made in an evening paper that Her Majesty's Government were considering the propriety of issuing a Commission to inquire into the condition of the crofters in Scotland?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no such question at present under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

CRIME (IRELAND)—REPORTED MURDER OF A CATHOLIC CLERGYMAN.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received any information with regard to the reported murder of a Catholic clergyman in Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: No, Sir, I have not.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [NINETEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February], as amended,

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. O'SHEA said, that hon. Members from Ireland had, in his opinion, been very unjustly assailed for voting lately with the Government on the question of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); but in his (Mr. O'Shea's) opinion, they had acted quite rightly in doing so, though it had been denounced in some quarters as a Government revelling in coercion. He would ask hon. Members to contrast the state of affairs which existed at the time this Resolution was first brought forward, when Ireland was still in the "ursine embrace" of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) with what it was now under the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan), when every complaint was investigated with care, and for every grievance that was proved some means of redress were adopted. The fears of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that, under the new Coercion Act, all Constitutional action would cease, and that the country would be thrown into the hands of the secret societies had proved groundless. He considered the proposals of the Government both wise and prudent; and in an issue which, he thought, virtually amounted to one of Confidence or No Confidence in the Government, the moderation of the Government in the execution of a law which might have been used, which was expected to have been used, for the purpose of destroying an opposing Party, was a factor worthy of consideration by the Irish Members. He gave all due praise to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, but held that it was high time for the Lord Lieutenant to raise the proclamation of at least some districts of the country. The question, however, that the Irish Members had to consider was, whether the resort to coercion was an adequate reason for an adverse Vote on the present occasion. He wondered whether hon. Members who intended to vote against the Government had studied the letter written to *The Times* by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). Had anything more cynical ever been meted out to hon. Members? The noble Lord requested the votes of the Irish Members for the Amendment, apparently for no particular reason, but as a personal favour. The noble Lord, whether he badgered the Prime Minister, or chevyed and egged on his own Leader, was always a person of consideration. He was fluent almost to eloquence, bold almost to rashness, and aggressive almost to audacity; he possessed comparative youth, and, having also other advantages, and being not too tightly bound by the ties of political Parties, had, no doubt, arrived within a measurable distance of a seat in some Cabinet of the future; but whether as Tory or Liberal he (Mr. O'Shea) would not profess to say. It might safely be said, in words once applied to another considerable statesman, "We are all proud of him." Such was one side of the shield. Turn to the other, and what did they find? "Brass, Sir; sounding brass." No orator could with more ingenuity pervert the meaning of an opponent, or disfigure his reputation. His language was sometimes as reprehensible as that of the army which, under his great ancestor, swore terribly in Flanders. The noble Lord had been endeavouring to enlist Irish recruits to vote against the Resolution, and what did he whisper to them? [An hon. MEMBER: Kilmainham Treaty.] Yes; the noble Lord, when he asked Irish Members to vote against the Government, whispered, "Kilmainham;" but what after all was that Treaty, as it was called? What was it but a collection of certain ascertained facts, the submission of those facts to a proper quarter, the candid examination of those facts by the Government, and their application, courageously and with foresight, to the circumstances of the case; and that candour, courage, and foresight met with an ample reward in the passage of the Arrears Bill. The noble Lord had whispered to the Irish Representatives that the hon. Member for the City of Cork was a deep politician. Well, he (Mr. O'Shea) could have told them that. The noble Lord had also said that he had always had a certain amount of admiration for Irish Obstruction. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I never said anything of the kind.] Well, at any rate, the noble Lord, with his usual cleverness, had given everyone the idea that he had some sympathy with it; but Irish Obstruction was a corpse, and no one knew better than the hon. Member for the City of Cork that by last June, it was as dead as Julius Cæsar. When the question was one whether Irish Members should vote for or against Government, he did not think the Irish Members would be attracted by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock's ribbons, or enlisted by his bad shilling. In conclusion, he could only say that the Prime Minister had declared that these Rules were necessary in order to carry out certain reforms. Hon. Members were well aware that reforms in the past had not applied merely to England and Scotland; and all who heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman on Wednesday afternoon, would agree that, in the reforms shadowed forth, Ireland was not to be forgotten. Even if that speech had not been delivered, the Minister who disestablished the Irish Church and carried the Land Act would not shrink from further reform in Ireland. There were certain burning questions connected with the Land Act. Those the Premier had promised to take up. If Irish Members turned him out of power, from whom would they expect to get the desired reforms? Not from the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, nor from the present Leader of the Opposition. Under these circumstances, he (Mr. O'Shea) hoped that Irish Representatives would do nothing which would weaken the power of the Prime Minister to pass reforms that they were all looking for in Ireland, and which must be passed, if peace and contentment were to reign in that country.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Sir, the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea), that the House has just heard, is not an argument either for or against the *clôture,* but a friendly appeal to his countrymen to vote for the Government. No one has a higher regard for the good intentions of the hon. Gentleman than I have; but it is to be hoped they will not be successful on this occasion. I do something more than hope; indeed, I feel sure they will not. Memories of coercion have not yet died out in this House nor in the country, and it will require more cogent reasons than have yet been adduced to induce the sufferers from coercion to vote for the coercionists. The ropes and irons of the Party stage are too clearly seen through my hon. Friend's appeal. It is a supplement to that of the Prime Minister the other day; but both supplement and original, I am confident, will fail in their purpose. The 1st Rule has now been under consideration for 17 nights. I am not foolish enough to fancy that I can find any fresh arguments in a field of debate that has been so well trodden by so many experienced speakers. But, as I am one of that section of Members that the Rule was designed to put to silence, I wish to record my reasons for resisting it. We want a full and free, but exact and temperate, investigation of all questions by which the different angles and the diversified tints in this political kaleidoscope will be fairly presented. The work of Parliament has been increased, and is increasing. The character of the work and the composition of the House have both changed. These changes necessitate a revision of the Rules. We recognize this as clearly as the Government do, and are as desirous as they are for rubbing off the rust and adapting our forms to the ever-shifting conditions of the country and the times. But we seek to change for the better. It is to be feared the Government are about to change for the worse. Complaints have been made of the prolixity and irrelevance of much of the speaking that takes place. We are told in effect, if not in words, that the faculty of Parliament has run to talk, and that a good deal of the talk has degenerated into drivel. Desire is expressed for greater condensation and clearness. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished. But I suspect we are all offenders in that respect—some of us unconscious offenders. We mistake bulk for strength. We draw out the thread of our verbosity finer than the staple of our arguments. If the Government could secure—either by Rule, by precept, or, better still, by example—more simplicity in statement, greater compression of argument, and perspicuity of language, they would confer a blessing, not only on the House, but upon the nation. But will their plan do this? They can call for brevity, but will it come when they do call? The *clôture* will impede the general action. Of that there can be no doubt. But if it is to act impartially, it will have to be imposed on individuals as well as on the

House. If it be not so imposed, some speakers—Ministers, for example—will get a profusion of the time, and others will get none. Yet you cannot compel different minds to limit their treatment of the same subject to a Procrustean standard of a given number of minutes or hours. Some speakers are ornate and elaborate, others sententious and brief, others didactic, and others declamatory; yet all may be equally effective, and equally natural. Such a Rule would not be equitably inforced. It would be relaxed for Members possessing other advantages. Ministers would be allowed to transgress it with impunity, and favourites with the House would be indulged. But the habit of relaxation once admitted, the exceptional practice will be frequently resorted to, and used by majorities to serve Party ends; while obscure or obnoxious Members, defending unpopular but useful causes, will have it inforced against them with literal exactitude. A general *clôture*, therefore, will act unequally, and an individual *clôture* will act unfairly. The purpose of the Rule is to secure greater speed in legislation. The delay that now occurs is a weariness of the flesh—of Ministerial flesh especially. I am not sure whether this artificial craving for legislation is a healthy sign. We are being legislated out of our liberty. The whole population is being dragooned and driven out of all sense of self-respect and self-reliance. That laws have profoundly affected national character no one denies. I am willing to admit, too, that many of the measures the Government have in contemplation are necessary, and that some of them are urgent. But they are not everything—

> "How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> The part which Laws or Kings can cause or
> cure."

The difference between a physician and a quack is this—a physician knows and admits that his powers are limited. He can aid Nature. He can help her to remove obstruction, and clear away abnormal growths. But he cannot re-create a broken constitution, or make a perforated lung do the work of a sound one. But a quack with his pills, and his plasters, and his potions, will undertake to cure all the ills that flesh is heir to. In like manner, the genuine reformer knows that the living law is the thought of the people, and that all Parliament can do is to fit that thought to the life of the nation. Political empirics, on the other hand, will engage to cut out a social cancer by the ballot-box. With them a Bill is a Bill, although there is nothing in it. It is not so much speed in legislation that is wanted as skill. It is not quantity, but quality that is required. The highest interests of the State would often be better served by the wise and liberal administration of old laws than by the high pressure production of new and imperfect ones. A great part of the time of this House is spent in correcting previous mistakes. Like tilers, when mending one hole, legislators usually make another. The Government hold in one hand a batch of Bills, and in the other a bundle of fetters. Give us these gags, they say, and we will give you these Bills. I would rather want the Bills than purchase them at such a price. Obstruction or no Obstruction, necessary legislation will come in due time if people want it. Free speech is more precious than all the measures in the Ministerial portfolio. Error of opinion may be tolerated as long as there is left the right to combat it. Discussion is a bulwark against oppression, and the sheet anchor of liberty. Obstruction is of two kinds—purposeless and patriotic. The first is conceived in mischief, sustained by faction, and by whomsoever practised is indefensible. Futile and tautological talk, whether originated in malice, in vanity, or in ignorance, designed to obstruct necessary Public Business, is intolerable. But patriotic Obstruction is the protest of the minority against the arrogance of Office and the intolerance of power. It is often useful, and sometimes essential. It is the reserve power—the last Parliamentary defence against the encroachments of Ministers or majorities. If the House parts with it, they part with a weapon that has secured its liberties in the past, and may be required to defend them in the future. The Prime Minister said, in introducing the Resolutions, and he has repeated the remark often since, that Obstruction in an aggravated form first showed itself last Session. I wish to speak with all deference of any statement respecting the Business of the House made by one with such varied and extensive knowledge; still I venture to contest the historical accuracy of that assertion. The existence of Obstruction as a Parliamentary practice must not be reckoned by Sessions, or decades, or generations, but by centuries. It is certainly older than the Reformation. Henry VIII. pleaded its existence in his day as a reason why certain changes promised to the Pope had not been made. He explained that unfettered discussion was the inalienable right of the British Parliament, which neither Crown nor Chancellor could restrain. Ministers might copy with advantage so unpromising an exemplar as the illiberal Tudor King. Queen Elizabeth, in whose Reign the foundation of our present Parliamentary government was laid, and in in which some of the Rules they were now about to destroy were adopted, chided a Speaker of the House with having spent a whole Session in mere talk. But let me cite a later and more striking instance. After the Stuart Rising in 1715, the House of Commons, by an unwarrantable stretch of authority, lengthened its life from three years to seven. The Bill for doing this was strenuously opposed by some of the Peers. In the quaint language of the historian of the day, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Nottingham, Lord Trevor, Lord Aylesford, and other Noblemen, made repeated Motions for Adjournment, and numerous and long speeches, with a view of putting off the passage of the Bill to another Session. Here we have, as far gone as 167 years ago, Obstruction of the exact character complained of—talking to produce delay in the hope that delay would insure defeat. During the French War the Whigs persistently and wilfully obstructed the Government of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Fox, who will be accepted as an authority on this side at least, boasted that, for over a period of 20 years, he never entered the House without speaking once and sometimes six times in a sitting. Similar instances could be multiplied indefinitely. But I put these cases rapidly before you to show that Obstruction was coeval with the existence of Parliament. It is incidental to, and an invariable accompaniment of, government by discussion. It has been resorted in times very different from the present, by all Parties, and by men of the greatest eminence in the State. It is not, as the Prime Minister contended, a recent Irish invention. The work of last Session has been emphasized. But, according to the Government's own showing, that was a hard and exception Session. And hard and exceptional cases make bad laws. Last Session one Bill—the hateful and humiliating Bill under whose arbitrary powers 1,000 men were imprisoned without trial, without accusation, and without opportunity of defence or explanation—was obstructed. Yes, obstructed; justifiably obstructed! Looking back upon that measure, the dishonouring memories of which will be burnt into the reputation of its authors, the surprise is that it was not met with much more desperate resistance than mere Parliamentary Obstruction. If 1,000 men had been imprisoned in Turkey, or Austria, or Italy, we would have had unctuous appeals to the sacred right of insurrection, and covert incentives to rebellion, from our Liberal coercionists. If ever there was a measure which warranted resort to every form of resistance that the House supplied to defeat it, it was that infamous Coercion Bill—a Bill, too, that the Government, six months after its passage, had to admit was a hideous failure. But while we hear a good deal of the Obstruction of last Session, we hear little of the Obstruction of last Parliament. The Obstruction of last Parliament was very different from the Obstruction of last Session. Last Session there was Obstruction to one measure; but last Parliament there was Obstruction to all measures. It was not a specific policy that was obstructed, but the entire administrative and legislative action of the Government of the day. Liberals had reasoned themselves into the belief that the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield was not only injurious, but that it was immoral. They regarded him as an international mischief-maker, who, in the plentitude of his power, went roving round the world in search of opportunities for aggression and occasions for display. They believed it to be their duty, not only to their country, but to their consciences, to resist him. The Prime Minister declared, on a well-known occasion, that the set purpose of his life was to counter-work his rival's designs; and that to such end he laboured day by day and hour by hour. The opposition to his domestic policy was as determined, although less displayed. The Government Bills were described as either bad or useless. If bad, they ought not to pass; if useless, they need not pass. A barricade was thus drawn across the Parliamentary passage, and little allowed to pass, except necessary measures, and these only after exhausting rebuffs. The Irish Members were blamed. Yes, they got the blame, but others got the benefit. They pulled the chestnuts out of the fire. Others ate them. Some of the Irish Members who were in the last Parliament, might, if they were so minded, a tale unfold that would disturb the equanimity of their cantankerous critics. If the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) would recount a few passages from his Parliamentary autobiography, they would be more interesting and instructive. My hon. Friend may probably remember a summer Wednesday, three years ago, when he was invited to give, by one of those processes in which he is an adept, the quietus to a Bankruptcy Bill. How he acceded to the request and fulfilled it! This was set down to Irish Obstruction. The finger points on the dial were Irish truly; but the mechanism that moved them was of another nationality. The Bill was defeated, and no like measure had since reached so advanced a stage. Now mark the Nemesis. Bankruptcy is one of the questions that the Government are specially anxious to legislate upon, and Grand Committees are one of their remedies for Parliamentary congestion. Here was a Bankruptcy Bill drawn by Sir John Holker and Lord Cairns—two men who, whatever may be said of them as politicians, are of uncontested authority as lawyers—and the late Ministry, with a view of hastening its passage, proposed to try experimentally the scheme of Grand Committees that the Government are now initiating. Yet the Bill and the project for the Grand Committees were defeated at the instance and suggestion of Liberal Clôturists, who are now clamouring for both. When I listen to the daily diatribes against Irish Obstructives; when I hear them described as men beyond the pale of decent politics, and recall how often Obstruction has been made a ladder upon which aspiring partizans have climbed to Office, any lingering respect I ever had for Party ethics expires. It is needless to speculate on the arrival of America political practices. We have them already in operation amongst us. The remedy is said to be a Radical one. But it is radically wrong. It strikes at the system, and not at the offenders. It punishes the whole, for the peccadilloes of a part. A man is talkative and troublesome; therefore they punish his neighbour, who is quiet and silent. That is the logic of the Government Resolution. If a man voluntarily enters a society, he must work within its rules. It is folly for anyone to join a body they intend to defy. If any man intentionally and deliberately breaks the rules, let them silence him, suspend him, or expel him. Do any, do all of these thing, if the circumstances warrant. But because one man, or a section of men, are guilty of offences, it is neither wise nor fair to impose galling restrictions upon those who fight fairly within the lists. Why is the majority to close a debate, and when is it to do so? Why, because the arguments of the Opposition are too strong to be answered. When? When the majority want to go to bed, or to dinner, or to some more agreeable occupation. Then they will close it. Ministers are taking powers not merely to regulate, but to annihilate discussion—not to curtail debate, but to strangle it. They would reduce the right of the minority to a nullity. If a discussion could be closed at any time the majority wished, it could be closed after two speeches had been delivered as easily as after ten. What is to prevent them thus closing it? Nothing, save their weak sense of justice towards troublesome opponents. And the sense of justice in an angry, impatient, and irritated majority, whether Liberal or Conservative, would be weak indeed. But it is said they will not use their power tyrannically. Will not they? I, for one, will not trust them. It is not good for their health—their mental or moral health—to have such powers. The bare possession of such will tempt them into excesses. Men do, as a body, things that, as individuals, they would shrink from and feel ashamed of. They have a convenient way of throwing the responsibility upon a Party when that responsibility is inconvenient. They may speak fair, and, for the moment, mean fair; but when their passions are roused, their tempers ruffled, and their interests assailed—when the honours and emoluments of Office are in the balance—it would be dangerous to trust the best intentioned majority. Englishmen, whatever other differences divide them, are proud of their Parliament. It is bound by a thousand bands to their interests and affections. Through the darkening centuries it has been a temple of law and liberty, of eloquence and history. In it the rights and dignities of the people have victoriously struggled against the absolute powers and omnipotence of any one man. Here we have torn in tatters, we have trampled underfoot the humiliating theory of an Autocracy, while it had found a lodgment and taken root in nearly every other country of Europe. We are now about to change its character—to degrade it from a deliberative Assembly into a registry office, where the commands of the Caucuses, and the fulminations of the Party Press, may be chronicled. The doctrine of the advocates of the *clôture*, when stripped of all surplusage, is this. They argue that, in recent years, the position of public affairs has greatly altered. Information that was once the exclusive possession of a favoured few is now the common property of all. News of events that transpire at the other side of the Globe and in our most distant Dependencies is flashed here in a few hours. The world has become a vast whispering gallery. Reports of the Business transacted in this House reach Cromarty and Cornwall, Dover and Donegal, almost as soon as they do the City. This rapidity of communication, and this multiplication of the means of publicity, have quickened public life and intensified discussion. Opinion, as a consequence, ripens more rapidly. The sentiments prevailing this year may not be entertained next. They wish to bring Parliament into closer contact with the constituencies. They would have it reflect not merely the convictions, but the caprices of the House. They would make it as sensitive to every passing breeze as the leaves of the aspen. That is their argument. I hope I have stated it fairly. But public opinion is a variable and fluctuating force. What is public opinion in one district is not public opinion in another. And which opinion is to guide us? Is it to be the public opinion of the smug and cowardly respectability of Islington or Clapham, or of the Lothians, or the public opinion of the pinched and perishing peasantry of the West of Ireland? Is it to be the opinion of the political lotus-eaters, who doze away their days in sleepy Pall Mall Clubs, or the opinion of the militant Democracy in the North of England? Which—the opinion of "society," as they call it, or of the "masses"—is to rule? In the vocabulary of genuine Democracy the people means not a majority, but the entire body of the citizens. It means not merely the landless, but the landed—not only the leisured, but the labouring classes. How are their opinions to be reached, and where can they find utterance? How—but by the verdict of the constituent body, solemnly and deliberately given; and where—but in this Assembly? If the machinery is faulty, mend it. If the electorate is too contracted, widen it. But, with all its defects, this House is the only place where the measured views of all classes and creeds, of all Parties and interests, find legitimate expression. If Parliament drifts out of harmony with the electorate, dissolve it. Let elections be more frequent if you like; but, while a Parliament lasts, it is the organized expression of popular will; and to supersede it or override it by the desultory decisions of the platform, the club, or the market place, is contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the law. Legislation is a matter of reason and judgment. But how can there be reason, where determination precedes discussion; when, as Mr. Burke worded it, one set of men deliberates, and another set decides? If we are merely to vote as we are told —which is the motto of the Caucus—why are we sent here? It is a great waste of power, of health, of time, and of temper. Instead of 600, 60, or, indeed, 6 would suffice. All that is wanted is a body of experts to whom the decisions taken in the different constituencies might be sent. They might be tabulated, and formulated, and summarized—handed first to a draftsman to embody in Bills, and then to an Executive to put in operation. The Prime Minister desires to lessen the amount of speaking. This is an easy plan of doing it. The work of legislation might be greatly simplified by such a course of procedure. Government shrinks from such a result; but it is the logical, inevitable, and irresistible outcome of their course of action. They may shut their eyes to it as they like; but it is to that end we are drifting steadily. Public opinion, if genuine and spontaneously expressed, I will defer to, although differing from it; but public opinion, when it is manufactured, I disregard. I say "manufactured," for it is manufactured—cast, as they cast railway chairs, according to pattern. We are all familiar with the process. We know how resolutions are drawn by the head centre and sent to the branches for adoption—how a dozen or a score of self-appointed and irresponsible officials, with little discussion and less knowledge, adopt them, and re-transmit them in Petitions to Parliament or Memorials to Ministers. The Prime Minister has received 180 of these deceptive documents in support of the *clôture*. They are paraded as the decisions of the constituencies; but the constituencies knew nothing either of the meetings, the men who called them, or the measures their support was pledged to. We have heard of an organized hypocrisy; but this certainly is an organized imposition. A further argument for the proposed change is the alteration that has come over another department of public life. The floor of the House of Commons, in the estimation of some, has ceased to be the exclusive, or even the most effective, platform from which to address the nation. In the great Council of the State, which holds its debates in the columns of the Press, public questions are sifted and settled; and all that this Assembly is required to do, or, indeed, can do, is to give force and form to the decisions thus arrived at. Now, I have no wish to disparage the Press, nor undervalue its influence; but I object to assign to it attributes it does not aspire to, or power it does not possess. The Press is, primarily, a record in which is outlined the salient features of our restless, diffuse, and fragmentary life. It is a panorama on which are photographed the swiftly moving incidents of a busy existence. It is an expositor through whose agency confused and complicated reports are sifted, facts discovered, and then disseminated. It is, too, an educator whose influence reaches through all the ramifications of society—from the palace to the prison. But it is vested with no representative function, and only in a limited degree can it be called an organ of public opinion. Newspapers express, often in a discursive and cursory way, the opinion of their conductors; but it is gross exaggeration to assume that they express the opinion of the public. Men derive from newspapers the material for discussion; but it is ignorance on the part of politicians, and vanity on the part of journalists, to pretend that the opinion of the newspapers and the opinion of the public are always synonymous. More than once during these debates, what is termed the unbusinesslike character of the proceedings has been referred to, and a hope has been expressed that the arrangements of the House should be assimilated to those of a Board of Directors. I have little respect for, and no sympathy with, such suggested perversion. To contemplate the lowering to the level of a mercantile Company an historical Assembly which has been the cradle of the liberties of modern Europe, and the political and legislative sanctuary of a great and free people, proves how the spirit and faith of a country, through a long course of prosperity and a sordid worship of success, can become unaspiring and materialistic; how the motives of nationality and patriotism, of reverence and courtesy, lose their force, and cease to be springs of action and guides of life. Never, I trust, will the British House of Commons degenerate into a shop or a counting-house; nor legislation, which, in its loftiest purposes, is the most solemn duty that man can discharge for his fellow-men; which builds up the character and influences the destinies of a nation; which secures the rights, the liberties, and the property of the people, become a trade. We may cut away a mouldering branch from our Parliamentary system; but we should remember that the trophies of the past are essential to elucidate and confirm the wisdom of the present. Idolatry of the immediate dwarfs and deforms national character. Let us recast our Rules, brush the dust off them, adapt them to modern requirements, but preserve the spirit and continuity of our proudly treasured historical traditions. I would not touch one of our old customs that does not stand in the way of necessary and urgent change. A breath blows the glory of ages away. The quaint call of "Who goes home?" when the House is up—what a vista of social vicissitude it summons to the memory! The grating on the doorway —what stalwart conflicts between the Representative and the Regal power it recalls! Some of the Regulations we are now asked to rescind have historical significance which kindle generous emotions when we reflect on the efforts made to win them. Change we must have, but that now sought is excessive and bewildering. It involves momentous innovations amounting to a revolution of Parliamentary Procedure, and is contrary to the temper and inimical to the interests of the Legislature.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, that he felt some diffidence in rising to speak, for he thought the House could scarcely have recovered from the effects of the address which had just been delivered by his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen). While he thoroughly agreed with many of the noble sentiments which his hon. Friend had so eloquently addressed to the House, he found a difficulty in seeing the immediate connection they had with the question before them. There had been some reference to history, and a great deal of abuse of the Liberal Party in the last Parliament; but these were not matters which affected that issue. The speech of his hon. Friend assumed the question which was really to be discussed. His hon. Friend showed the importance of freedom of speech, and denounced interference with it; but he (Mr. Charles Russell) failed to see how his hon. Friend had shown that the Resolution was intrinsically wrong, or that the probable operation of it would be to interfere with the freedom of speech in any real sense. As an Irish Liberal Member, the third who had spoken, he desired particularly to explain his views upon this question, because he believed many of his hon. Friends opposite of the Irish Party intended to take a different course to his on this subject to-night. Well he (Mr. Charles Russell) would say, without affectation, that he desired to act, as far as in his judgment he thought right, in unison with those hon. Gentlemen. He recognized their efforts, and he wished, as far as possible, consistently with his sense of duty, to act with them. He therefore regretted that, after a fair and impartial consideration of the subject, he felt himself obliged to separate from them on this occasion. The House had already affirmed the Resolution, by voting against the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and it was, therefore, idle to argue it at length. To his mind, there was nothing unjust or contrary to good sense or to reason in the proposal contained in this Resolution. If he believed that the Resolution involved, in any real sense, a curtailment of fair debate, he should certainly vote against it; but his conviction was that it would have the opposite effect. With reference to the Resolution, it must be obvious to all that the question before them had already been decided in one form or another. There, he maintained, was an inherent right in every deliberative Assembly to determine when a subject had been sufficiently discussed; and there was nothing unreasonable in a proposal that the House of Commons should exercise that power when, in the opinion of the Speaker, there had been adequate debate, and that it was the general sense of the House that a division should be taken without further delay. In former times a sort of informal but very effective form of *clôture* had been put into force in that House, when a subject had been deemed to have been sufficiently discussed, by means of a turbulent and disorderly expression of opinion, and a refusal to hear any more speeches. What was that but the surrender of the minority to the expressed wish of the majority. He (Mr. Charles Russell) said that the *clôture* had existed in some shape or other in every deliberative Assembly, just as Obstruction had existed in some shape or form. But the real ground of opposition to this power of *clôture* was because of the use which it was predicted would be made of it; and it had been said by Irish Members that it would act injuriously upon them, by curtailing their rights in the exercise of the duty which they owed to their country; but he maintained that such was not the case. What had been the experience of other countries on the point? He did not mean to dispute the proposition of the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) that it might be possible to point to more than one deliberative Assembly in which, in times of great excitement or under certain exceptional circumstances, the power of *clôture* had been abused; but, on the whole, the experience of foreign countries showed that endeavours to smother and check fair debate by an abuse of the power were of very rare occurrence. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had conjured up to themselves pictures of an infuriate and solid majority acting upon a partizan Speaker, and applying the *clôture* under those circumstances. What was the real protection against this? Were minorities left altogether unprotected where the *clôture* was in force? It must be remembered that all experience had shown that there was a power which was greater than the power of a Government, and which was greater than that of even Parliament itself, because it made and unmade Governments and made and reconstituted Parliaments. It was that of the healthy, vigorous, and living force of public opinion, which would sweep away any Government which ventured to abuse the power of *clôture* by endeavouring to put down freedom of speech. He, therefore, thought that the fears which hon. Members opposite expressed on this subject were greatly and grossly exaggerated. Exaggeration on this subject, however, had not been confined to one side of the House. There was great exaggeration in the view that was put forward by some hon. Members near him that the *clôture* would save an enormous consumption of time. That it would save considerable time he hoped; but there was no warrant for supposing that it would effect the great change that some hon. Members appeared to anticipate it would. And here he would remark that the real relief to the Business of the House was to be found, not so much by alteration of the Procedure in that Chamber, but in the redistribution of the power of the House, such as would suit the circumstances in which they now found themselves. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) in his able speech, had said that as regarded Irish Business, at least, the real relief to the Business of that House would be found in the re-establishment of an Irish Parliament. For his own part, he (Mr. Charles Russell) could not but think that this question of Home Rule for Ireland was fast ripening, so that it must early come up for consideration before the House in some shape or other; but he would say to his hon. Friends that surely a practical politician would take the wise course before that event; and the course which the great body of the people of Ireland would desire would be to use the Parliamentary machinery they had to turn out the best legislation for the good of Ireland that they could get. In the course of the debate he had been speculating upon what would be the course of the future action of the great Conservative Party with reference to the *clôture*. They had been told that this Resolution was the application of the gag to Parliament, that it throttled freedom of speech, and that it wrested from its sacred resting-place the great palladium of the House of Commons. If that were so, it would be wrong to use such a power at any time. He should, however, like to know whether, when the Conservative Party again came into Office, they would propose a repeal of this Resolution? [Mr. RITCHIE: Yes.] The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets cried out "Yes;" but he (Mr. Charles Russell) strongly suspected that the Conservative Party, when they came into power, would accept the weapon which was placed in their hands. He believed it would only be another instance in which they would be found to oppose measure after measure which Liberal politicians felt the needs of the country required, but which when in Office they cheerfully accepted. But leaving that he would address himself to a branch of the question which, he confessed, had more attraction for him—he meant in reference to the Irish Members, and in what way it was suggested this *clôture* power would act injuriously upon them, in the exercise of those duties they owed to their constituencies and their country. He would examine calmly and quietly that question, and he thought that it would not be denied that the position of the Irish Members in the House of Commons was peculiar. They represented a cause which was, to a great extent, unpopular—they represented interests which, as his hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell) had said on the previous evening—and he was sorry to be compelled to confess the truth of the statement—the English people had to be educated in; and in these circumstances, and, above all, in the fact that they were not backed up by the force of the great public opinion of England, and had not access to the organs of public opinion in England, made the position of Irish Representatives peculiar, and should make the House of Commons careful how they dealt with them. Because he claimed for the Irish Members that they were entitled to special consideration, and that it would be a bad thing for the Government of the country—the most awful reproach that could be levelled at the efficiency of Parliament — to legislate for Ireland, if it could be truly said that the Irish Representatives were not allowed to address and develop their arguments fully to the ear of the House. In that consideration was the real protection and strength of the Irish minority in the House of Commons; because he could not doubt that considerations of that kind must be present to the minds of the great majority of the House when discussing these Resolutions. If an Irish Member was particularly anxious to show that the House of Commons was unequal to deal with the legislative needs of Ireland, and he (Mr. Charles Russell) were that Irish Member, there was nothing that he would rejoice at more than the existence and the application of the *clôture* when it could be said that it had been unfairly applied. In that consideration resided the real protection of the minority. But he (Mr. Charles Russell) would ask—What was the country that had suffered most from the inefficiency of Parliament, to devote sufficient time to the legislation necessary for the good of the people? Ireland unquestionably. They admitted that, within recent years, attention had been given in Parliament to great remedial measures for Ireland; but compare the length of time devoted to those measures with the measures of every kind that had been passed for the other portions of the United Kingdom. Why Ireland suffered most was clear—it was because the interest represented by the greatest number, backed up by the greatest public opinion, must have precedence. And what he particularly wished to accentuate in that debate was, that one of the vices of Irish legislation was that it was always too long delayed. Most of the Irish measures, if they had become law five or ten years before they were passed, would have done twice the amount of good for the people they had effected. For that reason he thought it would be for the good of Ireland that legislation in that House should be expedited. He said, therefore, that an Irish minority, anxious to have good legislation for their country, would benefit by the change. Let him call the attention of his hon. Friends opposite (the Irish Members) to the present position. Did they prefer to the Rules before the House, which proposed a regular, Constitutional, and well-formulated mode in which the power of *clôture* was to be used, the Rules of Urgency, which no man, reading and calmly considering, could do otherwise than denounce as unjust; and could such powers for the protection of minorities as they gave be compared to the protection which was given by the Chair and by the necessity of the vote which was specified in the Resolution? He had endeavoured to show that in the Resolution there was nothing unreasonable, and to show that there was no good ground for apprehension. He understood that the reason for opposing the Resolution which had been given by some hon. Members opposite was that by doing so they were striking a blow at the Government of Coercion. He was as much opposed to coercion as any of his hon. Friends opposite; and he would say he was as strenuous in his opposition to the coercive measures of the Government as any of his hon. Friends; but was he to understand that the blow which they were going to give to a coercive Government was to help a Government which was not coercive? He failed to see how Ireland could benefit by substituting a Conservative for a Liberal Government. What part of the policy of the present Government had received a more cordial support from the Opposition than the measures of coercion? Why, the Opposition had only one fault to find with the measures of coercion, and that was that they did not go far enough. They had made two complaints, indeed; first of all, before they were passed, that they were not sufficiently stringent; and, next, after they had been passed, that they were not put into action often enough. He would look a little further into the question, if only for a moment. The Irish Party wanted several measures, and wanted them early. They wanted the amendment of the Land Act, in order to give effect to the intentions of the Legislature; they wanted an amendment of the Arrears Bill; they wanted a change of the Grand Jury system, they wanted a measure of Local Government, they wanted an assimilation of the franchise and decentralization. Were they going to give a blow to the Government of Coercion in order to help a Government that was opposed to all these measures, and in order to put out a Government which had certainly, with no uncertain voice, spoken in regard to some of them at least, and promised to help them forward? Would the position of the Irish people be bettered by putting into power men who had uniformly resisted every measure which the people of Ireland desired? He would take leave to say that Ireland needed these measures. She needed them promptly; and he hoped and desired to say, in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, that he hoped that mistake, which had so often been made in past times, of delaying these measures until they were robbed of their efficacy by the delay would be avoided. He would touch, lastly, upon one measure, of which the Prime Minister had spoken, and spoken clearly —he meant the question of local self-government for Ireland. He (Mr. Charles Russell) regarded that as one of the most important measures that could be passed for Ireland; and he thought it would minimize the great evil of Ireland—the centralization of government. He hoped, too, it would bring home to the Irish people the thing which, in his judgment, above all other things they wanted, a sense of responsibility in the conduct and the management of their own affairs, which sense of responsibility could never exist until they had at least power of self-government. These were the grounds upon which he could not see the justification for the course his hon. Friends opposite were going to take, and he had thought it respectful to them and to the House to state them.

Mr. HOPWOOD supported the Resolution; and, as one who was often in a minority on certain questions, was convinced that the rights of small minorities were protected. While listening to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), he could not help reflecting upon what he must regard as cross-grained and twisted, as far as his hon. Friend's remarks dealt with his old Associates and Friends. If they were going to war, his hon. Friend opposed war; but under the late Government he was clamorous for war. If they were proposing any measure of reform, he fell foul of it, and received counsel from the other side. Was he going to obliterate the impress of his life, in order to cast taunts at his Brethren on that side of the House? It seemed to him (Mr. Hopwood) that his hon. Friend had entirely overshot the mark; and he (Mr. Hopwood) must be pardoned if he thought it was due to the fact of its having been composed by the aid of the "midnight oil," and with a view to elicit the cheers of the Opposition. To do that, and to write down passages consisting of maxims on the subject of who was a quack and who was a wise physician, and to repeat them in the House for the gratification of the opposing patriots, was not the mid-zenith of a career which he (Mr. Hopwood) should imagine for himself, but was one which his hon. Friend seemed to have achieved for himself. Of what use was it to tell them that Mr. Fox sometimes obstructed? Undoubtedly he did; and what harm was there in that sort of Obstruction? And who was there amongst the Liberal Party that objected to Obstruction of that kind, or who, if that were the sole matter to be cured, would call even for the present mild form of cure? It was a specious argument to employ; but it was easily seen through. The hon. Member for Newcastle had no objection to the *clôture*, if only it was to be employed for the silencing of an unpopular Member. There was nothing in the Rule that would be applied with excessive danger when the time came; and the hon. Member, who talked a great deal about the boasted liberties and ancient memories of the House, was really animated by secret exasperations and a hatred of the Party amid whose Representatives he sat. The hon. Member, however, need not have any apprehensions as to the operation of the Rule, for it was much more likely to be applied in the case of a Member who was unpopular, or who was the object of popular rancour, than in any other case, and it was most unlikely that he would ever find himself driven into silence by it. In his (Mr. Hopwood's) opinion, this mild Resolution, which, while it gave the initiative in closing debate to the Chair, left the decision to the majority, constituted the best and the wisest method, and that most consistent with the Forms of the House for meeting the great difficulty with which they had to deal. He would not further dwell upon the matter, but only express a hope that under its operation the hon. Member for Newcastle might long exercise his great oratorical powers, receiving the respectful attention of the House. At the same time, he could not help thinking that the speech the hon. Member had just delivered was based upon exaggeration, and entirely unworthy of the speaker.

Mr. DALY also thought the speech they had just listened to from the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) might pass for good bunkum; but it revealed a very poor idea of eloquence in the hon. and learned Gentleman who had delivered it. He (Mr. Daly) had always entertained Liberal opinions, and should find it very much against his grain to vote with the Tories on that occasion; but he wished it to be understood that the vote would be given less from any sympathy he had with the Tories than from antagonism to the Government that had introduced the *clôture*. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had spoken of the deterrent action of popular opinion being strongly called into play against any Minister who applied the *clôture* rashly; but the hon. and learned Member was surely aware that the *clôture* would be applied by the preponderating votes of hon. Members sitting behind the Treasury Benches—Members of the Whig Party, who had only been second to the Tories in their oppression of Ireland. Beyond that, past experience had shown the uselessness of Irish Members appealing to public opinion in England. He believed that if the Government had had the courage to carry out the Land Act in the form in which they had conceived it, instead of allowing it to be maimed and mutilated by Whig landlords in the House, they would have by that time nearly a clean sheet in Ireland, so far as regarded agrarian crime. He admitted that the Party with whom he acted had offered great provocation; but he believed that the historian of the future would be able to point out how the objects desired by hon. Members opposite could have been attained by some other way than by the introduction of the *clôture*. His opinion was that, if it was to be adopted, the initiative of the *clôture* ought to be thrown upon the Premier for the time being; for he believed that, if this system once came into operation, it would be almost impossible to find a Speaker possessing the same independence as the present respected occupant of the Chair. He thought that the *clôture* would only be another name for despotism, and that what in the Resolution was called "the evident sense of the House" would, of necessity, in the future be merely the strength of the clamour of the majority, which it would be in the power of the Leader of the House at any moment to obtain from the Smoking Room and Library of the House, for the purpose of pushing forward official legislation. It was his intention to vote against the Government on the broad principle of the application of the *clôture*, which he thought a most objectionable and dangerous innovation; and he thought the very men who were now responsible for the measure would, in after years, come to regret having tampered with liberty of speech in that House. As to the appeal of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk to him (Mr. Daly) and his Friends to support the Government on account of their promised Irish legislation, he was one of those who, for the future, intended to be guided solely by what he regarded as Irish interests, without reference either to the Liberal or the Tory Party.

Mr. ERRINGTON said, that at a comparatively early stage of the discussion the matter had been worn so threadbare, that new argument was out of the question; and it was only owing to the fact that certain changes of recent occurrence had very much complicated the position of many Irish Members who, like himself, found themselves compelled to support the Resolution, that he felt himself reluctantly obliged to forego the pleasure he always appreciated highly of being allowed to give a silent vote. The subject had been represented to the Irish people as a gag aimed directly and exclusively against the Irish Members, and that by its means Ireland would be deprived of the small shred of Constitutional liberty still left to her. That, he maintained, was a mistaken idea; and, if he were not fully convinced of its futility, he should certainly have gone into the Lobby with his hon. Friends opposite (the Irish Party). The legislative machine had become unwieldy long before the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell) and his Friends took the action in the House which had been so much animadverted upon; and although the course which those hon. Gentlemen had thought it right to pursue might have aggravated the state of matters, it would be quite an error to assume that the block of Business was due entirely to the conduct of Irish Members, or that the remedy now proposed for correcting it was solely aimed against the Representatives of the Sister Country. At an early period of the debate, a remarkable and salutary change had come over the attitude of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends. He (Mr. Errington) gave the hon. Member credit for being actuated by fair and honourable motives, and he would never do anything to increase the difficulties which lay in the hon. Gentleman's path; but he would appeal to the hon. Gentleman and his Friends to accept facts as they were. He regarded the *clôture* as the only means by which the great objects of Irish policy could be carried out, and he appealed to the extreme Home Rule section of the House to invest the Government with the means of giving effect to these objects. Some comprehensive and stringent measures were imperatively required to render the legislative machine strong and effective for its work; and no part of the United Kingdom was so much interested in the attainment of that end as Ireland, because, in the matter of legislation, that country, owing to a variety of circumstances, had been backward indeed as compared with England and Scotland. The whole foundation on which Irish policy had been built for a very long period was that many reforms were urgently needed in Ireland; but as long as the legislative inefficiency of the House continued, it was absolutely impossible that those measures could be satisfactorily dealt with and passed into law. In an article in *The Fortnightly Review*, the hon. Member for Wexford Borough (Mr. Healy) said that what the Irish Party wanted for Ireland was not, after all, very extravagant—namely, Parliamentary, municipal, Poor Law, Grand Jury, and registration reforms, the development of the Land Act, and some species of self-government. He (Mr. Errington) concurred generally with the hon. Member as to the necessity of those measures, though he did not, perhaps, go so far as the hon. Member did in regard to some of them; and he might even add to the catalogue Educational Reform, with which the welfare and prosperity of the Irish people were intimately associated. It was hopeless, however, to expect those great questions to be effectually taken up and settled in the present state of the legislative machine; while it was equally wild and chimerical to look for the practical solution by what was sometimes called "the policy of exasperation." That feeling, which he hoped was not very widespread, was that it was more important for Ireland to keep the power of putting into force a policy of exasperation than to make legislation possible, and thus secure for Ireland measures of reform. He regarded that policy as consistent neither with the honour nor the true interests of Ireland.

Mr. SCHREIBER: I wish, Sir, to congratulate hon. Gentlemen opposite on the manner in which, one after another, they are breaking their long silence on the question before the House. I have lately seen politics defined as the art of speaking and writing incorrectly till a man becomes a Member of Parliament—then it consists in being silent. Of course, Sir, after their recent speeches this definition only partially applies to hon. Members opposite. Now, I think it quite possible that, in the division to which we shall come to-night, the opponents of this Resolution will find themselves in a minority; because it is by no means contrary to my experience of the present Parliament that the weight of argument should be on one side of the question, and the preponderance of votes upon the other. But I should like to ask of the majority who will follow the Prime Minister into the Lobby, is there one that does not know beforehand that he is engaged upon a hopeless enterprize, when he seeks to promote the despatch of Public Business by the application of a Standing Order, which enlists against it the open hostility, or the secret dislike, of more than half the House of Commons. This Rule, in my view, as I have stated on a former occasion to this House, will be a fruitful source of Obstruction and disorder; and I think we shall signally fail of our duty as an Opposition if we do not bring about its repeal upon an early day. I know, indeed, that hon. Gentlemen opposite are under the impression that Her Majesty's Opposition were routed at Tel-el-Kebir, and the sooner we undeceive them on that point the better it will be. I believe, then, Sir, that the first effect of this Rule will be to subject to the fiercest criticism the style and length of every speech addressed to us from the Treasury Bench. There are already many of us sitting on these Benches who have long been of opinion that it does not contribute to the despatch of Public Business that a Minister should habitually come down to this House to say, to unsay, and then say again; to make a statement, to explain it, and then explain the explanation; but while debate is free for all, we have never felt a sense of personal wrong from this display of "amplitude," as the Prime Minister calls it, or, as a better judge pronounced it, of "exuberant verbosity." But, Sir, under the New Rule our first thought will be that a debate may be "unduly prolonged" at its beginning or middle quite as much as towards its end; and we shall be irresistibly reminded of the Irishman's blanket, which, being too short at the bottom, was lengthened by cutting a piece off the top. In other words, the offending Minister will be informed in a manner which it will be impossible for him to mistake that he is trespassing, not as now, upon our patience, but on a reserve of time which we shall then regard as ours, and that he will do well to bring his remarks to a close. I do not see, therefore, Sir, that the 1st Rule is likely to promote order at the commencement or middle of a debate. Well, then, how about the close? The "evident sense of the House" in the future is to be manifested, not only by clamour, but by competitive clamour; so that the question will not be whose arguments, but whose lungs are the strongest. Now, there is nothing in which men differ more than in the power of their lungs. Surely the Prime Minister has not forgotten Stentor—

> "Stentor the strong, endued with brazen lungs,
> Whose throat surpassed the force of fifty tongues."

Well, Sir, I commonly sit in this House near an hon. and gallant Gentleman whose voice is said to be able to reach his constituents in South Ayrshire from his place in the House of Commons; and, directly this Rule takes effect, I shall expect to see my hon. and gallant Friend exercise a commanding influence on the course of affairs in this House and in the country. Seriously, Sir, I foresee that under the operation of this Rule the House of Commons will too often resemble a great public meeting held early in the Christian era, at which "one cried one thing, and one another, for the Assembly was confused;" only that you, Sir, less fortunate than the Town Clerk of Ephesus, will not be able to "dismiss the Assembly." So much for the practical wisdom of this Resolution in its effect upon the order of our debates; while, as to its influence on the despatch of Public Business, it begins by alienating those without whose loyal co-operation it is impossible to move a single inch in that direction. This is a branch of the question which was exhaustively dealt with in the singularly able speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), a speech which has hitherto remained unanswered, and the effect of which I will not weaken by the attempt to add anything to what he said. And now, Sir, I should like to say a few words on the injustice of this Rule as affecting the present and all future Oppositions. I want to know, then, who accuses the present Opposition of "Obstruction," or the "needless prolongation" of debate. Well, I believe I have heard the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) do so; but, as we know, that hon. Member has peculiar views as to the function of a free Parliament; and, besides, he must never be taken too seriously—not even when he proposes to abolish the House of Lords! Now, the "statistics of talk" are not complete for the present Session, because the Session itself is not yet ended; but for the Sessions of 1880 and 1881, the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) was quite correct in stating that the volume of speech, as measured by the columns of *Hansard*, was twice as great upon those Benches as on these of the regular Opposition. And, let me add, I think it somewhat hard that this Rule should be set in motion by a Minister who, in the last Session of Parliament, rose to his feet the prodigious number of 1,153 times, and to whose example we are so largely indebted for the flood of talk which has gone over the country and this House. But, Sir, I go a great deal further, and I utterly deny that an Opposition, as such, can be said, in any true sense of the word, to "obstruct." Oppositions, Mr. Speaker, oppose and do not obstruct; and if their opposition is so protracted as to delay or to defeat a Government measure, to the country and not to the Ministerial majority are they responsible. It is impossible, therefore, to lay it down too plainly that the present claim of the Prime Minister is an usurpation, to which it is our duty to offer an unyielding resistance on behalf of all Oppositions that are to follow. Let me take an example. I see that the hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke), not content with having introduced confusion into the annual revision of our borough registers, is anxious to try his "prentice hand" at a Reform Bill, and a Reform Bill in its most objectionable shape. I mean a Bill for the reduction of the franchise, unaccompanied by any redistribution of seats. Now, Sir, as I, perhaps, have had more experience of Reform Bills than the hon. Baronet, he must allow me to assure him that no such revolutionary proposal will be allowed to pass without our forcing an appeal to the constituencies; and there is no extremity of resistance which we, as an Opposition, could offer to such a measure that could by possibility deserve the name of "Obstruction." I wish, therefore, finally to enter my emphatic protest against the act of usurpation, meditated under cover of this Resolution. Such, then, Mr. Speaker, being the invincible repugnance of Her Majesty's Opposition and of many others to this Rule, is it even now too late for the Prime Minister to ask himself what, under the circumstances, would have been the course of the great men who have preceded him in the Leadership of this House and of the Liberal Party? Certainly, in the case of Lord Palmerston, he had studied, and he knew their methods well. One of the first speeches that I ever heard the present Prime Minister deliver in this House was a panegyric on Lord Palmerston, then recently deceased. On that occasion—the 22nd of February, 1866—having said, as no one else could say it, much that was graceful and eloquent and true of that great man, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded thus—

> "All who knew Lord Palmerston knew his genial temper and the courage with which he entered into the debates in this House; his incomparable tact and ingenuity—his command of fence—his delight—his old English delight—in a fair stand-up fight. Yet, notwithstanding the possession of these powers, I must say I think there was no man whose inclination and whose habit were more fixed, so far as our discussions were concerned, in avoiding whatever tended to exasperate, and in having recourse to those means by which animosity might be calmed down. He had the power to stir up angry passions, but he chose, like the sea god in the Æneid, rather to pacify. *Quos ego—sed motos præstat componere fluctus.*"—[3 *Hansard*, clxxxi. 913-14.]

How, then, Sir, has it come to pass that a Minister who could pronounce this just and splendid eulogy on a great Leader of the House of Commons should, when his own turn arrived, have been so seldom the Neptune, so often the Æolus, of our debates; so seldom the Sea God, so often the Wind God, in the Æneid? He, too, has the "power to stir up angry passions;" why, on this vital question, has he chosen not to pacify? Be that as it may, let the right hon. Gentleman know that this is a case in which "force will be no remedy;" and if he has at heart the credit of this House, the good order of our debates, and the despatch of Public Business, I would say to him—"Even now, at the eleventh hour, take back your Rule; for be assured that the Minister is not yet born from whom an English House of Commons will hold its liberty of speech —on sufferance."

Mr. FIRTH considered that their experience during the past three or four years called for a measure of this kind. That necessity was illustrated, among other instances, by the fate of a Bill which proposed in a broad and generous spirit to deal with parochial charities in the City of London, bringing in an income of £120,000 a-year. That Bill came on for second reading on a Wednesday, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and others appealed to the opponents of the Bill to waive their opposition, so that the measure might be read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee. Shortly after 5 o'clock, however, at the instigation of one of the Representatives of the City, who was allowed to frequent the Lobby of the House, one Member rose and talked until a quarter to 6, so that the second reading could not be taken. That was done against the decided wish of the Leaders on both sides. He did not see that any Rule, except the one now before the House, would meet a case of that kind. This debate had not been carried on according to the principles of which they had heard so much from the other side. It had not been carried on for the purpose of conviction. The Members of the Opposition in the House, at the present moment, could be counted on one hand. Was it carried on for the purpose of instructing the constituencies? If the latter, he submitted that that was not the purpose of debate in that House. If it were, they ought to adopt the custom of the United States, and send their speeches to some *Congressional Globe* in this country. Even with a two-thirds' majority, he doubted the efficiency of any control over such a method of conducting opposition. The legislation before them could not be satisfactorily accomplished unless some such Resolution was adopted; and, therefore, he should have great pleasure in supporting Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BIDDELL regretted that this should have been made a Party question. He would admit that the House had abused its liberties to such an extent that reform of the Rules was absolutely necessary, because when he went to his constituents they always asked—"When is all this talk to cease? When are you going to do any business?" But he could not agree with the method in which it was proposed to effect this object—namely, at a certain stage by a bare majority to close the debate. He contended that it ought to be directed towards the punishment of the individual offender, and not to Members generally. The result of the Rule would be that the lesser lights of the House would be debarred from speaking, in which case he, for one, should often like to give his vote by proxy. He hoped it would be understood that many of those who opposed the Resolution were not of opinion that no change was necessary. Reform was obviously desirable; but the *clôture*, as proposed by the Government, would do far more harm than good. The right improvement would be to punish the offender, and not a whole mass of innocent persons for the fault of an individual. He should have preferred the Resolution if it had given the Speaker authority to say, after a division on the *clôture*, whether the debate should go on or not. He was also inclined to favour a time limit for Members' speeches, though, if it were practicable, such a limit might be extended, or the Rule relaxed on particular occasions. He would have been sorry, for instance, to lose by the operation of a time restriction such a speech as they had heard that evening from the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen). He regretted the Party spirit which had been introduced into this debate; and, whatever might be the result arrived at, he hoped that hon. Members generally would see the desirability of making shorter speeches and of thus increasing the despatch of Business. He did not however, think the state of affairs demanded such a remedy as that provided by the Resolution of the Prime Minister.

MR. DUCKHAM said, it was with extreme regret that he found the British House of Commons reduced to a position which required such a stringent regulation as that under discussion; and was, like his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Biddell), especially sorry that the question had been made exclusively a Party one. He thought the very fact of the length to which the present discussion had extended, concerning a Rule of 12 lines only, and which certainly might have been disposed of in less than 19 nights, would satisfy the nation that the House required some power of control over its debates. The House had a great deal of work, which ought to be done. Three Sessions had been occupied with Ireland, and there was still legislation needed for that country. But meanwhile, under the present system, English occupiers had their wants—County Government Boards of a representative character, the re-arrangement of Local Taxation, reforms relating to Highways, the Valuation of Property, the Law of Distress, and other matters. Without a thorough reform of the Procedure of the House, such measures could never be passed, and he was sure the constituencies took a deep interest in the question, and supported the Government proposal.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY said, that on that Resolution the future of free and unfettered speech depended, but not the future possibilities or impossibilities of Obstruction. If the House rejected this Rule, the other Resolutions would be amply sufficient to deal with Obstruction, for without the 1st Resolution there were ample means provided for expediting the Business of the House. The House had rejected the proposal to hedge in the Resolution with a safeguard, which, though an evil in itself, was still a lesser evil than the Resolution itself, and they had now come to a final and clear issue of *clôture* or no *clôture*. All Members desired to ease the legislative machine of the House, and to lay down Rules of reform for dealing with Obstruction. But that *clôture* Rule was not only the first and the worst, but might prove the weakest as against Obstruction. It had been pointed out by the Conservatives, and allowed by the Liberals, that it was aimed directly or indirectly against Parliamentary Opposition, and not against individual Obstruction. The true remedy was to deal with Obstruction individually, and there were adequate means for repressing such Obstruction in the subsequent Rules. The Rules of the House also provided for wilful disregard of the authority of the Chair, and those were the only powers which could with safety or propriety be entrusted to the House. Would not some such apportionment of individual punishment to individual offence satisfy the Prime Minister? While on the subject of useless delay, he could not help thinking of the Prime Minister's speech two days ago, when, admirable as was his eloquence, he took up a large portion of his valuable time in compiling statistics about the number of Members on the Opposition Benches during these debates, and proving that five Members below the Gangway and 21 above made 26. He (Mr. Guy Dawnay) asserted that Conservative Members absented themselves from the debate because, being thoroughly convinced of the soundness of their own arguments, they had no need to crowd the Benches in order to be fortified with each other's speeches. They simply spoke in the hope that there might still be some Ministerialists open to conviction. He contended that if the Resolution were negatived, as he hoped it would be, there would be less danger of Obstruction, and less fear of waste of time in future, than if the Resolution were accepted. Minorities might feel tempted, in the latter case, to give occasion for the Rule to be put in force, in order to fasten on the majority the odium that must attach to the forcible silencing of the voice of an Opposition. They would be no parties to forging chains either for themselves or their Successors.

Mr. A. GRANT said, that, under existing circumstances, when the discussion on the Resolution had already extended to so great a length, perhaps the best course for Members on this side of the House to follow was to maintain silence; but he felt called on to ask the leave of the House to say a few words as to the proceedings of the Party opposite in this matter. In the face of a series of crushing defeats in regard to all the Amendments which they had brought forward, and in spite of the clearest proof that a majority of the House was in favour of the Government Resolutions, the Tory Party were persisting in maintaining a hopeless and factious opposition to what was manifestly the will of the House. They were also persisting in attributing to the Government the most sinister designs, when one Member of the Government after another had repudiated them, and protested against the charges as having no foundation whatever; and, further, some of them were openly avowing their intention to make use of every means within their power to render impossible the carrying out of the wish of the majority of the House. He asked, was that a creditable position for the great Tory Party to be in? They on the Ministerial side of the House had cordially supported the Government, because they agreed with them as to the absolute necessity of some steps being taken whereby the intolerable abuse of the liberties of the House, in the way of protracting debates for the purpose of delaying or rendering impossible the progress of Public Business, should be prevented; and, indeed, in that necessity he believed there were many Members opposite who also concurred. Now, already, they had had long discussions, beginning from the Amendment which was proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), down through all the other Amendments which they had afterwards dealt with; and with regard to all of them a large majority had declared in favour of the Government, and the position of the Government had never been shaken in the smallest degree. An Amendment had been proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) providing that a two-thirds' majority should be required to put the Rule in force. Well, that was a proposal for which something might be said. At all events, it was one worthy of ample discussion; but the right hon. and learned Member had been beaten by a large majority, mainly owing to the fact, which became apparent in the discussion, that the object of the proposal was not so much to amend the Procedure under the Rule, as to cripple, and if possible to destroy, the Government Resolution, by rendering the Rules unworkable. Of course, under these circumstances, those who had satisfied themselves that the *clôture* in some form was a necessity could give no countenance to the Amendment, especially after the declaration of the Prime Minister, that in his view the Amendment would render the Rule impotent, and that rather than accept it he would prefer to have no *clôture* at all; and, as he (Mr. Grant) had said, the Amendment was negatived by a large majority. Now, seeing that the Tory Party had been defeated on all hands by large majorities, it might be of some interest to inquire what object the Party opposite hoped to accomplish by their protracted resistance. In casting about for a possible reason for their action, one could not help referring to a tour in the North recently undertaken by the Leader of the Opposition, for the laudable purpose of opening the eyes of benighted Scotchmen as to the real meaning of Toryism and the blessings of Tory rule. The other evening the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) told them that he had discovered that the unfurling of the old time-honoured banner of Liberalism in Mid Lothian in 1880 might have had something to do with the originating of these Government Resolutions. But more recently they had had in Scotland the unfurling of another banner by the Leader of the Opposition. It was not like the other old banner — a war-stained emblem, which had been borne in triumph through a hundred fights; but it was a new banner—a brand new banner, with a motto which, so far as he (Mr. Grant) knew, had never been even thought of before. It was a banner with a strange device, in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman certainly, for the device was "The Tories and Liberty." This new flag did not seem to have kindled much of a flame of enthusiasm where it was first unfurled, possibly because the admiring people who saw it may have been taken too much aback by the strange conjunction which the motto displayed. But he could not help thinking that what they were seeing now taking place in the House of Commons was owing to the desire of the Tory Party to allow the public outside to see it figuring in its new colours; but it appeared to him that it was but a stagey exhibition at the best. The idea of the Tory Party posing as the special champions of liberty was too grotesque, too unreal; the fly was too gaudy; it was too manifestly artificial for the public out-of-doors to be taken in by it, or to rise to the lure that was being so industriously dangled before them. It seemed to him that this was a most extraordinary and ungenerous act, that the Tory Party should seek to manufacture a little political capital in the country by holding up the Liberal Party as enemies of liberty, when the Government had felt themselves compelled to undertake the most disagreeable duty of curtailing, to a certain extent, the present rights of Members—a duty which was absolutely necessary, in order to the rehabilitation of the House, and to the restoring to it of its efficiency, its character, and its credit. The people of this country were not likely to be cajoled by such tactics. They had made up their minds that it was absolutely necessary that some power should be created whereby the time of the House should be saved, discussions shortened, and Obstruction dealt with by a firm hand; and the people were perfectly satisfied that, safeguarded as it was, the proposal of the Government was not in the slightest danger of being used in a tyrannical manner for the suppression of free discussion within legitimate and moderate bounds. Hon. Members opposite were never tired of instancing the possibility of conspiracy between the

Speaker and the Treasury Bench for the suppression of free discussion; but they on that (the Liberal) side of the House had no fear of that dreadful combination that seemed so terrible to the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite—at least as long as they had a Liberal majority. And if the protestations of hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to the sacred right of unlimited licence of speech were true protestations, they need have no fear of any improper use of the Rule when the Conservatives came to take their place on the Government side of the House. Indeed, if they practised what they preached, the first act of a Conservative Government would be to altogether abrogate the Rules proposed. If it was any comfort to hon. Gentlemen opposite to know it, he could tell them that in the event of any such combination, there were numbers of Members on his side of the House, both above and below the Gangway, who would be prompt to repudiate such an unholy alliance on the part of their Leaders, in spite of the claims of Party discipline. He could assure them the Liberals would show by their vote, in the event of any improper use being made of the Rule, that they interpreted the Resolution of the Government to mean, not a suppression of free discussion, not a triumph over respectable and well-intentioned minorities, but the giving of a power to the House to put down, with no unsparing hand, that unprincipled and unwarrantable and wanton and mischievous Obstruction and licence which had lately prevailed.

Mr. SEXTON said, the hon. Member who had just addressed the House (Mr. Grant) had made a frank confession, for he had regarded with equanimity the operation of the gag so long as it remained in the hands of the Liberal Party. He was of such a generous mind that the prospect did not allow his imagination to wander into that horrible future when others might use the gag against himself. He (Mr. Sexton) had no doubt that even those who most detested the *clôture* would not be sorry that they were approaching the end of the discussion. It had been a long, a tedious, and a dreary operation; and perhaps the only incident which had relieved its tedium had been the noble and thrilling speech which had been delivered by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) that evening. It had been such a speech as he (Mr. Sexton) would have expected from an independent Liberal, whose mind was undebauched by political servility. In that speech he had put forward freedom as the greatest good, and had refused to part with liberty for any specious promises of advantage. He would have thought that such a speech, delivered by an Englishman to Englishmen in their historic House, appealing to those memories which must thrill English hearts—appealing to the memory of the long chequered, but in the end successful contest which the House had waged against Kings and Lord Protectors and Peers, would have been irresistible. But it appeared that the majority of the House, which would hereafter constitute the "evident sense," had closed their hearts against national feeling, and their minds against argument, by an exaggerated and evil devotion to the principles and interests of their Party. He thanked the hon. Member for Newcastle for having made it particularly plain that Obstruction, instead of being a novelty, had long been a familiar historical fact in the House; and he also thanked him as an Irishman for bringing into such bold relief the fact that so long as Obstruction had been only English, no English Ministry had dared to advance it as a pretext for overturning the liberties of Parliament. It had only been when the Liberal cry of "Irish Obstruction" had been raised that the Prime Minister, who was an ingenious manipulator of inconvenient facts, had used that cry to overturn the liberties of the House of Commons. Various comments had been made during the debate upon the silence of the general body of the Representatives from Ireland. When he considered the lassitude which had prevailed in the House since it had assembled for the Winter Session—a lassitude which had been brought into prominence by the remarks of the Prime Minister—he was not surprised that English Gentlemen had found it difficult unassisted to continue the course of debate, and had been anxious for some Hibernian assistance. Hon. Members did not appear to be delighted when Members from Ireland spoke, and did not appear to be satisfied when they were silent. There were reasons for their silence during the present debate. The question had not been to them so large or so interesting a one as it had been to English hon. Members. For example, Irish Members had not been able to feel an interest in the patriotic dissertations upon the future of British Parties under the operation of the *clôture* which had been indulged in by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and other accomplished speakers. The future of the British Parties was a matter of indifference to Irish Members. Neither had they been able to feel that interest in the history and traditions of the House which was natural for an Englishman to experience. What they knew of the House in Ireland was that for the past eighty years it had been responsible for all the misgovernment, for most of the misfortune, and nearly all the crime, of that country. It would be, therefore, impossible for them to regard the question from the point of view of men who were interested in the dignity and traditions of the House. The issue put before them was simple—they were in the House as strangers and sojourners. They were in the House as the Representatives of a people ruled over by the will of another people, and not by their own. Their right of free speech was the only right in any degree effective which Irish Members possessed in that House; and the policy with which they would meet any proposal to destroy, limit, or fetter that right must consist of one single article—namely, determination to oppose it with what force they might in any and every shape in which it presented itself. One proposal had been that debates should be closed by the votes of a two-thirds' majority. Obviously the Irish Party could alone suffer by such a proposal. It had been said that in the recent great division they went into the Lobby with the Government. He preferred to say that they voted against the Opposition. The proposal for *clôture* by a majority of two-thirds was simply a proposal that there should be a gag which would effectually silence the Irish Party; while it would leave the Tory Party free to speak, which would prevent the Irish Party from resisting a Coercion Bill for Ireland, while it would leave the Tory Party free to obstruct any and every Bill. Now, a different proposal was before them — namely, that a bare majority of the House should have the power to silence opposition. That was a proposal which hit all round with impartiality. If it were agreed to, no Members would be free from its operation except the thick-and-thin supporters of the Prime Minister. Under the *clôture* the will of the Prime Minister would be absolutely dominant. The Whigs who might want to apply the brake to the Ministerial Car, and the Radicals who might wish that the Car should accelerate its speed, would alike find themselves subjected to the compulsory silence imposed by the gag. Much had been said about securities; but, in reality, there were none. They had been told that if less than 40 Members should oppose the *clôture* there must be 100 Members willing to enforce it; and that if more than 40 Gentlemen should desire to continue a debate there must be 200 Members anxious to impose silence. These so-called securities, however, were mere trivial questions of Party organization. If the Whips of the Liberal Party, by neglecting to provide a sufficient majority, were ever to subject the Speaker to contradiction after a declaration of the "evident sense of the House," they would receive from the Prime Minister such censure as would prevent the recurrence of the event. They had been told that they would be protected by the fact that the *clôture* could not be imposed except in accordance with the "evident sense of the House." The Speaker had lately said that he should hold the "evident sense of the House" to be the evident sense of the House at large. The declaration, unfortunately, would not be binding on those who should come after the present occupant of the Chair; and the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had made that declaration seemed to many acute observers to be a confirmation of the rumours that his official life would soon come to a close. In fact, one of the evening papers had wittily referred to it as the "Swan Song" of the Speaker. The boast of the House of Commons had always been that it was the mother of Parliaments, and the freest of them all. This, in fact, had been their boast, that here whether—

"Girt about by friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will."

Yet now they found the Prime Minister

forcing the gag upon the House and appealing to the case of those foreign Legislatures which Englishmen had so despised. Unlike those foreign Chambers, it could not be claimed for this House to rule over a people equal before the law. In one of these Islands the Constitution existed in the spirit and the letter, in the other it had been violated and suppressed. Irish Members in that House had a claim to liberty of free speech that no body of men in any foreign Chamber could advance, for they could revert to the transaction—unparalleled in history for its mixture of force and cunning—by which 80 years ago the Parliamentary liberties of the Irish were filched away. On account of the misgovernment of their people, if they gave them nothing else, they should give them the right of free speech. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had good reason to complain. In the last Parliament he endured, in regard to Obstruction, the heat and burden of the day. Not only in regard to special Bills of the Government, but in respect to ordinary Bills and the Business of Supply, the fundamental functions of the State met with a resistance unequalled before and since. He remained sensible of the fact that through the efforts of the Irish Members the disgraceful and brutal practice of flogging in the Army and Navy had been swept away; but he was bound to confess that the right hon. Gentleman encountered in the last Parliament a determined and persistent opposition to which nothing in the least degree comparable had happened in the present Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman met it by levelling Rules against individual offenders; and he administered those Rules, whatever might have been thought of it at the time, it must now be admitted in a Constitutional spirit. He administered those Rules fairly and strictly against individual offenders. Since then the right hon. Gentleman had seen the Rules which he intended to be applied against individual Members used unconstitutionally and arbitrarily against whole bodies of men. The right hon. Gentleman had found the Rules which he intended to apply to Obstruction committed by individuals, and to offences immediately arising out of it, applied against whole bodies of men in their absence, and in regard to transactions extending over several weeks. In the course of the debate, he had observed a significant oscillation in the arguments of Ministers and their supporters. Before the division on the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), expecting to have the Irish votes in their Lobby, they were careful enough to make it appear that the argument for the Resolution was the necessity for finding time to meet the needs of legislation. Since that Amendment had been defeated the logical pendulum of the Government had swung back, and the argument was the Obstruction of the Irish Party. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] He excepted the Prime Minister from the charge; but he said that the veterans of the Liberal Party, as well as the babes and sucklings of the Party, had since the division on that Amendment returned to the charge against the Irish Members. The Prime Minister in his speech on Wednesday was supposed to be gracious to Irish Members, and said that their political position in that House entitled them to be treated with peculiar indulgence; and he made certain references to local self-government for Ireland which might have been intended to excite certain hopes in the minds of Irish Members. But the right hon. Gentleman was careful to oscillate, for in his speech last night at the Guildhall he commented upon the fact that the Irish people entertained extravagant expectations, and cherished desires which could not be realized.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I did not say that. I said it might be there, as elsewhere.

Mr. SEXTON said, that he was aware of the difficulty of quoting any observations of the right hon. Gentleman in such a manner as to command his assent. The right hon. Gentleman presented one line of thought which appeared to have an obvious interpretation, and seemed to have a faculty of holding in reserve a second line of thought for future use. Every sentence had a broad archway of thought in front which everybody could see; but everybody could not see at the moment of the speaking of the sentence that it had half-a-dozen avenues of escape behind it. He maintained that, during this Parliament, Irish Members had strictly limited themselves to opposition to Coercion Acts for Ireland, and to Votes arising out of the administration of Coercion Acts; and yet after the Liberals, while in Opposition, had made themselves conspicuous by their Obstruction, the present was the time when the Liberals charged the Irish Members with Obstruction, and told the country that it was necessary to abolish free speech in order to gag them. What was the use of Irish Representatives in that House unless, when they found the liberties of their people swept away in a breath, they used their Parliamentary force, not only to call the attention of the public and of the House to their arguments, but also to convince them of the rash recklessness of these arbitrary enactments? The Prime Minister had spoken of the congestion of Public Business, and, in various skilful phrases, had led the country to suppose that it was caused by Irish Members. But it was the fact that from December, 1877, to 1880, during the last three years of the late Administration, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) lost 18 to 24 nights devoted to Supply, but on which it could not be taken, owing to the number of Amendments on the Paper. In 1877 he lost 24 nights; in 1878, 18 nights; and in 1879, 24 nights by Amendments being persisted in. How many nights had the Prime Minister lost this year? He had lost five nights only, yet it was in the presence of that state of facts that the Prime Minister availed himself of the cry of "Irish Obstruction" to overturn the liberties of Parliament. The Tory Party had shown a good deal of simplicity in expecting the Prime Minister to accept the two-thirds' Amendment. He had a cry, and he was expert in the use of a political cry. The cry of "Irish Obstruction" would reach what he called the British mind, and it would cover and conceal any political scheme, however ambitious. By means of his cry of Obstruction, the Prime Minister would obtain the *clôture*, by which he hoped to pass such a list of measures as would retain Office for himself and his Party for a prolonged period. It had been revealed by the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that there was to be an attack all along the line upon the country Party. Feudalism was to be attacked, the relations of landlord and tenant to be revised, and the franchise was to be extended in such a sense and in such a direction as it was hoped would consolidate and perpetuate the power of the Liberal Party. He did not say that he was out of sympathy with any part of these proposals, and if he then had the honour of a seat in the House he might support them; but he mentioned them to show the complicity of the Tory Party in supposing that the Prime Minister would accept the two-thirds' Amendment. This was the gag to enable such measures of legislation to be pressed on as would give the Liberal Party an indefinite lease of power. Only three speeches in support of the Government had been delivered by Irish Members. One was by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Errington), who might be very good as an ecclesiastical envoy, but not as a politician. That by the hon. Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) was a pleasant little exercise, and it was not necessary for him to deal with it. He would, however, say a word upon the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy). He suggested that the penal Rules which were already in force against individuals would be found to be more severe than the *clôture*. He could not, however, see the force of the hon. Gentleman's logic. If the Irish Members were to be suppressed at all they would prefer being taken in detail, and not to be suppressed altogether *en masse*. But he suggested that the *clôture* enforced by the House would be preferable to the *clôture* enforced by the arbitrary will of the Speaker, and he referred to the time when the Irish Party were summarily put to silence by the Speaker. But it was extremely improbable that such a *coup d'état* would be witnessed again in England as was witnessed when the Irish Party made a bold stand against the Coercion Act. He would much prefer the exercise of arbitrary power by the Speaker to the more easy and convenient exercise of power by the majority. With regard to the argument of the hon. Member that this Rule was necessary in order to give time to the House for dealing with Irish questions, he replied that in the past time had not been wanting for that purpose. The hon. Gentleman was a Member of the Party led by the late Mr. Isaac Butt, his Colleague in the representation of the City of Limerick. That Party proceeded on lines of moderation and conciliation. That Party, during a period of seven years, presented to Parliament no less than 100 Bills dealing with every part of the national life. That Party was satisfied with brief and moderate debates. It accepted the defeats inflicted on it by the House with meekness and resignation ; yet the dispiriting record remained that not one of the 100 Bills was passed. Even in what were called the good old times, Ireland was neglected. They knew what sort of men the Irish Members then were. The Prime Minister, not more than 30 years ago, had sitting beside him as Colleagues two Irish Members and two others, who sat beside him as his supporters; and what became of those Irish Members to whom the tone of the House was the supreme law, and the convenience of the House the first consideration ? One of them, a forger and a swindler, committed suicide ; another, a forger and a swindler, was expelled from the House of Commons; the third was made a Commissioner of Income Tax, and he plundered the Public Exchequer, and fled to America—[An hon. MEMBER: He was never in Parliament.]—while the fourth, a worthy companion of the other three, was made a Judge, and entrusted with the administration of justice in Ireland, and after an attempt upon his own life, died insane, leaving an odious name behind him. These were the men who sold to the Government the liberty of their people, and who made the name of Irish Member a byword in the country. During the 80 years that had passed since William Pitt handed over the Parliamentary liberties of Ireland to the British House of Commons, had it ever, from a mere sense of justice, passed a Reform Bill for Ireland ? Both Parties combined together against justice being done to Ireland. During that period they passed no less than 60 Coercion Bills for Ireland. The Irish people had been 20 years labouring for Catholic Emancipation, and they had not a shadow of a prospect of success until the Duke of Wellington went to George IV. and said, "Unless you pass the Emancipation Bill Ireland will be plunged into civil war." Forty years passed away without a single Reform Bill for Ireland until in 1869 and 1870 the Government passed two important Acts, which remained connected with the name of the Prime Minister. But why were those Acts passed ? The Prime Minister had himself stated that what had led to the introduction of those measures were the Ballycohey tragedy and the Clerkenwell explosion. It was not any sense of justice that had led to their introduction. Then what induced the right hon. Gentleman to pass the Land Act of last year ? Was it not necessary for the Irish people, struggling with famine and distress, to cast themselves into the seething cauldron of agitation for three years, and to bring that country within what the right hon. Gentleman had himself declared to be "a measurable distance of civil war" before he passed that Act ? The lesson to be learned from the past was simply this—that the British Parliament had never passed a single beneficial Act for Ireland out of a sense of justice, but because of pressure, Parliamentary or otherwise; because, in other words, it became more convenient for them to grant justice to the Irish people than to withhold it. It was in Committee that it would be found most effectual to apply the *clôture*. In the conflicts of passion between the two great English Parties the operation of the *clôture* would produce a constant resistance and friction. The hour of frank and friendly union between those English Parties was always an evil hour for Ireland. He did not think the *clôture* would affect the Irish Members very much. The Representatives of the Irish people would have courage and resource enough to make themselves felt and heard in that House, in spite of any gag; but a Rule which would place the two great English Parties in keener antagonism would work well for Ireland. The operation of the *clôture* would be to generate hereafter between English politicians, who, in spite of their Party differences, had hitherto been personal friends, hatreds and rancours which would eat their corroding way even into private life. Therefore it was that he had great hopes for the future of his country, believing that out of the chronic feuds and bitter contentions of hostile English Parties the hope of Irish regeneratiou would arise. There were, he thought, two lessons to be gathered from the present situation.

If the Tory Party, taught by adversity, were willing to learn anything, they would see that they had lent themselves, in an evil hour, to tyranny against the weakest Party in the House. They had gladly and freely given their votes to a Ministry strong in themselves to suppress the Representatives of a people who had nothing left to them but their voices in that House. And now the Tory Party, with a swiftness of retribution seldom equalled in political life, found that the scourge which they had placed in the hand of the master they were themselves now fated to feel. The other lesson was one for the House itself; and he commended it to them in words the justice of which he was willing to leave to be tested by the course of future events—namely, that 80 years ago, by sheer force and fraudulent cunning, they robbed the people of Ireland of Parliamentary liberty; and now, after eight years of a free Irish vote and three years of an independent Irish Party, by the slow but silent working of Irish discontent they had undermined and brought to a crushing downfall the Parliamentary liberties of England.

MR. WADDY said, he should not have interposed at that time, and availed himself of the privilege which, by the courtesy of the House, was usually afforded to its youngest Member, and which he believed he was entitled to claim, unless he had wanted to make one observation, which he should endeavour to make in the shortest possible time, in order that he might make room for some Member of the Irish Party, who might possibly have something to say in answer to the eloquence of the hon. Member who had just sat down. He did not propose to follow the speech of that hon. Member. He certainly did not propose to answer all that the hon. Member had said about William Pitt, and the Clerkenwell explosion, and 80 years ago, and other matters of that kind which had nothing to do with the subject under discussion. They had heard much about the rights of various people; but there was one right which had never yet been mentioned on the Opposition side of the House, and which seemed to be entirely forgotten. They had heard from various parts of the House of the rights and privileges of the Party of Government, of the rights of the Party of Opposition, of the wrongs of the Party of Ireland, and of the small Quadrilateral Party; but they had not heard much of the right of the nation, which, he ventured to think, was the one thing that seemed to be very much forgotten. The nation had a right which swallowed up all those other rights, and included them all. The nation sent them there in order to do the work of the nation, and not merely to talk about it; and the great right that the nation had to look to that House to be doing something was just the one right that seemed to be entirely forgotten. That was the right that he wished for a moment to impress upon the House. A right hon. Gentleman, who sat on the Front Opposition Bench, had informed them that the duty and the object of the House was to reflect the mind of the nation in its various moods and passions; but when they had reflected it, what were they to do with it then? It struck him that there was something to be done possibly beyond that. He did not mean, at that late hour of the night, to interpose long; and, therefore, he would satisfy himself with saying this — that the energetic and vigorous oratory of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen)—very brilliant, but not altogether consequent—had, he thought, missed this one point. He seemed to be of opinion that there was too much legislation. [MR. WARTON: Hear, hear!] If there was, the conscience of the hon. and learned Gentleman who interrupted was quite clear from being responsible for it. There had been no more legislation than that hon. and learned Gentleman and some other hon. Gentlemen could help. But he wanted to know whether the hon. Member, who had made the brilliant speech to which he referred, would deliberately say that the legislation which he himself had approved for years past in the House, and which had been the outcome of the work of the Liberal Party that was now being obstructed in its work—whether he believed that legislation was for good or for evil? If it had been for good, what was the meaning of that energetic oratory which they had heard that night, inveighing bitterly against legislation, when no legislation could take place? He had come to give this message from the country—that the one thing the country wanted from that House now was not to be so desperately anxious to preserve the rights of this Party or the other, but that it looked for a great deal more work and a great deal less talk.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he desired to make one observation before the House went to a division, because he found it difficult, as regarded that Resolution, to know exactly how they stood. Gentlemen on his side of the House had been pleading for a variety of safeguards against what appeared to them to be the dangers of a tyrannical majority; and they had contended throughout these discussions that there ought to be no doubt or uncertainty whatever, if the "evident sense of the House" was to be a condition of the *clôture,* as to the true and correct interpretation of that phrase. Accordingly, they had moved various Amendments at different periods in the debate on that Resolution with the object of attaining that end. First, they had moved to substitute "the general sense of the House;" then it had been proposed that the words should be "evidently the general sense of the House;" and, finally, the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had tried to accomplish the same object by moving that the majority should be two-thirds of the House. During the whole time the Government had taken an opposite view, had rejected every Amendment, and had offered hostile arguments to the reasons adduced by the Opposition. At last the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) went so far as to say that the only interpretation of the words "the evident sense of the House" was that they meant the evident sense of the majority on that (the Ministerial) side of the House. A fruitless contention on that point was proceeding, when Mr. Speaker came to the rescue of an anxious, an irritated, and an embarrassed House of Commons, by placing on those words a construction which he ventured to say would add fresh lustre even to the dignity and the impartiality which had marked his tenure of his high Office. The interpretation he placed upon the "evident sense of the House" connected it, not with the sense of one side of the House, but with that of the House at large. On that declaration he desired to put a question to the Chairman of Committees and to the Prime Minister, or some other Member of the Cabinet. He wanted to ask the Chairman of Committees whether, and how far, he endorsed the declaration made from the Chair? It was important to the House of Commons that they should know whether it was the opinion of the Chairman of Committees that the "evident sense of the House" meant the evident sense of the House "at large?" He would like to have an answer to that question from some Member of the Government—say, from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain).

[At this point an interruption occurred through the entrance to the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery of the Native officers of the Indian Contingent deputed to visit this country.]

Mr. CHAPLIN, resuming, said, the House, and he felt satisfied also the distinguished visitors who had just honoured the House with their presence, would be delighted with the answer which, no doubt, would be given to the question he had a moment before put to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain). Did he, or did he not, accept the declaration of Mr. Speaker with regard to the interpretation placed upon the words the "evident sense of the House;" and did they intend to give effect to them? That was a question to which they were entitled to an answer, and both sides would agree that before they went to a division they ought to know. If they did, then, so far as he was concerned, although he should vote against the Resolution, he should not feel so much apprehension; but if they did not, then he must reserve to himself the right of taking whatever course with regard to it he thought fit in the future. They had always from the first condemned it as a clumsy and ineffective weapon. The Prime Minister himself confessed that the loss by the House of control over individual Members was the root of the evil which had overtaken the House; and, accepting that statement, they had endeavoured to introduce Amendments aimed at individual Obstruction. To their dismay, those Amendments had been ruled out of Order. In the course of his speech on Wednesday last, which was delivered at an unusual hour, the Premier said he rose on that occasion in order that there might be no suspicion even that in the mind of the Government there was any reason whatever for continuing this debate, or that there was anything further of importance to be said. Had the Premier, or any of his Colleagues in the Cabinet, been in the House shortly before the dinner hour, they would have heard a speech from the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), which appeared to him to be a masterpiece of eloquence, of argument, of reasoning, and of passionate oratory in vindication of liberty and freedom, which had seldom been surpassed even by the Prime Minister himself. But what did they see instead? It was rumoured in the Lobbies that the hon. Member was about to speak and make a vehement attack upon the policy of the Government, and Minister after Minister slunk out of the House. Attacks, more or less direct, were made upon Members of the Government and their supporters; but it was not until almost the close of that oration that the President of the Board of Trade condescended to enter the House, and even to listen to the arguments which were advanced in the ablest and most powerful manner against the Resolutions which the Government had submitted to the House. It was as a Radical of Radicals that the hon. Member for Newcastle had often been described. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Conservative!"] It might be that the description of a "Tory of the Tories" applied to himself; but on that occasion the hon. Member for Newcastle and himself were thoroughly united. The hon. Member for Newcastle, whom he was proud to speak of as his Friend, and himself were thoroughly united to-night, because they had the same fears that there were dangers in these Resolutions to the future of the Parliament of England. They were united because they believed, in common with many Members on both sides of the House, and with thousands, even millions, of persons outside, that upon the liberty and freedom of her Parliament the freedom and the liberties of England and of her people would depend.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, that he was not one of those who repeated their Colleagues' speeches almost *ipsissimis verbis*, and who had managed to get themselves reported in the papers, though they were rarely listened to in the House. But though indisposed at first to speak on this subject, his indisposition to do so became still greater after hearing the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), of which he would say that, since he heard the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) speak on the Indian Question, he had rarely listened in that House to a greater rhetorical effort. If ever there was a time when bygones ought to be bygones, and when persons should not be abused for the course which they chose to take, it was the present. But what did the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) dare to say? The hon. Member dared to say that Irish Gentlemen who had represented Irish constituencies in that House for years ought to be classed with forgers and men of that description. He was not skilled in the Parliamentary language that he ought to address to that hon. Gentleman, and the only excuse he could give for him was that he had been for years a trading politician—that for years he kept a book of good and evil for every public man, aye, even in his own country; because whenever they got a man with a true, real, thoroughly evil disposition, they might be sure that he would attempt to make capital in that House by platitudes in abusing his own countrymen. [*Laughter.*] This was no laughing matter, for hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House were proud of their political honour and of the traditions of their Party. He knew the hon. Member did not like them, because their ears were not tickled by his attacks upon the Irish magistracy. They did not belong to the proletariat, whilst he, with Hyperion curls and the attitude of a Roman warrior, sought to trample upon everybody who would not submit to mob despotism. For his own part, he cared not what the hon. Gentleman might say; but there were people out-of-doors who, knowing that he had got that happy knack of declamation after study, might imagine that he was a great power in the House. He did not like to retail Irish gossip in the House, though it might be useful to the hon. Member. But, he would ask, was the hon. Gentleman the Irish patriot who accompanied the Whig Judge Barry to fight the National Party at an election contest, and did he come there to tell those who differed from him that they were dishonest men and forgers, like the Sadleirs? He

(Sir Patrick O'Brien) thought that the Kilmainham Treaty would have made things quiet that night. He believed if the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who often put away an unpleasant question with a sickly smile, had been present at the time, the statements to which he had referred would not have been made by the hon. Member for Sligo. The hon. Member had spoken of the county Longford. Was it by arrangement he did so? Was he giving a friend a little political help at the coming election? He spoke of the Pope. He supposed the hon. Member for Sligo was opposed to the Pope. Well, he might have referred to the Colleague of that hon. Gentleman, who had spoken in that debate in a much more guarded manner than the hon. Member for Sligo. It was what he expected from a man with a knowledge of "our own times." They had heard of oscillation. There were many who did not oscillate. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) was one of these, for he was in perpetual motion. The intervention of his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Shea), who, after all he had done for them, got scant courtesy from the hon. Member for Sligo, did not appear to have made everything as smooth as ordinary treaties ought to have made them. But he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) never imputed to hon. Gentlemen opposite, with the exception, perhaps, of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), a knowledge of anything except what they called "Irish politics" gathered from reading American papers. They had never read any book upon Treaties—he was excepting, of course, the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who, having completed his education, was anxious to leave Kilmainham. Irish Members on that (the Ministerial) side had been accused of having done nothing in their time. Let him mention one thing that they had never done—they never appealed to a foreign country for money to pay them and keep them. For many years past the Irishmen in the House had supported emancipation and everything connected with municipal reform; and, as everyone knew, their object in doing away with the Established Church in Ireland was to bring peace to their country. They had sought place and pension from no man. For those Gentlemen, therefore, with whom he had the honour to be associated, he repudiated, trampled upon, and pulverized the Irish Party opposite.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that he would endeavour to bear in mind the long duration of the debate; but he wished, as briefly as possible, to reply to some of the speeches that had been made against the Resolution. Much had been said of the weariness of the House, and he might venture to account for it by the great similarity of many of the speeches of hon. Members opposite. If the notes of the speeches which had been made against the Resolution could have been seen he believed the stock portions of those compositions would have been found to be something like the following:—"Refer to the traditions of the House; refer to its honour and the desire to maintain it; refer from time to time to the Caucus; give a Party flavour to the composition by frequent allusion to the Prime Minister, or, for choice, the President of the Board of Trade; then cover all with a gloomy prophecy served up to the knell of the British Constitution." Such had been the majority of the speeches of hon. Members opposite, though there had also been others, some irrelevant and some relevant, of a less ordinary character. The former he need not notice; but of the latter he wished to say a word or two. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), speaking from his experience of the Business of the House as Secretary to the Treasury, had thought it right to say that the Resolutions were unnecessary, because the evils they were intended to meet were temporary, and existed only as long as the present Government remained in Office. These evils, according to the right hon. Baronet, were caused by the mismanagement of the Government, and by its want of control over the House, and when the Government disappeared they would disappear likewise. That was very much a matter of opinion, as to which it was not worth while to argue; but he might ask the House whether such a contention was consistent with the declaration made in the House on February 26, 1880. The right hon. Baronet was then Secretary to the Treasury, and took part in the management of the Business of the House; and on that day the

Leader of the House told hon. Members that it was impossible to carry on the Public Business. The evil of Obstruction "had grown, was growing, and would continue to grow." He might observe, parenthetically, that he did not suggest that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, who used those words, was guilty of any inconsistency in opposing the present Resolution, because he had carefully guarded himself at the time against any acceptance of the *clôture* as a satisfactory remedy; but, after saying that the evil of Obstruction must be met, the right hon. Gentleman frankly told the House that, in his opinion, the Resolution which he was then proposing would not be sufficient to meet the difficulty that existed, and that—

> "There is only one alteration of our Rules which would be of a character that really could prevent Obstruction, and that is one for which we have no English name, but which is known to us all under the name of the *clôture*." —[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1457.]

[*Cries of* "Read on!"] He repeated that he did not charge the right hon. Gentleman with inconsistency; because the right hon. Gentleman had proceeded to say in effect—

> "That is a method on which I venture to think that this House will pause very long before they adopt it."—[*Ibid.*]

But that was not the question. The question was whether the right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) was justified, in the face of that declaration, with charging the present Government with being the cause of all this Obstruction; whether the evil in question did not exist in February, 1880; whether the then Leader of the House did not warn the House of its probable continued growth; and whether the right hon. Gentleman did not fear that it could be met by only one remedy? One of the other variations of the common Opposition form had proceeded last night from the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon). The noble Viscount had repudiated all ideas of political animosity in his opposition to the proposed Rules, and doubtless entertained no such feelings of animosity. But, while he fully reciprocated the pleasant spirit which the noble Viscount had endeavoured to import into the debate, he might assure him that the supporters of the Resolution were perfectly well able to settle the matter with their constituents, and would certainly not be regarded by them, to use the noble Viscount's phrase, as "tainted candidates." Let him remind the House of the position which they occupied. This question had received the consideration of the constituents perhaps more than any question that was ever introduced and passed in one Session. Hon. Members opposite had used their best endeavours to place this matter before their constituents. They had stated their views in language which he thought he might say was not quite so discreet or so accurate as that which they had used in that House; and after all that had been done, what was the result? The hon. Member for Greenwich, who had great practical knowledge of the action of the Conservative Party, had said on Wednesday last that in the May of this year the present Administration was an unpopular one, but that now they were intensely popular in the country.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I merely stated the fact that in May you were extremely unpopular; I did not say you are popular now.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) contended that the statement was, in effect, comparative, although the hon. Member might not have made an explicit comparison; and, such being the case, the Opposition were confronted with this as the result of their active agitation in respect of this Resolution. It had been said that an attempt had been made to burke this debate; but what was the fact? 126 independent Members had spoken during the discussion, and of these 66 were Conservatives, and 60 Liberals. So much for burking the debate. But in addition to that, up to Tuesday last of the Amendments which had been put on the Paper, the majority had been placed there by Liberal Members. It had also been said that there had been a determination on the part of the Government to refuse all Amendments to the Resolution. Those who brought that charge should make their account with the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote), who, when the Government accepted the Amendments of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), and that moved by the right hon. Gentleman the

Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), turned to his supporters and said—"What do you think of this Government? They do not know their own minds for a single moment. Look at their weakness and vacillation." After that warning, after that lecture, after that example, 17 Members had complained that the Government did not vacillate more, and give more evidence of their instability by accepting more Amendments. There had been one variation upon the usual stock attack on the Government, and that had been the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen). However much he (the Attorney General) differed from the statements in the speech, and from its tone and result, it was impossible for anyone who had heard it not to acknowledge the pleasure with which it was bound to be listened to as a literary composition. In one other sense he had listened to it with pleasure also, because it had marked more definitely and more completely the line which existed between the hon. Gentleman and the Liberal Party for the future. He hoped the hon. Member would not think he (the Attorney General) was wanting in courtesy if he said that the time was come. if the hon. Member for Newcastle had such serious charges as he had made that night to bring against the Liberal Party, that he should look that Party in the face, that he should sit amongst those with whom he acted, on whose behalf he spoke, and with whom he invariably voted, and that he should not go through the form of sitting on one side of the House and acting with the other. He had declared himself to be a Democrat, and one who spoke on behalf of Democracy. He had invoked the Liberalism of the past, and had declared himself an enemy of the Liberalism of the present. He sneered at those whom he termed the idolators of the immediate, and he had refused to recognize the necessity of legislation upon any subject, and for the redress of any grievance; and that all he wanted was past legislation well administered. The hon. Gentleman might have made the same declaration with equal theoretical correctness 50 years ago. What would have been the result of such a doctrine 50 years ago? Men would have been reminded of the great traditions of that House, and would have been told that in desiring reforms they were only idolators of Utopian schemes. What would the hon. Member have said to the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, to taxed bread, and to those who, in consequence of that tax, were steeped in poverty, and to those other reforms which had been carried by the Liberal Party? The hon. Member must settle those questions in the present time with those with whom he had to deal. The hon. Member had made a violent attack upon what he chose to call the Caucus. That was one of the stock ingredients of the charges against the Government which he had hoped to pass lightly by. And his labours had been lightened by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke), who, knowing how many Conservative Associations there were in the country, said he would not join in the attack upon the Caucus.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE: I used no such expression.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the contradiction or correction of the hon. and learned Member was so broad that he felt he must be quoting the statement of someone else.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE: I do not want the contradiction to be broader than the case warrants. What I said was that I was not afraid of the Caucus, but that, so far as it was useful in its operations, we had Associations on the Tory side, which had been discharging the same functions. And I said, with regard to the peculiar action of the Caucus, that I believed it would alienate from the Liberal side independent thinkers, and would so do more harm than any mechanical operation would do good.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he did not think the denial of his hon. and learned Friend had gone beyond the necessities of the case. The explanation would be perfectly satisfactory to both parties. During the Royal Titles Bill, upwards of 200 Petitions were brought from Conservative Associations directing Conservative Members how to vote. While the hon. Member for Newcastle was denouncing the Caucus, he should have liked to have heard from him whether there was not a Democratic Federation of which he was the President. That Democratic

Federation bore a name. It would be hardly respectful to the hon. Gentleman to state what it was; but it was said that the noun substantive was "Caucus," and that the prefix had a special reference to his Christian name. It was a society asking for legislation from that House, and that was the federation he was using for political purposes in the North. It had even been admitted by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) that it was inevitable that there should be new legislation, and that the Conservatives ought not to allow the opportunity of dealing with certain questions to slip from their grasp. Let the hon. Member for Newcastle return to his constituency; let him tell them that legislation was not a question that ought to be dealt with in that House; let him tell those colliers in the North, who had not yet forgotten the sound of that terrible colliery explosion, that there was to be no legislation on their behalf—["Question!"]—hon. Gentlemen who cried "Question!" heard that the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle was to be made, and they gathered in the House to cheer every word of attack upon the Government. Was no reply to be made to that speech? In continuation of his reply to that speech he would say—Let the hon. Member for Newcastle go and tell the agricultural labourers in the North that no advance in their position was required; let him tell every interest he met in Newcastle that no change was required. Let him tell those he met on 'Change that laws such as the Patent Laws and the Bankruptcy Laws were all one could wish, and say that those who wished to remedy defects in the law were "the idolators of the immediate." He could understand that whilst the hon. Gentleman was making these attacks amidst the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite, the wheels of his rhetoric grew so warm that there might be some sparks of inaccuracy thrown off in his progress; but the hon. Member had no right to deal with the characters of public men who denied certain of the statements he made. It had been admitted by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire that the charge the hon. Member for Newcastle made was a direct charge against the present Government of having formed an alliance with Members of the Irish Party. He charged one Member of the Government—the President of the Board of Trade—with having formed an alliance with the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) to oppose one Bankruptcy Bill while he was now appealing for the closure to carry another. The hon. Member had been misinformed on that subject. On the 16th July, 1879, the last year of the late Government, a Bankruptcy Bill was under discussion which had been introduced at the termination of the Session. Towards the end of the evening the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) made a suggestion to restore the system of Grand Committees, a system that had not been carried on for 150 years. Time was required for the consideration of that proposition, and the hon. Member for Cavan having moved the adjournment, the President of the Board of Trade seconded the Motion, and that was the only foundation for the statement of the hon. Member for Newcastle. He would ask the hon. Member if he made such charges against Parties and against men that he should test the accuracy of the statements before he made them. There had been the appeal over and over again to the traditions of the House. He believed that every Member was proud of those traditions; but how was it possible to appeal to traditions when the circumstances which surrounded them had entirely changed? It was not merely the Obstruction of individual Members with which they had to deal, but the enormous increase in the Business of the House. In 1841 not more than 231 Members took part in the Business of the House; but in the year 1881 the number had increased to 441, and they might be sure that the speeches were no shorter than they used to be. They had but a certain portion of time to dispose of from the beginning of February to the middle of August. That time could not be increased without the risk of driving out of the House the men whom it was most desirable to keep in it, and who could not afford to give up more than seven months of the year to Parliamentary life. The real question was—were they going to maintain the present system and spend the whole Session upon one or two Bills, or would they be willing to make necessary changes for the passage of Business through the House? It was undoubtedly the practice for Members in that House to expend all their time upon discussing certain measures, and thus to leave no opportunity of discussing others of equal, if not of greater, importance. The noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) had disputed the accuracy of the Prime Minister's statement that last Session was a barren one, and had instanced certain measures which he praised the Liberal Party for having passed. The fact, however, was that every one of the Acts to which the noble Viscount had pointed so triumphantly had been passed without a single word of discussion. The Settled Land Act itself, which affected every settled estate throughout the Kingdom, and the credit for which was due to one man alone—its author, Lord Cairns—was only passed through that House in consequence of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), who thought that it did not go far enough, yielding to a personal appeal made to him to remove the block which he had placed against it; and that measure also, important as it was, had been passed without a single word of discussion, because the time of the House had been wasted in the unnecessary discussion of other measures. It had been well said the other day by a gentleman, who, if ever he entered Parliament, would adorn the other side of the House, that business to be business must be brief. That was the view that the House was about to adopt. The right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had said that if they passed this Resolution, they should be making a mockery of the prayer for freedom of speech, which the Speaker uttered at the commencement of each Parliament. But that prayer related, not to permission to repeat the same arguments 20 times over, but for leave to state those arguments once. It was the quality, and not the quantity, of the debate that had to be looked to. The hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. Herbert) had told the House a tale about the Obstruction which the Liberal Party, when in Opposition, had offered to the Army Discipline Bill. He did not wish to recriminate, otherwise he could refer to the course taken by hon. Members opposite to the Clerical Disabilities Bill, to the Army Purchase Bill, to the Ballot Bill, and to many other measures. As far as related to the Army Discipline Bill, however, it had been supported by the present Secretary of State for the Home Department, and by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India; and if, in the face of the combined action of the two Front Benches, it was so difficult to pass the measure, that was a convincing proof of the necessity for this Resolution. Different remedies had been suggested as alternatives to the Resolution. The noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) suggested Urgency, with increased powers of suspension. Did the House wish to see an increased number of suspensions, which must inevitably result in conflicts between individuals and the Speaker, which the right hon. Gentleman and the House would sincerely regret. There was one other matter to which he wished to refer before sitting down. On Wednesday last, in answer to an appeal made by the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), the Prime Minister stated that he still kept in view the question of local self-government in Ireland. As soon as the right hon. Gentleman had concluded his speech, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) suggested that the Government were contemplating a new departure in favour of the Irish people in the hope of influencing the votes of their Representatives; but the Prime Minister's declarations were simply statements with regard to a promise already given. In the Speech from the Throne in January, 1881, Her Majesty said—

> "A measure will be submitted to you for the establishment of County Government in Ireland, founded upon representative principles, and framed with the double aim of confirming popular control over expenditure, and of supplying a yet more serious want by extending the formation of habits of local self-government."

That promise was given in 1881, and it remained unfulfilled because there was not freedom of discussion in that House. Sharing the view of the Leader of the Opposition, that the worst fate which could befall the House of Commons was that it should "die through contempt," he (the Attorney General) believed that the only way to avert that fate would be to restore to that House the full exercise of its powers, and that this object would be most effectually attained by passing the Resolution now under consideration.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, it would be a pain to a great many people both in England and Ireland, and a disappointment to a great many others, to learn from the dry, legal, interpretation given by the First Law Officer of the Crown, that the ambiguous statement of the Prime Minister on Wednesday last meant nothing, after all, but a County Government Bill—a County Government Bill such as he supposed every hon. Member who had ever occupied the position of Chief Secretary for Ireland except himself had at one time or other of his career had the pleasure of introducing to the House of Cmmons—a County Government Bill which, forsooth, was postponed last Session, simply because Her Majesty's Government preferred to introduce other measures in its place. He was not surprised that the Government had considered that the *clôture* — the voluntary *clôture* — which was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on Wednesday to his Colleagues, was no sufficient answer to that noble speech which had been delivered earlier this evening—a speech which, whatever they might think of the sentiments contained in it, was, in its eloquence, worthy of the best days of the House of Commons, and was deserving a better reply than that which had been vouchsafed to it. For what had the hon. and learned Member the Attorney General done? He had denounced the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), who was a truer and purer Radical than himself. He had misrepresented the hon. Gentleman's statements, and had explained the charges the hon. Member had made by an admission of their truth; but there was one thing which the hon. and learned Member had omitted to do, and that was to reply to the arguments contained in the hon. Member's speech. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had hoped, when the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in introducing this Resolution at a very early period of the Session, asked the House to consider it as a matter affecting its duties and its dignity, and, indeed, its future welfare, and ability to perform its duty to the satisfaction of the country, that the House would treat it as other than a Party question. He had, in fact, understood the Prime Minister to entreat the House not to treat this as a Party question. Well, it had been reserved this evening for the First Law Officer of the Crown—for the Attorney General—to treat this as, above all others, a Party question; for what had he done to the hon. Member for Newcastle in response to his speech? Why, he had solemnly read the hon. Member out of the Liberal Party. It would be interesting to know whether a similar pressure was exercised upon those more yielding Members of the Party opposite, who were content with speaking out-of-doors against this Resolution, and with placing Amendments on the Paper which they never moved, and the withdrawal of which they never explained. He should like to know—to borrow a word from the hon. and learned Gentleman—whether the efforts of those hon. Members had been "burked" in the same way as it had been attempted to "burke" those of the hon. Member for Newcastle? The hon. and learned Gentleman had proceeded to misrepresent one of the most important statements and arguments in the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle. He had asserted that the hon. Member was opposed to those very measures of which all his political life, so far as he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) knew, he had represented himself to be the friend, and in favour of which he had voted whenever an opportunity had presented itself. The hon. Member for Newcastle said in his speech, not that he was opposed to these measures, but that they were asking him to buy them at too dear a price. A similar statement was made the other day by no less an independent Member of the Party opposite than the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor); but the hon. Gentleman—why, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), knew not—had not yet been read out of the Liberal Party. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman had gone on to tell them that the charges made against the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) were "without foundation." He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did not know what a charge without foundation meant; but the hon. and learned Member had admitted that the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) —it was to be supposed at somebody's instigation, for he had never yet found that hon. Member taking an interest of his own free will in legislation appertaining to England—had blocked the further proceeding on the Bankruptcy Bill. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) himself on that occasion saw, as the hon. and learned Gentleman had admitted, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade take off his hat and second that Motion. If that was not an admission of the charge made by the hon. Member for Newcastle, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did not know what was. He had something more to say than this. This was not the only action of the kind undertaken by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) could remember well, and his Colleagues could also recollect, how on the 11th and 12th of August, 1879, that right hon. Gentleman kept up the House of Commons all night long by dilatory Motions in opposition to that Bill—a Bill the purpose and object of which was to save the money of the people. But it was not necessary to dwell further on the remarks of the hon. and learned Member in reference to the hon. Member for Newcastle; indeed, if the hon. Member for Newcastle had been in his place, he should not have ventured to interfere between him and the hon. and learned Member. He would proceed to deal with what he understood to be the arguments of the hon. and learned Member in favour of the proposition which they were now considering. The hon. and learned Gentleman's great text seemed to be this—if Members of the House would discuss some measures at too great length, other measures equally or more important could not be discussed at all. Let them deal with the discussion of certain measures at too great length first. What the hon. and learned Member, he supposed, meant was this—that trivial discussions had been initiated and carried on in the House in order to prevent other measures coming on. Well, if that were so, that practice, he ventured to say, would be entirely put down by some such Proviso as was contained in the 5th Rule placed on the Table by Her Majesty's Government, preventing unnecessary repetitions, and compelling Members—as, indeed, they might be compelled under the existing Rules—to adhere to the Question before the House, and empowering the Chair, if they did not do their duty in that respect, to compel them to cease their speeches. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman went on to say that the Estimates at present were not sufficiently discussed, that opportunities could not be found for approaching them, and that, in fact, they were impeded by waste of time. But Her Majesty's Government appeared to have forgotten that they had placed on the Paper a Rule—the 12th of these Resolutions—which went much further than was necessary to cure any defect that existed in their practice in that respect. If that Resolution were carried in anything like its present form, far more time would be given to the Government for the transaction of the Business of Supply than any Government had hitherto possessed in that House, and the particular objection of the hon. and learned Gentleman would certainly be met. But then the hon. and learned Gentleman had said—"Oh, then there is the Indian Budget, which cannot be properly discussed." Why, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) thought they understood from the Prime Minister the other day that when hon. Gentlemen did not choose to attend the House debates ought to cease and discussion was useless; and if ever there was an occasion when hon. Members were not present in the House, surely it was when the Indian Budget was before it. Then the hon. and learned Member referred to private legislation, and made a bitter complaint that the Settled Land Bill of the present Session had been passed without public debate in the House. Well, but if that was a good measure, as he understood from the Attorney General it was, what would have been the use of discussion?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not know what the right hon. Gentleman meant. His statement was this—here was an Act admitted by every Member of the House to be a good measure——

Mr. GLADSTONE: Not at all.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Not admitted by the right hon. Gentleman to be a good measure?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Not admitted by every Member of the House.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Why, then, did the Government consent to its passing? Here was an Act admitted, if not by every Member, at all events by 99 out of 100 Members to be a good one, and because there was not a discussion on it—which would have been perfectly useless in the face of universal assent—they were told, forsooth, that the *clôture* was required. The hon. and learned Member said that the present state of things must be amended; but that was no argument whatever in favour of the particular proposal before the House. It was all very well for hon. Members to repeat—as hon. Members opposite had, day after day, repeated—that the present state of things was intolerable, that there was great waste of time, and that some steps must be taken to deal with the evil. If the Prime Minister had come down to the House and moved a general Resolution of that kind, these arguments would have been perfectly appropriate, and he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), for one, would not have been voting or speaking in opposition to him; but what they had to consider that night was whether this particular Resolution now before the House was the right way of dealing with the evil of which they complained. He, for his part, ventured to say that it was not. In the first place, it was directly contrary to the principle which the late Government invariably followed in all their proceedings on this question. That principle was that in attempting to restrict the waste of time in the House—call it by what name they pleased—they must attempt to deal with those persons who were guilty of that waste, and must not, for their fault, take away privileges from Members who did not abuse them. That was the principle of the late Government, and it was directly violated by the proposal before the House. But, again, he believed—and, if time permitted, he believed he could show to the satisfaction of the House—that all the evils of which they had cause to complain, in connection with waste of time in the House, would be covered by one or other of the Resolutions on the Paper, without any necessity at all for this Resolution. If that were so, he would ask, why was this Resolution pressed upon them with an urgency quite unparalleled in the history of similar measures? Was it because of its intrinsic merits? Why, no one defended it on that ground. Was it because it was in accordance with the "evident sense of the House at large?" The division would show that it was nothing of that kind. Was it on account of Foreign or Colonial experience? That argument had been tried, but had failed. Was it because it, and it alone, could satisfactorily relieve any particular evil? No one had shown that to be the case. Was it because anyone believed that within the next year or so it was likely to have any very great effect if applied as Her Majesty's Government professed they intended to apply it, and in the only way in which Mr. Speaker would permit it to be applied? Why, they had heard the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), whose views, he believed, were shared by many who sat in that quarter of the House, say that if he thought it would be employed as a Party weapon, he, for one, would vote against it. No doubt, that was the hon. Baronet's view. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) wished to speak with every respect of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government on that matter; but what he feared was that they were not masters of their intentions in the future. The real masters of this matter in the future, if they sat anywhere at all in that House, sat below the Gangway on the Ministerial side; and what had they said with reference to their intentions as to the working and application of this Rule? He did not know what view the President of the Board of Trade might take on this point; but it was a singular fact that throughout the whole course of these debates the right hon. Gentleman had never favoured the House with his views as to this matter. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) the other night shrank with something like horror from the doctrines of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); but he feared that the active Members of the noble Marquess's Party would really, in the end, control its policy, and would be too strong for the noble Marquess in this matter, as they had been this and last year on the great question of Irish land legislation — he feared that the noble Marquess would be hurried away by his Party into sanctioning an application of this Rule which, no doubt, at the present moment, the noble Marquess did not in the least degree intend. There was, then, this fact to guide them as to the future; and there was this other fact—that with these threats as to the application of the Rule before their eyes, Her Majesty's Government had steadfastly declined to insert any words in these Rules that would prevent these threats from being carried into effect. He did not know whether they would be told that, after all, these fears were groundless, and that the safeguard was the initiative of the Chair. If the House would bear with him, he should like to ask hon. Members to test by practical experience the value of this safeguard of the initiative of the Chair. He did not now refer to the action of the Speaker. They all knew that they were safe in the right hon. Gentleman's hands; and as to the future, he (Sir Michel Hicks-Beach) was not going to deal in prophecy. What he referred to was a part of this question which was very remarkably avoided by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in his reply to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and that was the position of the Chairman of Committees, to whom they had unfortunately intrusted the working of this Rule. He should like to recall the attention of the House to what had actually, within a very recent time, taken place in that House with regard to a Rule—namely, the 12th Standing Order of the 28th of February, under which the initiative rested as fully and completely with the Chair as it was proposed it should do under the Rule now under consideration. The House would remember that on the 1st of July last the Committee of the House had been for many hours engaged in the discussion of the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Bill. Motions for reporting Progress and for Adjournment had been made. The hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) rose and made another of those Motions, and the hon. and gallant Member for West Gloucestershire (Colonel Kingscote) asked if the hon. Member for Queen's County was in Order. He said—

> "It was trifling with the Committee to make such Motions continually."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxxi. 1201.]

The Chairman of Ways and Means, with whom the initiative rested, said—

> "The Chairman is only the exponent of the wishes of the Committee, and I have waited to see whether the Committee entertain the same view that I do."—[*Ibid.*]

He then put the Question, which, on a division, was negatived; and a Motion was thereupon made by the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair." The hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) then rose and said—

> "I think that the Committee must feel that the time has fully come when this, which I would almost call a farce, should be brought to a close. . . . . . It will not be denied that the Motion of the hon. Member comes within the Standing Order of this House. I therefore most earnestly appeal to the Leader of the House not to allow this state of things to continue in absolute opposition to, and disregard of, the Standing Order, and that he will take such measures as are necessary to re-establish the dignity and Order of the House."—[*Ibid.*]

His right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) at once rose and said—

> "According to the Standing Orders of this House, the responsibility of taking action does not rest with the Leader of the House, but with the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees."—[*Ibid.*]

And what did the Leader of the House say? He said that the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire had stated the law of the House on the subject with perfect accuracy, and continued thus—

> "At the same time, as an appeal has been made to me, although I have no duty of taking the initiative in the matter, I think that it is my duty to answer the appeal, and at least give my opinion. I am bound to say that I cannot for a moment entertain a doubt as to the application of the Standing Order to the case before us."—[*Ibid.* 1203.]

And then the right hon. Gentleman showed why it applied. Immediately on the Leader of the House resuming his seat, the Chairman, who had taken no action up to that time, said—

> "I think it now my duty to Name certain Members as having abused the Rules of the House by persistent and wilful Obstruction of the Business of the Committee."—[*Ibid.*]

The House would observe that the Rule placed the initiative in the Chairman of Committees; he was unwilling to exercise it; he permitted an appeal to be made to the Leader of the House, and the Leader of the House expressed his opinion on the subject—an opinion expressed in terms which he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) ventured to say few if any Chairmen of Committees could, by any possibility, resist; and the Chairman, on the authority of the Leader of the House, accordingly Named certain Members as having been guilty of Obstruction. Far be it from him to say it was done wrongly; but the Rule, at least, was put in force under circumstances that could not for a moment have been expected by the House when it was passed. Did not this argument pulverize and destroy all that had been said as to the value of the intentions of the Government with regard to the working of the Rule? He trusted the House would understand that he had not quoted this page of Parliamentary history with the idea of casting any blame upon the Chairman of Ways and Means—an honourable Gentleman, actuated with a sincere desire to be impartial in the discharge of the duties of his Office. Nor did he say that the right hon. Gentleman acted on the occasion referred to in accordance with what was generally known as Party purposes. But here was an honourable and impartial Chairman of Committees, and a Leader of the House anxious, above all things, to maintain the authority of the Chair; and yet the House would see that the initiative which belonged to the former was virtually taken by the Leader of the House. He would now put a more recent case. Hon. Members would recollect the impatience which, in speech and action, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister exhibited at the prolongation of the debate on Wednesday last, an impatience somewhat hard upon the House, when it was borne in mind that the debate was prolonged for the convenience of both sides, and especially in order that Her Majesty's Ministers might yesterday be enabled to attend elsewhere. He would suppose, then, that on Wednesday afternoon, the Prime Minister entertaining those feelings, an hon. Member of great weight and authority, a perfect monument of impartiality, had risen from his place and said, as did the hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) in July last, that "the time had fully come when that which he would almost call a farce should be brought to a close;" that the Prime Minister said—"We do not think the prolongation of this dilatory debate expedient, or a useful expenditure of public time; that those Benches were crowded with independent supporters of Her Majesty's Government, and that the 'evident sense of the House' had been manifested by unmistakable cheers." Did hon. Members suppose that, under those circumstances, the Chairman of Ways and Means would have been sufficiently independent to assert his own view of the adequacy of the discussion against the authority of the Leader of the House, supported, as it would certainly be next morning, by every Party organ in the United Kingdom? He thought not. If, then, what he had stated were likely to re-occur, surely they were not very far from the time when, to use the words spoken by the right hon. Gentleman the other day, it would not be long before the closing power was contaminated by bringing the action of Party and Party influence into connection with the Chair, and affecting its traditions, to be in their turn followed by a violation of the traditions of the House. He was aware they were told that there would be another safeguard; and he referred to the fact that he had already mentioned this, because the right hon. Gentleman had done him the honour to quote, on two occasions, words he had used with reference to the subject in the spring of the year. On that occasion he said—

> "He thought the Government, under the conditions of the present day, and under the present conditions of political life, would be deterred from an unfair application of this Rule simply by fear of the consequences."

And that—

> "If they attempted any such course, their opponents and critics would have a much pleasanter time in the ensuing autumn than they would."

The right hon. Gentleman had not, however, quoted the whole of what he said on this subject. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) went on to say—

> "Although I believe that to be the true outcome of the position under present circumstances, I very much fear, looking at the way in which day by day the expression of individual political opinion becomes more difficult in this country; how day by day political action is being more strictly confined within the limits of Party organization, that the time will surely come when the Government of the day, taught by the *Clôture* and the Caucuses, may with impunity use this weapon to put down political independence in the House and in the country, without that fear of appeal to the country,

which fortunately, under present circumstances, would preserve us from harm."

In conclusion, the House had before it a Resolution untouched, as he believed, in its worst and vital points by any Amendments to which Her Majesty's Government had assented. From their public speeches, from the Amendments they had placed upon the Paper, they knew that hon. Members opposite were as strongly opposed to this Resolution as were those on that side of the House; and he ventured to express the hope that even yet, in the division about to take place, they might be permitted to believe they were dealing with the issue on its intrinsic merits, uncomplicated with any question of confidence, or want of confidence, in Her Majesty's Government. In his speech on the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), the Prime Minister said that it would be trespassing on the just jurisdiction of the House for the Government to try to enforce the rejection of that Motion by a threat of resignation. He went on to say that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was not an Amendment, but actually a deterioration of the present Procedure, adding that he would rather have no *clôture* at all. He hoped and believed that the right hon. Gentleman, who felt so strongly the injustice of using Party pressure in reference to that Amendment, would at least free hon. Members from this pressure in the vote they were about to give upon a Resolution, the rejection of which, as he had stated, would be less disagreeable to the Government than would have been the affirmation of the Motion of his right hon. and learned Friend. Hon. Members who opposed the Resolution had been told, in the course of the discussions which had taken place, that they were contending for the right to veto the measures of the majority by interminable and useless discussion. They contended for no such right; they had never exercised it; and, moreover, they believed that its exercise would render Parliamentary government not only difficult, but impossible. What they contended for was that, in the alterations of the Procedure of the House, the measures adopted should be such as were required to restrict the licence of those offenders of whom they had cause to complain, without depriving the great majority of Members of liberties which they had never abused; and in aid of that contention, on its intrinsic merits alone, they asked for the support of all, of whatever Party, who wished to preserve the rights and privileges of the House of Commons.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, who rose amid cries of "Divide!" said, he should not detain the House at any length; but he had one word to say, and, notwithstanding the cries of hon. Members opposite, as an old Member of the House, he intended to say it. He wished to enter his strongest protest, on behalf of a great constituency (North Warwickshire) and of the silent Members, against this Resolution. The whole question lay in a nutshell. If the object was the repression of Obstruction, a two-thirds' majority would secure it; but if it was something else, then he said that the Minister who brought forward this Resolution was deserving of great blame. He would call to mind what occurred in 1648, when a Resolution was passed by, as he supposed, the Prime Minister of that period, to the effect that the best means to obtain the end in view was to have soldiers in Westminster Hall, the Court of Requests, and in the Lobby, so that they might be in readiness to pass into the House. Colonel Pride was in command of the doors on that occasion to prevent those Members who were excluded from entering the House. They were about to enter upon a similar state of things; and he would add, with reference to the Speaker's Office, that, in his opinion, if the Resolution now before the House were passed, the dignity and sanctity of that Office would be gone.

Lord ELCHO said, he rose to ask a question arising out of the speech of the Attorney General. The Prime Minister, in the course of these debates, had told them that the *clôture* was not for the purpose of dealing with Obstruction, but to facilitate legislation which the Government might deem desirable. Now, in the course of his speech, the hon. and learned Attorney General had stated that legislation was wanted for the miners of Northumberland and the labourers of Newcastle. To what legislation did this refer? Either it meant something or nothing. If it meant something, and if the Attorney General referred to some specific measures which he had in contemplation, or which the Government intended to introduce, it was essential, before the House passed a Rule to facilitate legislation, that they should know what those measures were. He would distinctly ask the Attorney General to state what the measures were that were necessary for the miners of Northumberland and for the labourers of Newcastle. If, on the other hand, the Attorney General meant nothing by the statement, it appeared to him (Lord Elcho) to be unwise on the part of a Minister to encourage expectations which the Government had no intention of realizing, and to do that in the interest of a political Party.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he had no intention of trespassing more than a few minutes upon the time of the House. Attention had been called to the most able speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen). The hon. Member for Newcastle was a Radical, and he spoke as he (Mr. Newdegate) had heard Radicals speak in days of old. The hon. Member was a happy exception to the ultra-Liberals of the present day. But he wished to call the attention of the House to another speech—to the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). That hon. Member gave a full account of the origin of the Party to which he belonged. He said that his Party had separated itself from all other Parties in Ireland, and that the object of the Party was the disorganization of the House of Commons. He (Mr. Newdegate) sat behind the hon. Member for Sligo; and those were the sentiments, if not the exact words, with which his speech concluded. Now, he did not hear the speech of the Prime Minister on Wednesday—he did not expect the right hon. Gentleman would speak on that day—but he claimed the attention of the right hon. Gentleman when he said that he (the Prime Minister) was not the author of this measure. The author of the measure sat beside the Prime Minister—namely, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington). He served with the noble Marquess upon the Committee on Public Business which sat in 1878. The noble Marquess did not make his intention perfectly clear to that Committee—he would not venture to do so there; but he owned his intention in his speech in this debate. In the spring of the year he cited a speech of the noble Marquess showing that he was the author of this measure, and he cited a speech of the Prime Minister in answer to his Colleague; and, with the permission of the House, he would read the Prime Minister's speech. The Prime Minister said—["Oh!"]—well, he would not quote; but he would say that in answering and condemning his Colleague the right hon. Gentleman said that the *clôture*, instead of punishing the offending Members, would punish the House itself. He had taken the trouble to copy the particular passage from the speech, and if the right hon. Gentleman wished, he would read it to the House. ["Read!"] On the 27th of February, 1880, the Prime Minister said—

> "Reference has been made to the practice abroad of what is termed the *clôture;* but let us observe and bear in mind that, whatever the *clôture* may be as a means of saving the time of a deliberative Assembly, it is, I think—and so I presume Her Majesty's Government have thought—inapplicable to the present discussion, because, as a penal measure, it would surely be altogether inappropriate. The *clôture* is not the stoppage of a particular Member who is supposed to have offended, it is the stoppage of the debate; and, therefore, to bring in the *clôture* for the purposes which this Resolution contemplates would be simply to enact that the House would punish itself, and the great interests with which it is charged, in consequence of the offence of a particular Member."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1593.]

Now, he (Mr. Newdegate) begged to recall attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The hon. Gentleman boasted that he had been a party to the protraction of debates. He (Mr. Newdegate) claimed the deliberate opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that this measure would not check abuse on the part of Members themselves, but that it would punish the House of Commons. In conclusion, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would persevere with the principle of his 9th Resolution, which was in accordance with the ancient discipline of the House, which had always proved effectual whenever it had been applied—namely, of calling to the Bar or of suspending for an indefinite period a Member who, like the hon. Member for Sligo, had disorganized the debates in the House. He lamented this measure because it was a measure in which the minority would not only dispute the Speaker's decision, but must appear, at all events, to controvert his authority, and thereby to contribute to the dishonour of the Office the right hon. Gentleman the Speaker had so worthily filled.

Main Question, as amended, put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 304; Noes 260: Majority 44.

AYES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Acland, Sir T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Allen, H. G.
Allen, W. S.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Bass, H.
Bass, M. T.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, H. R.
Brassey, H. A.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Buxton, F. W.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H.C.E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Colthurst, Col. D. La T.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Creyke, R.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Currie, Sir D.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
De Ferrieres, Baron
Dickson, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, Sir C. W.
Dilke, A. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Earp, T.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Adm. hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Errington, G.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hon. C. W. W.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Forster, Sir C.
Fort, R.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Givan, J.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Glyn, hon. S. C.
Gordon, Sir A.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grey, A. H. G.
Guest, M. J.
Gurdon, R. T.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Heneage, E.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Holms, W.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, E. S.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Illingworth, A.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.
James, Sir H.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, rt. hon. W. M.
Johnson, E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Laing, S.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lawrence, Sir J. C.
Lawrence, W.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Leeman, J. J.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Leigh, hon. G. H. C.
Lloyd, M.
Lusk, Sir A.
Lymington, Viscount
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Maclver, P. S.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, E.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. Story-
Matheson, Sir A.
Maxwell-Heron, J.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Monk, C. J.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Nicholson, W.
Noel, E.
O'Beirne, Colonel F.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Donoghue, The
O'Shaughnessy, R.
O'Shea, W. H.
Otway, Sir A.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, A.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Peddie, J. D.
Peel, A. W.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.
Philips, R. N.
Playfair, rt. hon. L.
Porter, A. M.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Price, Sir R. G.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, J. N.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.

Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Slagg, J.
Smith, E.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, J.
Storey, S.
Stuart, H. V.
Summers, W.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Verney, Sir H.

Vivian, A. P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Waterlow, Sir S. H.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
Whalley, G. H.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, Lord R.
Kensington, Lord

NOES.

Alexander, Colonel
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Barne, F. St. J. N.
Barry, J.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, rt. hon. Sir M. H.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hon. G. C.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Blake, J. A.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, rt. hon. R.
Brise, Colonel R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Brooks, W. C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burnaby, General E. S.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Byrne, G. M.
Callan, P.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.

Churchill, Lord R.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Collins, T.
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Courtauld, G.
Cowen, J.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Dalrymple, C.
Daly, J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Dawson, C.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. W.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, G. W.
Elliot, Sir G.
Emlyn, Viscount
Ennis, Sir J.
Estcourt, G. S.
Feilden, Major-General R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Fitzpatrick, hn. B. E. B

Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gore-Langton, W. S.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Gray, E. D.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Harcourt, E. W.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hinchingbrook, Visc.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J. G.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, T.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lalor, R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leamy, E.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Macfarlane, D. H.
Mac Iver, D.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Coan, J. C.

M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
March, Earl of
Marriott, W. T.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Miles, C. W.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Molloy, B. C.
Monckton, F.
Moore, A.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Murray, C. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Noel, rt. hon. G. J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, H. S.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Kelly, J.
Onslow, D.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Peek, Sir H.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, Earl
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Power, J. O'C.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sandon, Viscount
Schreiber, C.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, Lord H.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.

Shaw, W.
Sheil, E.
Smith, A.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smithwick, J. F.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F. A.
Stanley, E. J.
Synan, E. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, P. A.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, T.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tollemache, hon. W. F.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walpole, rt. hon. S.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Welby-Gregory, Sir W.
Whitley, E.
Williams, Colonel O.
Wilmot, Sir H.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wyndham, hon. P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.
Crichton, Viscount
Winn, R.

Further Consideration of New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 13*th November*, 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter past One o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 13*th November*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* the City of New Sarum, *v.* William Henry Grenfell, esquire, one of the Grooms in Waiting on Her Majesty.

QUESTIONS.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—AYLESBURY GAOL.

Mr. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that Aylesbury Gaol is no longer to be used as a House of Correction?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that a recommendation to that effect had been made by the Prison Commissioners, and it would be complied with.

EGYPT—DESPATCH OF ENGLISH OFFICERS TO THE SOUDAN.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that three British officers have been sent, or are to be sent, to report on the state of affairs in the Soudan; if so, whether Her Majesty's Government have made it a condition that they should be accompanied by a suitable escort?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: This Question was answered by the Secretary of State for War on Friday. I am informed by the War Office that the General Officer Commanding in Egypt does not think it expedient to send any escort with the officers whom he thinks it advisable to send to Khartoum.

Mr. ONSLOW: Is the advice approved of?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That Question should be addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS' LICENCES.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, For what reason was the licence to carry arms by Mr. P. L. White revoked; is he aware that a gun taken from Mr. White was by Rigby, of Dublin, costing £31 10*s.* 0*d.*; and, on what grounds has the amount (£15 15*s.* 0*d.*) claimed by Mr. White as compensation not been paid by the Government?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I must decline to state the circumstances which called for the revocation of Patrick White's arms' licence. I am informed that the gun is one of Rigby's; but I do not know what it cost. The Sub-Inspector offered Mr. White £2 compensation—that being what he considered the gun was worth. White refused to accept this offer, and the gun has been sent to the county store to be re-valued.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—NEWRY WORKHOUSE—TREATMENT OF CASUALS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that Mayor Wyse, R.M., at present stationed at Newry, has sentenced everyone who uses the Casual Ward of the Newry Workhouse to one month's imprisonment as alleged vagrants; and, whether these cases are usually tried in private?

MR. TREVELYAN: In reference to this Question, Major Wyse reports as follows:—

> "I deny, in the most distinct manner possible, that I ever sentenced everyone who uses the casual ward of the Newry Workhouse to one month's imprisonment as alleged vagrants, or have heard such cases in private."

Since Major Wyse has been stationed in Newry 366 casuals have obtained relief in the workhouse, and of that number only 10 have been brought before him charged with offences. Under the Vagrancy Act these cases were properly heard out of Petty Sessions.

POOR LAW (SCOTLAND) — CASE OF ALLEGED STARVATION AT TAIN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, Whether an old woman named Ann Macdonald, residing in King Street, Tain, was found dead in a room there on or about the 3rd of October; whether she died from the effects of starvation; whether, a fortnight previous to her death, she applied for parochial relief and was refused, with the exception of 2*s.*, which was appropriated by the deceased for payment of the rent of her room; whether the criminal authorities failed to hold a post mortem examination of the body; and, whether the Inspector of Poor for the parish of Tain acts in that capacity for four other parishes, and whether such a state of matters will be allowed to continue?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said, that a woman named Margaret Macdonald, about 50 years of age, was found dead in her room at Tain on the 2nd of October. She did not die of starvation. Provisions of various kinds were found in her room. She never applied for parochial relief, but aliment to a small extent was spontaneously given her by the Parochial Board between the 15th of August and the 23rd of September; and shortly before her death she received payment for out-door work she had done. The body was examined by a physician on the day of her death, under the Sheriff's warrant, in the ordinary form; but it was not found necessary to open it, her death being attributed to diarrhœa, from which she was known to have been suffering. There was no fault or neglect on the part of any of the officers concerned, and he (the Lord Advocate) did not propose to take any steps in the matter.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)— SHERIFF-CLERKSHIP OF FORFARSHIRE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is a fact that the office held by the late Sheriff Clerk of Forfarshire was a sinecure, the duties of which were performed by deputies in Forfar and Dundee; whether such an arrangement was not contrary to the enactment of 6 Geo. 4, cap. 23, sec. 6, that Sheriff Clerks shall discharge the duties of the office in person; what salary was attached to the post; and, whether he sees his way to effect a saving without sacrificing efficiency in any new appointment?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said, that the office of Sheriff Clerk in question did not appear to him to be on a satisfactory footing, and when the vacancy occurred he communicated with the Public Departments with a view to having the office placed on a better footing. In the new appointment care would be taken to ensure personal performance of the duties, and he expected that a substantial saving would be effected without any sacrifice of efficiency.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION — JUDICIAL RENTS, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can tell why judicial rents have not been fixed for the tenants of Major George Arthur Crawford, Castlerahan, county Cavan, although they were entered in the Court on 22nd October 1881, and cases have since been tried in the same district which had not been entered for six months later?

MR. TREVELYAN: The cases referred to in this Question were originally commenced in the Civil Bill Court, and were subsequently transferred to the Land Commission Court. A case thus transferred takes its place in the books of the Land Commission as of the date of transfer, not the date of the entry in the books of the Civil Bill Court. These cases will be listed for hearing at the next sitting of the Sub-Commission at Virginia, commencing on the 11th of December.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 —SEC. 8—INCIDENCE OF COST.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the expenses, salaries, &c. of working the Arrears Act will become a charge on the Estimates or be defrayed out of the Church surplus?

Mr. TREVELYAN: By the 8th section of the Arrears of Rent Act, any liabilities incurred by the Land Commission on account of payments to landlords in respect of arrears of rent are primarily a charge of the Irish Church Temporalities Fund; but the expenses of carrying out the Act must be voted by Parliament.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—CHELSEA WORKHOUSE—RIGHT OF A PAUPER TO WEAR THE "BLUE RIBBON BADGE."

Mr. S. MORLEY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the reports in the "Times" and "Morning Post" of the 1st November, of the case of Charles Thompson, a crippled pauper in the Chelsea Workhouse, who, upon refusing to remove his blue ribbon badge from his coat when ordered to do so by the master, saying that he had a right "to stand by his colours," was put on the ground by the instructions of the master, and had his chest knelt upon, and the ribbon forcibly removed from his coat and destroyed; and, whether any, and, if any, what steps have been taken for the protection of paupers against proceedings such as those reported, and for the punishment of the officials concerned?

Mr. DODSON: My attention has been called to this case, and I have requested the observations of the Guardians on the subject. The Guardians have referred the matter to a Committee. Meanwhile, I have no hesitation in saying that I should regret any interference with the wearing of the Blue Ribbon badge by the inmates. As regards the conduct of the officials in the case of Thompson, they state that the man was not thrown or struck to the ground, and that no unnecessary violence was used. I am glad to be able to add that a gentleman connected with the Blue Ribbon movement offered to find Thompson employment, which he was physically able to perform, and that the man has now left the workhouse.

ARMY PENSIONERS—STOPPAGE OF PENSION WHEN RESIDENT ABROAD.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the advisability of revising the rules under which all Army Pensioners residing outside Her Majesty's dominions are deprived of their pensions?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: In the unavoidable absence of the Secretary of State for War, I beg to say, in reply to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Clare, that Army Pensioners under 50 years of age are liable by statute to be called out for service at home in the event of a national emergency; and, consequently, these could not be permitted to receive their pension if residing abroad. To those who are over 50 years of age, and consequently not liable to serve, no such prohibition applies; and many do, in fact, receive their pensions in foreign countries.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEARCHING OF HOUSES.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether instructions have now been given to the Irish Police not to demand admission to houses, whether at night or by day, without a warrant; and, if not, will he state that householders would be justified in refusing admission; whether it has been reported to him that, on a Sunday in last month, Constable Brophy, of Millstreet, with three police, entered and proceeded to search the house of Thomas M'Carthy without producing a warrant; if Brophy had a warrant with him; and, whether this was done under the Crimes Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The owner of any house visited by the police may decline to admit them if he thinks fit to do so, and the police thereupon go away unless they are armed with a warrant. In the case of Thomas M'Carthy, referred to in the Question, the police had no warrant; but they were admitted by the inmates, who might, if they wished, have refused them admission. In visiting houses at night the police are acting in the discharge of their ordinary police duties—not under the Crimes Act.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED DANGER OF FAMINE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the following Resolution, unanimously adopted on the 3rd instant, by the Board of Poor-Law Guardians of Dromore West, county Sligo:—

> "The Guardians of the Dromore West Union view with considerable alarm the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, made in the House of Commons on Tuesday night last, when he stated on the authority of the Local Government Board that imminent danger of famine did not exist in the West of Ireland. It is the deliberate opinion of the Guardians that within the last thirty years no darker prospect presented itself before the people. The potatoe crop is found to be more deficient every other day. Very little of it is expected to be forthcoming on the approach of the new year. In most places half the corn has been lost by the recent storms. Hay has suffered in the same manner. Owing to scarcity of provisions the people are selling off their pigs at ruinously reduced prices at the local markets, and the quantity of horned cattle and sheep has been remarkably scanty amongst the small farmers for the last few years. We cannot lose sight of the pressure brought upon this class at present in qualifying themselves for the provisions of the Arrears Bill, and paying off enormous costs which civil bill and ejectment proceedings have entailed upon them.
>
> "Having all these things in view, and that no remunerative labour is employed in the district, we feel it our bounden duty as Guardians of the Poor to put our views before the Local Government Board, so as to apprise them of the necessity of adopting measures to meet a calamity before the prospect of which we naturally shrink with horror.
>
> "The Guardians at all times, considering the administration of outdoor relief as in many instances demoralising, would respectfully suggest to the Local Government Board, as means of meeting distress, advances from the Government to small farmers for the purpose of improving their holdings, as well as similar advances for the reclamation of waste lands which unhappily abound in this union;"

and, whether he, considering the declaration that "within the last thirty years no darker prospect presented itself before the people," will consider the suggestions to make advances to small farmers for the improvement of their holdings and for reclamation of waste lands, and will take such steps in concert with the Board of Works and the Local Government Board, as may secure the population of the threatened districts from widespread distress through want of employment?

MR. TREVELYAN: The attention of the Local Government Board has been drawn to the Resolution referred to by the hon. Member, and they have directed one of their Inspectors to proceed at once to Dromore West Union and to make inquiries and report as to the statements contained in the Resolution. Until I see that Report, which will not be for a few days, I cannot say whether any exceptional measures appear to be called for.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENTS, Co. MAYO.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many applications to have fair rents fixed have proceeded from the county of Mayo; and, how many of these applications yet remain to be heard?

MR. TREVELYAN: In the Land Commission Court in the county Mayo the number of applications to have fair rents fixed has been 9,349; 1,171 have been disposed of, and 8,177 remain to be heard. In the Civil Bill Courts the number of such applications has been 1,999, and of these 1,107 have been disposed of, and 892 remain to be heard. That proportion may fairly be taken to apply to the rest of Ireland.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS.

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the county court judge of the county Leitrim, Mr. Waters, Q.C., recently appointed a Mr. Irwin Flaherty as the court valuer in cases under the Land Act of 1881, where applications had been made to fix a fair rent, and which were to be heard before him; whether this is the same person who is a yearly tenant in the same quarter sessions district where he was appointed valuer; whether his valuation is under £20 annual value for all the tenements or holdings of which he is the occupier, in county Leitrim, or elsewhere; and, whether he carries on a small business as an auctioneer in the village of Drumkeeran, county Leitrim, and keeps a car for hire and posting purposes, which he drives himself?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This Question appeared on the Paper some time ago, before I had arrived at the decision that I could not ask Mr. Waters to favour me with his observations on any more such Questions. He was good enough to furnish me with a report on the case referred to, from which I find that in February last he did make use of Mr. Irwin Flaherty's services in three cases in his Court. He had endeavoured unsuccessfully to get from the Land Commissioners the aid of a valuer. He then tried to get a disinterested person who would not be objected to by any of the parties, and Mr. Flaherty was the best man he could find. He visited the farms and gave evidence in Court, and Mr. Waters fixed judicial rents in the cases, which, he believes, have not been appealed against. With reference to the last Question of the noble Lord, I have received a long letter from Mr. Flaherty which, in justice to him, ought to be read to the House. In that letter Mr. Flaherty, gives the names of a considerable number of persons of very respectable and, indeed, high positions who have recommended him. He then goes on to say—

> "Lord Arthur Hill asked whether my valuation was under £20, to which I can reply with correctness that my annual value is £38 15*s*. It is true that my late father kept during his lifetime seven horses for hire, which branch of industry I now keep on, as well as that of auctioneer. But the number of horses a man may or may not keep has nothing to do with his practical knowledge of the value of land. For instance, Charles Bianconi in his lifetime kept some thousands of horses, and I venture to say he was not able to put a fair letting value on a holding of land."

That is Mr. Flaherty's account of himself, which I felt bound to read to the House. I must repeat that I do not feel myself bound to ask Mr. Waters to answer any more of these Questions.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF PLACARDS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of repeated instances of tearing down of public placards by the police, he has yet issued the promised instructions on the subject, and if he will communicate the terms of those instructions to the House; whether, at Slane, in the county Meath, the local police tore a placard off a wall, took it into the police station, and, after a time, returned and posted it up again; and, what explanation is offered of this transaction?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The further instructions with regard to the placards of the Irish National League which I promised should be issued have been issued. They are dated the 6th of November, and are to the effect that the Constabulary shall not tear down the placards of the Irish National League so long as they continue of the same character as at present. The placard taken down by the sub-constable in Slane, county Meath, was improperly taken down by the sub-constable when on beat duty. He brought it to his head constable and was told to post it up again at once, which he did.

IRELAND—INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES EXHIBITION.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If any steps will be taken by Government to assist the Irish fishermen to derive advantage from the approaching International Fisheries Exhibition?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have asked the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries to exhibit maps of the principal Irish fishery grounds, accompanied by such information as will explain their operation, and to give every possible information on the subject to Irish fishermen attending the Exhibition.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE DONEGAL AND DERRY SUB-COMMISSIONS—JUDICIAL RENTS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the fact that, by the decisions of the Donegal Sub-Commission given at Buncrana, judicial rents were, in some cases, fixed at a higher figure than the estimate of the landlord's valuer, and, in some cases, were raised on the tenants without any application for a rise on the part of the landlord; whether he has seen that, on that occasion, the chairman, in delivering the decision of the Court, stated that, besides the evidence of the witnesses examined before the Court, they had—

> "The report of the Court Valuer, which report, coming as it does from an independent source, unconnected with either party, we consider most valuable;"

if he will obtain the production of the report of the Court Valuer, together with a statement of the reasons for fixing the rent of the tenants at a higher figure than the estimate of the landlord's valuer; and, if he has not this power, if he will introduce Legislation to submit Court Valuers to open examination in Court?

MR. TREVELYAN: I referred this Question to the Land Commissioners, who inform me that their attention had not been called to the matters referred to in it. With regard to the allegation that rents were raised without any application for an increase on the part of the landlord, the hon. Member must be aware that it is the duty of the Sub-Commission to fix a fair rent, and the absence of such an application does not affect the matter. Any person aggrieved by the decision of a Sub-Commission can have his case re-heard by three Land Commissioners. A copy of the Court Valuer's Report in any case can be obtained after the hearing on application to the Registrar of the Land Commission, and upon payment of the proper fee, which, on the average, is 6*d*.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the fact that the tenantry whose cases were for hearing before the Derry Sub-Commission at Limavady declared to the Court through their Counsel that—

> "The official valuer attached to the Court was not competent to perform the duties of a land valuer; that his prejudices and feelings were altogether hostile to their interests; that they did not believe his appointment was legal; and, that, unless the valuer were at once withdrawn, the tenants, as a body, would withdraw from the Court;"

whether he is aware that, in consequence of the action of the official valuer attached to the Donegal Sub-Commission, withdrawal from the Land Court is contemplated by the Donegal tenantry; whether it is true, as stated by Mr. Roper, the Land Commissioner for Derry, that the Chief Commissioners—

> "Will do nothing without consulting the Lord Lieutenant in the matter, and that, until the Government of the Lord Lieutenant care to alter it, the present mode of doing business must be continued;"

and, whether the Government will propose an alteration, in conformity with the claims of the tenants?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners have had a correspondence with Mr. Todd, who appeared for a large number of the tenants whose cases to fix fair rents were listed for hearing before the Derry Sub-Commissioners at Limavady; and I find from that correspondence that these tenantry have threatened to withdraw from the Court on the grounds stated in the Question. The Land Commissioners wrote to Mr. Roper, asking if he made use of the words attributed to him; and I have just had a telegram from them stating that the report is substantially accurate. They add, in their telegram, that the tenants referred to in the Question have now decided not to withdraw their cases, but to proceed with them.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would introduce legislation for having Court Valuers submitted to open examination in Court?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he thought it would be better that the intentions of the Government in that matter should be indicated in debate, and not in answer to a Question.

MR. LEWIS asked what day the Government intended to give with the view of debating the working of the Land Act?

MR. TREVELYAN replied that, speaking personally, he certainly courted debate on the subject in the course of the present Session; and he had no doubt the Prime Minister would readily answer any Question which the hon. Gentleman might address to him on the subject.

VACCINATION — TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE THROUGH INOCULATION OF SOLDIERS IN THE FRENCH ARMY.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the Vice President of the Local Government Board, in regard to the alleged inoculation of French soldiers with syphilis by vaccination, which occurred in December 1880, Whether he will think it right to lay upon the Table all the information he has obtained on the subject?

MR. DODSON: The information which I have obtained is, as I told my hon. and learned Friend on a former occasion, so incomplete that it throws no further light upon the subject; and I see no advantage, therefore, in laying it upon the Table of the House. At the same time, I am as anxious as my hon. and learned Friend to obtain as much information as possible with respect to the extraordinary circumstances referred to; and I have now again requested the Foreign Office to endeavour to ascertain whether the French Government have made any further inquiry into the matter, with a view of obtaining any additional particulars in their possession.

CRIMINAL LAW—INFLICTION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON ADULTS UNDER THE VAGRANT ACTS — SUBSTITUTION OF BIRCHING FOR FLOGGING.

MR. HOPWOOD asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is to be understood to be of opinion that, wherever "whipping" was mentioned in a penal Act, as for instance the 5 and 6 Vic. c. 51, for the Protection of Her Majesty, "scourging" or "strokes with a birch rod" could be lawfully substituted under that term; whether the "whipping" in the 5 Geo. 4, c. 83, and previous Vagrant Acts, was inflicted by the vagrant being carried to

> "Some market town, there tied to the end of a cart, naked, and beaten with whips throughout such town or place till his body be bloody with such whipping:"

and, whether any statute has been passed since to change that Law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I understand my hon. and learned Friend entertains the view that wherever whipping can be inflicted under a penal Statute the prisoner must always be flogged with a cat-o'-nine-tails or some such instrument, and cannot legally be punished with a birch-rod. I am aware that my hon. and learned Friend's view is that the more severe flogging would not be inflicted, and from humane motives he desires to get rid of the whipping altogether. I do not, however, agree with him; for, although formerly the flogging was of the most severe character, yet in modern times, in the interests of humanity, its severity has been modified, and I think such modification is within the discretion of the Court passing the sentence. I may add that in 26 *Vict.* c. 51, and the three Consolidation Acts of 1861, under which whipping can be inflicted, express provision is made that the instrument with which the punishment is inflicted shall be specified in the sentence.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—SURRENDER OF PRISONERS OF WAR TO THE AGENTS OF THE KHEDIVE.

MR. BOURKE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table that portion of Sir Garnet Wolseley's confidential Despatch in which he asked whether he should hand over to the Khedive the chief rebels whom he might capture; whether the request of Sir Garnet Wolseley, referred to by Lord Granville in his note of the 28th of August to Sir E. Malet, did not apply exclusively to three officers who surrendered at Ismailia, saying they were loyal to the Khedive, and wished to go to Alexandria; and, whether these three officers are to be put upon their trial?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE (for Mr. CHILDERS): I learn from the War Office that there is no objection to lay upon the Table that portion of Sir Garnet Wolseley's confidential despatch to which my right hon. Friend alludes. It is as follows:—

> "Mahmoud Fehmi Pasha, Arabi's chief engineer and military adviser, is now prisoner in my camp. I intend sending him to Alexandria to be handed over to the Khedive. Shall do the same with the other chief rebels whom I may capture, unless I receive other orders from you."

"You," of course, means the Secretary of State for War. The telegram from Sir Edward Malet of the 22nd of August, stating General Wolseley's intention with regard to three prisoners, required no reply, and remained unanswered. On the 28th the War Office received from Sir Garnet Wolseley the telegram giving the proposal which I have just read. Directions were given for a reply to this latter telegram to be sent to Sir Edward Malet. The text of the actual telegram contains no reference to the telegram of the 22nd; but in drafting the recorder (that is, the despatch concerning the telegram), in accordance with the usual routine, a reference was sought, and on its being found that the last telegram on a similar subject addressed to the Foreign Office was that of the 22nd, reference to that telegram was by mistake made. As far as I am aware, the three officers mentioned are not among those now put upon their trial.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the order for the surrender of Arabi Pasha to the Egyptian Government was given before the Code under which he was to be tried was arranged between the English and Egyptian Governments?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I beg to ask the hon. Baronet a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, and which will enable him to explain a discrepancy between a statement which he made in this House and the despatch of Lord Granville. He stated, in answer to my right hon. Friend the other day, that Arabi Pasha was being tried under special conditions which were to be found in no Code whatever; and Lord Granville, referring to the despatch of Sir Edward Malet on the 10th of March, said—

> "The Egyptian Government had informed him (Sir Edward Malet) that, by the Code under which the court martial was constituted, prisoners were not allowed counsel."

I should like to know under what Code the court martial is to be formed?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There is no contradiction. Sir Edward Malet said that under the Code by which Arabi is to be tried there was no provision for counsel for the prisoners, and we understand that they are now to be allowed to have counsel. Therefore, they are not to be tried under that Code to which reference was made. In answer to the Question of the noble Lord, I have to say that I stated to my right hon. Friend some time ago that there never was at any time any question of arranging the Code under which Arabi was to be tried between the English and Egyptian Governments—that is, as regards law. The only variations in the procedure usual in such cases, according to Egyptian practice, of which Her Majesty's Government are aware, are in favour of the accused—that is, allowing counsel and a public trial.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: What I want to know is, the time at which that alteration in the procedure was arranged —whether it preceded or followed the order for the surrender of the prisoners to the Egyptian Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I did not appreciate the point of the noble Lord. There are no facts beyond those which are already in possession of the House on this subject. The noble Lord will see the dates. The arrangement was concluded piecemeal, and not all at once; and, therefore, it is difficult to give an answer, whether affirmative or negative, to that Question.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: May I ask whether the order for the surrender of Arabi Pasha was given before any of the proposed alterations were submitted to the Egyptian Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not know the facts with regard to any orders that may have been given to Sir Garnet Wolseley by the War Office.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Then may I ask the Question of the Representative of the War Office?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I understand the noble Lord to refer to the actual transfer of the prisoner from the English to the Egyptian guard. That would be under the War Office orders. I think the noble Lord had better ask the same Question of the Secretary of State for War.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to ask the hon. Baronet if there is any truth in the statement which appears in some of the morning papers, that the Egyptian Government have declined to confirm the arrangement with regard to procedure which was come to between the Government and prisoner's counsel?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The noble Lord (Lord John Manners) has given private Notice of a similar Question, and I will answer it now. We have no reason to suppose that the statement is true. We have stated that it was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that the Egyptian Government have accepted the procedure agreed to between the advocate of the Egyptian Government and counsel for the defence. We have no reason to suppose that there has been any departure from that.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Is the House to understand that Arabi is to be tried under the Egyptian Military Code as varied by the conditions subsequently agreed to between the Egyptian Government and the counsel?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That is our understanding.

MR. BOURKE: I wish to ask the hon. Baronet whether one of the Rules proposed by Lord Granville, under which

Arabi Pasha was to be tried, was not—

> "That no arguments or evidence as to political motives or reasons in justification of the offence charged should be admitted, but only such as went to establish or disprove the truth of the charges made."

I wish to ask whether the hon. Baronet considers that Rule in favour of the prisoner?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: If the right hon. Gentleman will read the context, he will see that the very language shows that what was in view was trial for ordinary crime; and, of course, that Rule does not apply, in our opinion, to political crimes.

Mr. BOURKE: Is it to be one of the Rules under which Arabi is to be tried?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I believe that such evidence is to be admitted as regards political crime.

Mr. BOURKE: Then this Rule is not to be one of the Rules.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No; we inserted this Rule when we had in view ordinary crime.

Mr. GORST: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether any information has been given to Sir Edward Malet or the Egyptian Government that these Rules have been withdrawn?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No; we understand that the course of procedure is admitted to be perfectly satisfactory.

Mr. ONSLOW: Is Arabi to be tried under an Egyptian Code of any sort or kind whatever, or under special conditions laid down?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That is the Question of the noble Lord which is on the Paper, and which has been already answered.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA.

Lord BURGHLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will allow those Regiments of Militia, whose recruiting is seriously affected by the new system of drilling men immediately upon enlistment, to return to the arrangement of calling all recruits up together for instruction before the annual training of their regiments?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (for Mr. Childers): In reply to the noble Lord the Member for North Northamptonshire, I beg to say that the system of drilling Militia recruits immediately upon enlistment has only been one year in operation. Returns are being prepared of the total number of Militia recruits enlisted between the trainings of 1881 and 1882, as well as of those raised during the calendar year. The condition of the recruiting for all Militia battalions, both of those whose recruits train on enlistment and of those whose recruits do not, can then be compared. These points, together with all other matters connected with the Militia, will be submitted to the Secretary of State for War. But, at present, there seems no reason for altering the existing arrangements.

Lord BURGHLEY: In the meantime one regiment will have entirely disappeared.

ARMY (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW.

Mr. SCHREIBER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any, and, if so, what facilities will be given to Members of this House for witnessing the review by Her Majesty on the 18th instant, in St. James's Park, of the troops recently engaged in the Egyptian Campaign?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (for Mr. Childers): An opportunity will be afforted to Members of both Houses of Parliament of seeing the review of the troops on the 18th by the Queen. A platform will be erected for that purpose in front of the Horse Guards. If hon. Members of this House will apply personally to the Speaker's Secretary they will receive a ticket for themselves and for a lady. I say they must apply personally, as, the space available being limited, it is not intended that Members who have left London should obtain tickets and give them to other persons.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked whether, considering the great interest taken by the public, especially the working classes, in the Army that had come from Egypt, it would not be possible to hold the review in Hyde Park?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER asked that the noble Lord should repeat his Question on Tuesday, when the Secretary of State for War would be present.

MADAGASCAR—REPORTED PROCEEDINGS OF FRANCE.

Mr. SUMMERS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any foundation for the statement made by the Paris correspondent of the "Times" that—

> "The Madagascar envoys have been apprised that France intends to take possession of the coast of Madagascar from Diego Suarez, on the north-east, to Majambo, on the north-west, a coast line of the same extent as the whole south of England?"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is not in my power to give information to the House with regard to the negotiations in Paris between the French and Hova Governments. The subject is receiving careful attention from Her Majesty's Government on account of the important interests of England and Madagascar.

EGYPT—TRIAL OF ARABI PASHA.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the crimes charged against Arabi Pacha, and the punishments attached to those crimes, have been matters of arrangement between Her Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government, or whether the negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government related only to procedure; whether, when Arabi Pacha was delivered up by Her Majesty's Forces to the Egyptian Government, it was known to Her Majesty's Government that he was not to be tried under any known Code; and whether Her Majesty's Government, being now aware that Arabi Pacha cannot be tried under any known or specified Code of Law, Military or Civil, will direct the Egyptian Government to discontinue the present proceedings, and to order his immediate release? Might I ask the hon. Baronet to answer these Questions seriatim?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already repeatedly answered the first branch of this Question in the negative. Her Majesty's Government neither knew when Arabi Pacha was captured, nor now know that he was, or is to be, tried in any other manner than according to Egyptian law, whether codified or not. If he can show that the offences charged against him are not military offences against Egyptian law, triable by court martial, that defence will be open to him. As to the forms of procedure, the procedure, according to the existing practice, would have denied the prisoners the benefit of counsel and of the publicity of trial; and the only thing which has been done *ex post facto*, to quote a phrase that has been made use of in Questions put in this House, is to secure these benefits to the prisoners.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to call the attention of the hon. Baronet to the fact that he has, unintentionally, within the last few minutes, given two answers absolutely contradictory one of the other. In answer to one Question he states that there was no arrangement between the Egyptian and English Governments with respect to the crimes charged against Arabi Pasha or the punishments to be inflicted; and he stated, only two minutes before, to the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bourke), that Her Majesty's Government, by Lord Granville's despatch of the 20th of August, endeavoured to arrange that Arabi should be tried as a common criminal.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: What was in view at that time was his trial on certain charges. He is being tried on these charges and upon other charges; but there has been no arrangement on the subject, and the charges have simply been communicated to us.

MR. BOURKE: Is Arabi not to be tried by court martial? I understood the hon. Baronet to say that if Arabi could show that certain charges against him could not be proved, then he is not in that case to be tried by court martial.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The words I used were that if he could show that the offences charged against him were not military offences, triable by court martial under the Egyptian law, that defence will be open to him.

MR. GORST: The hon. Baronet says that Her Majesty's Government made no arrangement as to punishment. Am I to understand that the paragraph of Lord Granville's despatch on that point is withdrawn?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I must refer the hon. and learned Member to the Prime Minister's answer to Question 43, which turns upon this subject.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS AND COURT VALUERS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a Resolution adopted by the Board of Guardians of the Granard Union, county Longford, complaining of

> "The want of sympathy with the tenant farmers evinced by the selection of the gentlemen appointed as Sub-Commissioners and Court Valuers"

under the Land Law Act, affirming that

> "their close connection with landlords, many of whom are rack renters, prevent the Sub-Commissioners from dealing with the cases that come before them on the principle of 'live and thrive,'"

and adding,

> "that we believe the judgments lately given in the cases heard at Longford and Granard will lead to a total withdrawal from the Sub-Commissioners' Court;"

and, whether, in view of this expression of opinion and others of the same kind from Boards of Guardians in Ireland, the Government are prepared to take any steps?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have not seen a copy of the Resolution referred to in this Question; but I have ascertained that it was passed at a meeting of four Guardians of the Granard Union, where the Board consists of 50 Guardians. The Land Commissioners inform me that they have no applications for the withdrawal of cases from the Longford and Granard Sub-Commissioners' Court.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA.

Colonel ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the equipment of nearly every battalion of Militia has been reported to be in a bad state; and, whether it is intended to give to Militia battalions the valise equipment, as well as the means of carrying ammunition?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (for Mr. Childers): In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I beg to say that the Militia equipments are of old pattern, and the knapsacks in many cases have been for a long time in wear. It is intended to commence gradually replacing them with the valise equipment, which provides means for carrying the ammunition?

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATIONS FROM THE PURVIEW OF THE COURT.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, taking into account the fact that a large number of applications to fix a fair rent have been withdrawn from the Land Courts, the Government will be able to make an early announcement of the course they intend to pursue as to the continuance of the official valuers at the termination of their temporary appointments?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that they are not aware of any withdrawals of applications to fix fair rents in consequence of valuations being made by official valuers, except those which took place some time ago at Balbriggan, in the county Dublin. Threats of withdrawal have been made in other cases; but, so far, have not been carried out. I can assure my hon. Friend that I look forward to expressing the views of the Government on the first occasion when it can be done fully and in detail.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—"GRUBB *v* CHESTERTON BOARD OF GUARDIANS."

Dr. FARQUHARSON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Grubb *v.* The Chesterton Board of Guardians, and the decision and comments of the Cambridge County Court Judge thereon; whether the Local Government Board will so modify their consolidated orders as to prevent in future the contingency of a district medical officer summoning his Board of Guardians to pay him his extra fees; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Correspondence between Dr. Martin O'Connor, of Chatteris, Cambridgeshire, the Local Government Board, and the North Witchford Board of Guardians, Cambridgeshire, relative to the refusal of the latter body to pay a fee claimed by Dr. Martin O'Connor?

Mr. DODSON: I have seen a newspaper report of the case of "Grubb *v.* the Chesterton Board of Guardians," in which a Poor Law medical officer obtained a judgment for an extra medical fee for attending a poor woman who had broken her leg. The County Court Judge appears to have stated that the Guardians had no sufficient reason for defending the action. As regards the proposed modification of the General Consolidated Order, it does not seem to me that the Local Government could properly so alter it as, on the one hand, to preclude a medical officer from taking legal proceedings against his Board of Guardians for extra medical fees which they had declined to pay, or, on the other hand, to require Guardians to pay such fees where they consider they are not legally due. If my hon. Friend thinks fit to move for the Correspondence in the matter concerning Dr. O'Connor, I shall have no objection to produce it.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED DANGER OF FAMINE.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the possibility of severe distress during the coming months in certain districts in Ireland, he will consider the advisability of giving to the Local Government Board the same power of dealing with exceptional distress in individual unions by provisional orders with regard to outdoor relief, which is possessed by the Local Government Board in England?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is not in the power of the Government to authorize the Local Government Board for Ireland to make orders with regard to outdoor relief, other than the orders specified in the 2nd section of the Act 10 *Vict.*, c. 31, under which section the Local Government Board can only empower a Board of Guardians to administer outdoor relief to able-bodied men and their families when the workhouse is full or, by reason of fever or infectious disease, unfit for the reception of poor persons. That rule can only be altered by an Act of Parliament. The Local Government Board are making inquiries as to apprehended distress in certain districts to which special attention has been called, and the reports on the subject which they obtain shall have very careful and anxious consideration; but from the information received up to the present there do not appear to be any grounds for arriving at the conclusion that the relief which may be afforded under the existing Poor Law Acts will be found insufficient for the wants of the destitute poor during the coming winter. The Irish Government are in daily consultation with regard to the apprehended distress, which is never out of their minds; and I can assure the House that no calamity will occur from any obstinate adherence to theory on the part of the Executive Government.

COLONEL COLTHURST: My object in asking the Question was that the Government should take power of legislating upon the subject.

MR. TREVELYAN: Distress can be provided against, if necessary, by other means.

MR. PARNELL said, the question was whether it would be provided against by any means.

POST OFFICE APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. CAINE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will consider the desirability of placing all post office appointments throughout the Country under the control of the Postmaster General?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have no reason to believe that the present arrangement, by which Post Office appointments of a certain class are placed under the Treasury, works in any manner injurious to the public interest, and we have no intention to make any change.

MR. CAINE said, that, as there would be plenty of opportunities next Session of discussing the question, he would call attention to the inconvenience of certain appointments in the Post Office being under the control of the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION).

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, inasmuch as no machinery exists for consulting the wishes of the people of Egypt as to their future government, Lord Dufferin will be instructed, in concert with the Government of the Khedive, to devise such a machinery before the final arrangements are concluded; whether Lord Dufferin has been instructed to make provision in any arrangements for the settlement of Egypt to which Her Majesty's Government will be a party for the establishment of institutions in which the Egyptian people shall be represented, and giving to their representatives control over the legislation, administration, and expenditure of their Country; and, whether it is intended, before any new arrangements are promulgated, to submit them to the sanction of the Sultan and the Concert of Europe?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The first branch of the Question speaks of something to be done before the final arrangements are concluded in Egypt. There are no final arrangements to be concluded by us. Our business is to endeavour to make, or to concur in making, such arrangements as may appear to be necessary and useful for the security and good order of the country; but there will be nothing to shut out amendment of such arrangements according to the light which time and experience may throw on Egyptian affairs. We cannot undertake to define machinery for consulting the wishes of the people of Egypt before such arrangements as I have just described have been concluded. With respect to the second branch of the Question—whether Lord Dufferin has been instructed to make provision in any arrangements for the settlement of Egypt to which Her Majesty's Government will be a party for the establishment of institutions in which the Egyptian people shall be represented?—that is a Question coming fully and fairly within the scope of the assurances we have previously given, and we are engaged in communication with Lord Dufferin upon the subject of it. With regard to the third branch—whether it is intended, before any new arrangements are promulgated, to submit them to the sanction of the Sultan and the Concert of Europe?—it would be quite premature, until we have made further progress, to enter upon the question.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEES.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, For what term he proposes that the Resolutions respecting Standing Committees shall be in force, seeing that he does not propose to make them Standing Orders, and that if made as merely Sessional Orders they will never come into practical operation?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question of the right hon. Gentleman is quite justified by the state of facts to which it refers. The Resolutions respecting Standing Committees were placed upon the Table at a period when a hope was cherished that they might be brought into operation during the present Session, and that the House might have some experience of them. The Session is too far advanced to allow that hope any longer to be entertained, and to pass them for the present Session would be to make them futile. There is no intention to depart from the substance of our proposal that these Committees should be of a temporary and experimental character; and I shall, therefore, make a proposal for the purpose of giving them effect through the next Session, or to some date in 1883. With regard to the precise form of the proposal, we will consider it carefully, and give the House Notice of it before it is submitted.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: It would be convenient that Notice should be given in reasonable time.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Quite so.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARABI PASHA.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can name a day for discussing the Resolution, of which notice has been given by the Right honourable Member for King's Lynn,

> "That this House regrets that, after the unconditional surrender of Arabi Pasha to British authority, he was delivered over to be dealt with by Egyptian Tribunals?"

Mr. GLADSTONE: This is a subject which it has been the duty of Her Majesty's Government to consider with much care, not only with respect to the Government and the House, but much more especially with reference to the interests of the chief person arraigned in Egypt—namely, the interests of Arabi Pasha. Now, if this question were discussed in the House, it would be absolutely necessary for Her Majesty's Government, in order to explain the grounds of their conduct, to consider all the circumstances, whether actual or alleged, belonging to the conduct of Arabi, which led to his arrest. We should necessarily have to refer to alleged acts, amounting to crimes—of which he may or may not be guilty—and we feel certain that, however the case might be stated on the one side or the other, we should necessarily be anticipating the proceedings of the trial. It appears to us to be beyond all doubt, that if we were called upon to state even the possibility of his guilt in connection with the imputation of certain crimes of which he may be entirely innocent, we should be most seriously affecting his position in the coming trial. The expression of our views would give rise to statements which might unfairly prejudice him. There is a consideration more important still than the effect which speeches and arguments of Her Majesty's Government in explanation of their own conduct might produce, and that is, the effect that might be produced by a vote of the House; because I need hardly point out how much greater weight would follow a vote of the House, which, if it went in one direction, might be regarded as condemnatory of the conduct of Arabi Pasha. I am not prepared, therefore, while the judicial proceedings are pending, to name a day for the discussion of this Motion. Were the judicial proceedings in Egypt to be in any way brought to a close, this would be a matter as open to the House as any other portion of the Egyptian Question. What I have now said is in no way to be understood as a departure from what I have already said in regard to our general conduct of affairs in Egypt. Should there be any desire to pronounce a censure on that conduct, it will be our duty to find the earliest day in our power for the purpose of discussing that subject.

MR. BOURKE: I should like to ask one Question arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman—Whether all the difficulties he has just mentioned as standing in the way of finding a particular day for this discussion do not arise from the fact that Arabi Pasha was surrendered to the Egyptian Government, and that they would not have arisen if he had not been surrendered?

MR. GLADSTONE: Of course, my answer is, that if the same difficulties had not arisen—which they might have done — other difficulties would have arisen of a much more serious nature.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER: May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman will give the House an assurance that on the conclusion of the trial of Arabi Pasha, and before any step has been taken to carry out any sentence consequent upon the trial, he will give the House an opportunity of discussing the question?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think the hon. and learned Member can hardly suppose that I will give an assurance that the House will be made so far party to the procedure — whatever sentence is pronounced, whether just or unjust, whatever facts are proved or not proved—that before anything is done the House should be called upon to give its judgment on the subject. One of the great objects and purposes of the House is that a substantial Government shall exist in Egypt, with real authority and real dignity. It is impossible that that result can be attained if either the British Government or the British Parliament is to endeavour to exercise that authority, or take it out of the hands of the Egyptian Government. I say this without prejudice to the answer which I have presently to give.

MR. GIBSON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman when he expects the trial will begin, and when he expects the trial will actually be brought to a close?

MR. GLADSTONE: Considering the Profession to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman belongs, and the total impossibility of knowing in this country when any legal business will begin or conclude, I think it is sanguine on the part of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to ask me that Question. All I can say is that, in the interests of all concerned, it will be very advantageous to all parties that those proceedings should be as expeditious as is consistent with the substantial ends of justice.

MR. ONSLOW asked whether the date of the trial was to be fixed by Her Majesty's Government, or by the Egyptian Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: The date of the trial will be fixed by the local authorities, and not by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, in the event of a verdict to that effect, can Arabi Pasha be executed without the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think it would be expedient that I should enter into the abstract question as to the power or authority of the Khedive's Government to execute Arabi; but I have no hesitation in saying that I entertain no doubt that Arabi will not be put to death without the assent of Her Majesty's Government.

LAW AND JUSTICE (COUNTY COURT JUDGES)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. SELFE.

Mr. JONES-PARRY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it be a fact that Mr. W. L. Selfe, called to the Bar in A.D. 1870, has been appointed to the County Court Judgeship which includes the towns of Cardiff and Newport; if Mr. Selfe has had considerable or any practice at the Bar; and, if it is the fact that he held the office of Secretary to Lord Cairns.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): The Lord Chancellor has made this appointment, not from any political or personal grounds, but solely because he regards Mr. Selfe as a gentleman who is fully qualified to fulfil the duties attaching to the office of a County Court Judgeship. Mr. Selfe has practised as a conveyancer and equity draftsman for 12 years; he has been engaged as assistant editor of the Revised Statutes, and in the office of the Parliamentary counsel, when engaged in preparing Bills, gave proof of great ability. The Lord Chancellor has also made inquiry from others as to Mr. Selfe's qualification, and I am permitted to read a letter from the Master of the Rolls, in which he says—

> "I knew Mr. Selfe years ago; he is a very clever man, and, in my opinion, qualified for a higher position than that of a County Court Judge."

It is true that Mr. Selfe was for a short time Secretary to Lord Cairns, which afforded some proof that he was possessed, not only of ability, but also of discretion and tact—qualities to be sought for in a County Court—but while the Lord Chancellor did not make this any ground for the appointment, he did not look upon it as any disqualification.

EGYPT—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether he intends to-morrow, as he intimated the other day, to make a statement with regard to our position in Egypt?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; a very brief statement; but containing what we consider to be the material facts in respect, not of the general position in Egypt, but of the particular Notice given by the right hon. Gentleman.

CRIME (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON MR. JUSTICE LAWSON.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, can give us any information with regard to a statement that has been made in the newspapers as to the attack which had been made in Dublin upon a very distinguished Judge, Mr. Justice Lawson?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have received several private letters from eminent persons in Ireland, which I have read very carefully; but I find it extremely difficult to make out from them anything which I think it would be right to make public. All the information I have got is contained in a report, dated yesterday, from the Superintendent of the Detective Division in Dublin. I am almost unwilling to take up the time of the House by reading it. [*Cries of* "Read, read!"] Very well; if the House wishes it, I will read it—

> "I have to report that at 5 o'clock yesterday evening the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson left his house in Upper Fitzwilliam Street, accompanied by his son Henry, intending to walk to the King's Inns, in Henrietta Street, to dine with the Benchers. He was protected by Constables Lawlor and Brennan, of the B Division, and Pensioners M'Donnell and Driver."

It has been discovered that the increased duties of the Dublin Police require the addition of some 25 trustworthy men, mostly military pensioners—

> "The two first-named walked immediately behind the Judge, and the two latter about 30 paces behind him, on the other side of the way. When they had got about midway between Merrion Square and Clare Street, M'Donnell's attention was called to a man who, in passing, touched M'Donnell on the elbow in a very significant way, saying, 'It is all right,' or words to that effect. M'Donnell at once concluded that there was something suspicious about the man, and kept his eye on him. When they reached Leinster Street Driver and M'Donnell walked along Trinity College wall, and the man who had attracted their attention also walked on that side, immediately before them. Judge Lawson and his son, and the two constables of the B Division, walked on the opposite side as the Judge approached Kildare Street Club."

The description which follows is what the officer who gives this report has gathered from the evidence of other persons; but it bears out the extremely courageous conduct of M'Donnell, and I think it shows that it was a very desperate attack—

> "The revolver taken from him was loaded in six chambers, and was a good class weapon. Judge Lawson went into the Kildare Street Club, and subsequently went to the King's Inns and dined with the Benchers."

I may say that the private letters I have got from persons who were in his company say his demeanour was, in the highest degree, quiet and gallant—

> "At the College Street Police Station the man was recognized as a person who was convicted of highway robbery on a previous occasion, and sentenced to five years' penal servitude. He was discharged on licence on the 18th of December, 1874. He admitted his identity. He is a house carpenter, about 34 years of age, married, with four children. He was formerly in the employment of a respectable timber merchant in Thomas Street, and recently worked at the residence of Chief Baron Palles. On a previous occasion he made an attempt to shoot a policeman with a revolver. He was brought up this morning at the Southern Police Court, and remanded for a week on the evidence of M'Donnell and the constables."

That is, practically, all the information I can give to the House; but it is satisfactory to know that the protection which has been provided for the Judge, who was liable to so much danger, has proved to be sufficient.

EGYPT—SURRENDER OF ARABI PASHA TO THE AGENTS OF THE KHEDIVE.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL wished to ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the answer which he had just given to the right hon. Member for North Devon, In what manner the surrender of Arabi Pasha by Her Majesty's Government to the Egyptian Government was connected with the trial of Arabi by the Egyptian Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: If the noble Lord wishes it I will repeat the whole answer I have given already; but I think that I gave it in as clear a manner as possible.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: As it appears to me that this is likely to be the very last night on which it may be in the power of any Member to bring matters even of the greatest urgency under the notice of the House on a Motion for the adjournment, I wish in a few simple sentences to show the importance of taking some immediate steps with respect to the trial of Arabi Pasha; and therefore, to put myself in Order, I beg to move the adjournment of the House. At the present moment Arabi is confined in an Egyptian gaol, under an Egyptian guard, and Her Majesty's Government cannot guarantee that his life is safe at the present moment. We know that prisoners in Egyptian gaols are treated with the greatest cruelty, especially in Provincial gaols; and I challenge any Member of Her Majesty's Government to get up and say that the life of Arabi Pasha is not in the greatest danger. Yet, knowing the danger in which he is at present, Her Majesty's Government refuse to give a day for the discussion of the question of his surrender. And why? Because they know very well that if the question is discussed in this House it would decide the fate of the Egyptian Government. ["Order, order!"] I repeat that, should the result of the discussion be to pass a Vote of Censure, the natural result of that Vote of Censure will be to force the Egyptian Government to release Arabi Pasha. And yet Her Majesty's Government, although they cannot guarantee this man's life for 24 hours, although they know he has in his possession documents which would compromise greatly not only the Sultan, but the Khedive and the Khedive's Ministers, and whose interests are to put Arabi out of the way, refuse to let the House of Commons express its opinion as to his fate. I venture to say that if this matter is allowed to be discussed a large number of Members will place upon record their opinion that the surrender of Arabi Pasha was one of the most disgraceful acts that had ever stained the British name.

DR. CAMERON: I rise to a point of Order. On the 28th of June, 1881, I proposed to move the adjournment of the House in order to bring a matter which I considered of very pressing importance under the notice of the House, when attention was called by the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) to the fact that a Motion relating to the same question was on the Paper; and you, Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt very properly, ruled me out of Order. Now, I beg to call your attention to the fact that amongst the Notices of Motion standing on the Paper is one in the name of the right hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) relating to the surrender of Arabi Pasha, and asserting that the House condemns it. Now, any remarks of the noble Lord condemnatory of that act, I submit, would be out of Order; and as you ruled me out of Order on the ground that I was anticipating the discussion of a Motion on the Paper, I ask whether the noble Lord is in Order in anticipating, under the guise of a Motion for the adjournment of the House, discussion of a Motion which stands on the Paper?

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord cannot, under cover of a Motion for the adjournment of the House, anticipate the discussion of a Motion which is set down on the Paper, and stands in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn. The noble Lord cannot advert to any point covered by that Motion. He would be out of Order.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: It was not my intention to do more than allude in passing to that Motion. What I have a perfect right to refer to, and what is not covered by any Motion on the Paper, is the trial of Arabi, and the procedure at the trial.

Dr. CAMERON: I again rise to Order. A Motion stands in my name on the Paper as to the procedure on the trial of Arabi Pasha.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I think it will be found that the Motion of the hon. Member does not cover the remarks I am going to make. Look at the position in which the House is placed. ["Order!"] I must appeal to hon. Members opposite to exercise for the last time in their lives a little spark of fairness. Government have taken up all the time of Parliament. It is absolutely impossible for any Member—be he sitting on this side of the House or below the Gangway, or no matter what his position may be—to bring forward Motions on any subject without the consent of the Government; and this is literally the only opportunity on which the attention of the House can be drawn to the conduct of the Government. And what is that conduct? Why, the Government had absolutely refused to meet the House of Commons on their Egyptian policy. ["No, no!"] Well, what has taken place? On one of the few occasions on which I was able to attend the House before the adjournment, my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) gave Notice of a Motion censuring the destruction of Alexandria, and we asked the Prime Minister whether he would give a day for the discussion of that Motion. He refused to give a day for the discussion of that atrocious act—it was absolutely refused.

Dr. CAMERON: I beg to call your attention, Sir, to the fact that a Motion with regard to the destruction of Alexandria stands on the Paper.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The perseverance of the hon. Member is creditable to his race; but he does not give me a chance. He does not allow me to finish what I was going to say. I do not propose to discuss the Motion referred to. I only say that the Government refused to give it a day. And why? Because it was given Notice of by a private Member, and the Prime Minister said the Government could not think of giving it a day unless it was put forward by someone in the position of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon. Well, the right hon. Baronet has since given Notice of a Motion which appeared to me to be a Vote of Censure. It said the House was not in possession of certain information which it was desirable the Government should give it. If, therefore, this was not a Motion of Want of Confidence, I do not know how such a Motion could be drawn. The Prime Minister, however, evaded it, and refused to give it a day. Then we come to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn—a Motion of a most important and pressing character—and the Prime Minister gets up——.

Dr. CAMERON: I rise to Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord must be perfectly well aware that he is not entitled to discuss the Motion of the right hon. Member for King's Lynn.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I do not mean to discuss it. I only want to point out—and I hope the public out-of-doors will take notice of the fact—that, in spite of all our efforts, in spite of those Notices of Motion—that of my hon. and learned Friend, that of the Leader of the Opposition, and that of the right hon. Member for King's Lynn—the Government have refused to give a day for a discussion. More than that it is not necessary to say; but it is absolutely necessary to mark this firm refusal on the part of the Prime Minister to allow the subject to be brought before the House of Commons. The noble Lord concluded by moving the adjournment of the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I need be only brief in answering the noble Lord. He has shown his usual inaccuracy in his statement of fact. I have given as yet no answer whatever to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon with respect to his Question; and, consequently, as I have not given an answer. I cannot possibly have refused him any request which he may associate with it; but I have stated that to-morrow I will give information which, as I think, may throw light upon the subject sufficiently to assist him in determining what course he will pursue. So much for one of the "refusals." It does not exist at all. Let us look at the other. The first "refusal" was that a private Member—I do not remember who it was —proposed that we should arrest the course of Government Business and of the regular Sittings of the House in order to discuss the question of Egypt.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The burning of Alexandria.

MR. GLADSTONE: Very well; part of the question of Egypt. I stated, in conformity with universal practice, that no Government ever could recognize any Motion of that kind as reasonable for setting aside the Business of the House and grant a special day unless the Motion was made on behalf of some great Party. That is the second case. With regard to the third, the House has heard the explanation I gave to-day, and my belief is that the House is satisfied. At all events, it is open to the right hon. Gentleman to question it at the proper time.

MR. GORST: I think we have reason to complain that the Government will not condescend to give the House such information as they themselves possess, and that the answers given by one Minister should be inconsistent with those given by another, and the answers given by one Minister of the Crown on one day should not be consistent with the answers given by the same Minister on another day. What I understand to be the feeling of the House is not a desire to discuss the general Egyptian Question. Hon. Members are willing to wait until they hear the Statement which the Prime Minister has promised to make to-morrow. Nor are they desirous of discussing the guilt or innocence of Arabi Pasha. But what they think they ought to know is—what are the Government themselves doing? What part are they going to take, and how far do they recognize that they have any responsibility in the matter? A despatch from Lord Granville, dated October 23, 1882, has been laid upon the Table, and the remarkable feature about this despatch is the essential inconsistency between it and the language used in this House by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the various answers he has given. An example of this was furnished this afternoon in the answer that the Under Secretary gave to a Question, when he stated that Her Majesty's Government had entered into no engagement whatever with the Egyptian Government with reference to the punishment that would be inflicted on the political prisoners in Egypt in the event of their being found guilty. I innocently asked how that was reconcilable with the reservation in Lord Granville's despatch of the right to appeal to the Khedive in case of the sentence being unnecessarily severe? What was the answer I received? I was told that the Prime Minister had answered my Question in reply to another Question. No such answer to this Question could be given; and what we want to know is—do the Government recognize that they are responsible for the trial of Arabi and his friends, or do they not? Is their position this—that, having captured these prisoners by the force of British arms, and having handed them over to a Government which is maintained by a British force constituted only by British bayonets, and able to maintain its position only so long as it is supported by the military power of this country, do they put it before Parliament that they have exonerated themselves from all responsibility as to the fate of that unhappy man and his fellow-prisoners by handing them over to be tried by that Government, or are they prepared to take steps to insure them a fair trial? Now, there is a point in this despatch——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member seems to me to be raising questions which are involved in the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn, and in so doing he is out of Order.

Mr. GORST: I understand the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn to be a censure on the Government for having delivered the prisoners over to the Egyptian authorities. I am not enforcing that point at all. I am pointing out that the Government, having so handed over the prisoners, are bound to make conditions to insure them a fair trial. I am not at all trenching on that part of the subject which is covered by the Resolution of my right hon. Friend. But what we want to point out is this—that in the despatch of Lord Granville a condition was laid down which has been made the subject of many Questions in this House.

Dr. CAMERON: On the point of Order, does not the hon. and learned Gentleman trench on my Resolution which calls on the Government to give full information as to the trial of Arabi?

Mr. SPEAKER: Both one Resolution and the other seem to me to shut out the observations of the hon. and learned Member.

Mr. GORST: The hon. Member's Motion is not on the Notice Paper.

Dr. CAMERON: The hon. and learned Gentleman is mistaken. It is on the Paper.

Mr. GORST: It is surely a reason why the House should not proceed with its Business that it is debarred from all discussion of such an important matter. This is a Motion put down for the purpose of preventing discussion — very likely a Motion put down by the advice of the Government. Therefore, I do not think the House should proceed with Business when it is so fettered by Motions put down by Friends of the Government at the instigation of the Government. This is a Motion which cannot possibly be brought under discussion. ["Order!"] I am giving reasons why the House should adjourn. The hands of the House are tied by the action of Friends of the Government in putting down Motions which cannot be discussed, and which they know cannot be raised. If this is the way in which the great Liberal Party are going to treat foreigners, who, at all events, profess to represent national feeling in their own country—if they are going first of all to hand them over to the authorities, and then prevent this House, by an abuse of the Forms of the House, from expressing an opinion on this infamous transaction, I beg to protest against it.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think we must all recognize that the House is placed in a position of considerable difficulty in connection with this great and important question. We recognize, of course, the great duty which lies upon us all of doing nothing that can be injurious to the national interests. On the other hand, we have a duty to perform to this House and to the country; and there are many questions on which we do feel it is our duty to express our dissatisfaction with the course taken by the Government, and on which we think it would be right that the House should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion. The Question put by me in regard to the Motion of my right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn was put with no intention of embarrassing the Government, but with the intention of asking whether the Government would give us an opportunity of discussing a matter which we think of great importance, and which, in the interest of all parties, we think ought to be discussed. I feel, and we all feel, that the answer which was given by the Prime Minister to my Question was one which would not satisfy. We cannot enter into a discussion of the question. We are precluded from doing so by the fact that you have ruled—and very necessarily ruled—that the presence of these Motions on the Paper prevent us. But then it is necessary that, in the grave circumstances of the case, we should consider what course we ought to pursue. To-morrow we may have an opportunity of reviewing a portion of the policy of the Government, and I desire to reserve myself until the Statement promised by the Prime Minister has been made. I hope the Motion for Adjournment will not be pressed to a division; but, at the same time, I think it is necessary that we should take this opportunity of saying that we are not satisfied, and that the course we ought to take must engage our serious attention.

DR. CAMERON said, he was sorry that a little joke of his should have so much disconcerted the noble Lord and the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. It so happened that on the occasion to which he had referred when he was ruled out of Order, because a Motion on the same subject stood upon the Paper, he had incautiously said he should take off that Motion, and move the adjournment of the House on a subsequent day. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill), however, with that great ingenuity and versatility of talent which distinguished him, took forcible possession of his Motion, and reinstated it on the Paper in his own name, and so precluded him from bringing forward by way of adjournment a subject, in order to call attention to which he had removed his Motion. In that way the noble Lord had thoroughly succeeded in impressing upon him what was the Rule of Procedure in regard to this tactic. Accordingly, the other day, when the noble Lord, not being satisfied with the answer of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, gave Notice to repeat his Question, and that in the event of not being satisfied with the answer he should move the adjournment of the House, he thought he could not do better than adopt the noble Lord's own manœuvre, used so successfully against himself, and apply it in his Lordship's case. He accordingly took the liberty of appropriating the noble Lord's Question and transposing it into a Resolution, sticking closely to its verbiage, even to the extent of a grammatical error and superfluous inverted commas, and that he had put down in his own name upon the Paper. Apparently the noble Lord was determined that on some excuse he would move the adjournment to-night. He got a satisfactory answer to his Question; but that was not sufficient to mollify him. This was the last available opportunity, in all probability, for raising an irregular discussion by moving the adjournment of the House; and as "any stick was good enough to beat a dog with," he had managed to obtain what would serve as an excuse. It was a pity the noble Lord did not inform his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) of the state of matters. He had no doubt the noble Lord was acquainted with it, and that he noticed a familiar look in the Resolution, which had been evolved from his own Question. If he had informed his hon. and learned Friend, it would have led him to be more guarded in his denunciation of the horrible conspiracy between himself and the Ministry for the purpose of stifling discussion on a disagreeable question, and he would have been less ready to expose the whole thing to the country. He trusted the House would not think he had acted discourteously. It was a very fair case of a "Roland for an Oliver" between himself and the noble Lord. He quite agreed with the ruling of the Speaker on the former occasion. So far as he was concerned, he believed it was doubtless for the convenience of the House that he should not have been allowed to go forward with his Question under the guise of a Motion for Adjournment; and he had no doubt that the noble Lord, in preventing his going forward with it, conferred a service on the House in the shape of saving of time. He had also no doubt that when the noble Lord came to reflect on the matter he would see that imitation was the sincerest flattery, and would agree with him that it was probably, after all, just as well that he had not had the occasion of signalizing himself as the last Member in this degenerate Parliament who had raised an irregular discussion under the old Rules by moving the adjournment of the House at Question time.

Question put, and *negatived.*

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—WRITERS.

SIR JAMES LAWRENCE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Board of Customs have recently recommended to the Treasury that some of the writers in the Customs Service should be promoted to the position of Examining Officers; and, if the Treasury have approved of such recommendation?

MR. COURTNEY: Such a recommendation was made on behalf of one case only by the Board of Customs in July last; but the Treasury did not approve of the proposal. There has been no other instance.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — APPLICATION OF THE FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

Mr. LEWIS wished to ask a Question of which he had given private Notice. Would the Prime Minister state whether the Government would support the application of the 1st Procedure Rule to the Business of the House during the present Session?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have had no Notice of this Question. But I have no power whatever to give it an answer. It would be very wrong in me to make any statement in regard to it anterior to the occurrence of a state of things that may call for its operation.

Mr. LEWIS said, his Question was, Whether the Government would support the application of the Rule in the event of any case arising?

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

COMMUNICATION TO THE HOUSE.

Mr. Speaker acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter from Mr. Bradlaugh, one of the Members for Northampton:—

To the Right Honorable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Sir,

On the 21st February last I, as I then believed and still believe, in exact compliance with the Statute and Standing Orders of the House, took and subscribed the oath by law required, and took my seat as Member for Northampton. For this the House judged right to expel me, without permitting me to be heard in explanation, or in statement of the reasons which seemed to me under the law and custom of Parliament to justify my action. A new writ being issued, I was on the 2nd March re-elected, and since that re-election I have not yet presented myself at the table for the purpose of taking my seat according to law. From the Votes of the House I have learned that by an order of 6th March the House has resolved, without having heard me on my own behalf, that I shall not be permitted to fulfil the statutory requirement to enable me to take my seat.

In order to avoid the repetition of the appearance of personal conflict with the House, a friendly suit, exactly as the suit of Miller v. Salomons, was commenced against me by one of the electors of Northampton, to obtain a decision of the High Court of Justice as to my legal rights and duty. This suit the Court has yesterday formally refused to hear.

I have therefore, Sir, through you, to ask that the House will permit me, one of its Members, to be heard at the Bar, that I may state the grounds of law on which I claim to be entitled to fulfil the law and take my seat.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most humble and obedt. Servant,
Cha. Bradlaugh.

20, *Circus Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.*
11 *November* 1882.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: As I believe it is impossible, as a matter of Privilege, to move that Mr. Bradlaugh be heard at the Bar of the House, and as, in view of the Obstructive tactics of hon. Gentlemen opposite during the present Session, I do not wish to stand for a moment between the House and the passing of the Rules of Procedure for which we are called together, I merely rise to give Notice that the first time I can do so consistently with the Rules of the House I shall move that Mr. Bradlaugh be heard at the Bar.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: Mr. Speaker, in the letter you have read from Mr. Bradlaugh he refers to the case of Mr. Alderman Salomons——["Order!"]

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order. I would ask you, Sir, whether the hon. Gentleman is in Order in discussing the matter? I am ready to discuss it; but I believe I should not be in Order in doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER: In pursuance of my duty to the House I have read the letter of the hon. Member for Northampton, and upon that letter having been read Notice of a Motion has been given. The matter is so far at an end that no debate can arise upon it, because it is not a question of Privilege.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: I do not wish in any way to transgress your ruling, Sir. I have merely to state that it is within my knowledge——["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to debate the matter in any form he must give Notice of a Motion.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: Then, Sir, I will move the adjournment of the House, for the purpose of saying it is within my knowledge that the statement in Mr. Bradlaugh's letter, that his case before the Court stood on the same ground as that of Mr. Alderman Salomons, is an absolute mis-statement. I will not say a misrepresentation, because I do not know that Mr. Bradlaugh could be aware of the difference of the circumstances between his case and that of Mr. Alderman Salomons—but I have special knowledge in the matter. And now, Sir, having, I hope, dispelled what might be a misunderstanding, or contributed towards doing so, I beg to withdraw my Motion.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SECOND RULE (MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT BEFORE PUBLIC BUSINESS)

[TWENTIETH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure.

MR. GLADSTONE said, it was his duty, as a matter of order and regularity, to move the 2nd Rule, as follows:—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by forty Members rising in their places, nor until after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of."

The Resolution had been recast and put in a less stringent form than when it was first presented to the House, in order to meet what might be called cases of Urgency, and to allow a competent number of Members to raise the question for the decision of the House, whether a Motion for Adjournment should be taken or not. The first condition laid down was that a Motion for Adjournment should not be made during Question time, as had often been done to the great inconvenience of the House and the prejudice of Public Business; and the second was that the number of Members desiring such a Motion to be made should be a competent number. The Government did not wish to make the number too high or too low; but they thought that the number which was competent to transact the Business of the House—namely, 40—would be a reasonable number. They were not absolutely wedded to that number, and, if there were any desire on the part of the House to reduce it, they would not object, even if it were reduced to the number of 20, for which there was a precedent in the number required to call for a Division in Urgency. That was all he would say on the subject, because this was a question entirely within the knowledge and experience of the House, even if it was not crowned by the experience of that evening.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by forty Members rising in their places, nor until after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he rose to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice—that the Rule should operate "on days when Government Orders have precedence." The alteration, he thought, should command the sympathy of the Government. The Government appeared, in submitting the Resolutions, to overlook the fact that one great cause of obstruction or delay was the enormous amount of Private Business which was brought forward by private Members, whose Bills and Motions were generally of a useless character, and seldom came to fruition. In the present Session there had been no fewer than 170 private Members' Bills against 70 Public Bills. The Amendment would do some good if it only prevented private Members bringing forward Bills on subjects which should be left to the Government. Further, he would be glad to see some Rule introduced to give really good Bills, brought in by private Members, ample time for discussion and amendment, and also to leave time to the Government to carry forward their Bills at leisure. It appeared to him, also, that the rights of private Members should be consulted rather in the matters of urgency than of these Bills. The object of Members being sent to the House was rather to remedy grievances than to assist in debates on abstruse matters which often required no legislation at all. He agreed with the Government that restriction should be, perhaps, placed on constant Motions for Adjournment; but he did not think that that restriction should be imposed on nights devoted to private Members. Very often the subjects brought forward urgently on Motions for Adjournment were of far greater consequence to the public than the Bills or Resolutions with which they interfered. They were often of a nature so urgent and transitory that the opportunity for discussion must be taken off-hand; for if Members had to wait for the opportunity of discussion it might not come until too late, and thus a grievance might pass without redress. He hoped the Government would show some indulgence in this matter. They had carried their 1st Resolution by a very large majority; and he believed that, by showing a certain desire to compromise and come to an understanding, they would probably carry the remainder of the Resolutions much faster than if they drew a hard-and-fast line and said they would listen to nothing which came from the Opposition side of the House.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "That," to insert the words "on days when Government Orders have precedence."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought the hon. Gentleman would admit that the Government were not at present chargeable with any unconciliatory disposition with respect to this Resolution. The Government had already, without waiting for any prompting, greatly mitigated and altered the form of their original proposal, and had intimated their willingness to make a concession in the matter of numbers should there be such a desire on the part of the House. Hon. Members would see that this was not a case in which he had to stand up for the interests of the Government. It would be convenient for the Government that Motions for Adjournment should be excluded on Government nights. It was assumed that no other Party was interested in excluding them; but that was a fundamental mistake. Independent Members had just as much interest in the passing of this Rule, and in the Amendment they had an exclusive interest. That Amendment would leave private Members entirely undefended, because a Motion for the adjournment of the House at Question time on Tuesday night, when made without any restriction, might occupy the whole evening, and preclude a private Member from bringing on a Motion for which he had previously obtained precedence by ballot. Down to the present moment the Motion for Adjournment had never had any sanction at all. He would not say it had been censured by the Chair; but it had been spoken of from the Chair as an unauthorized and inconvenient practice, and it had been, to a considerable extent, discountenanced by the general sense of the House. Now, however, they were going to legislate about it, and to devise a plan which would give Motions for Adjournment an entirely different character from unauthorized and inconvenient Motions as heretofore. They would be as legitimate as the original Motions of private Members, provided they were made in the terms of the Resolution; and, that being so, it would be impossible for the Government and most unfair to private Members to surrender to the mercy of uncontrolled action the right of setting aside on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays the regular Business of the House. Private Members often had measures in hand which were not interesting to the great majority of the House, but keenly interesting to some section of the House; but if this Amendment were agreed to, attempts to bring on such subjects would be regularly met by Motions for Adjournment.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the Prime Minister had taken a view of the Amendment which he had hardly anticipated. As he understood his hon. Friend (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), his object was to reserve some kind of right on particular occasions to bring subjects of great urgency before the House; and he had been willing to make a concession on this point to the Government that on the days when Government Orders had precedence such Motions should not be made. It was clear that Government Business was Business of the greatest importance to the country—Business in which the country at large was interested—but private Members' Business, in 19 cases out of 20, was Business in which the private Member alone was interested. His hon. Friend, therefore, had suggested a very great concession to the Government, and was preventing hon. Members from interfering with the Government Business in an unauthorized manner. Hon. Members balloted for the priority of their Motions; but it often happened, as the Prime Minister would agree, that a very unimportant Motion might, on a Tuesday, block the way of a Motion of the greatest importance, and prevent it from coming on. That was constantly happening, with the result that the House was counted out on the unimportant Motion, and the important Motion had no chance of coming on at all. He had an Amendment on the subject on which he should produce some startling figures to the House. He would, however, suggest, if the right hon. Gentleman would not accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, that he might consider whether a more satisfactory arrangement of Business could not be made for Tuesdays and Fridays, and the House allowed to select for itself out of the Motions put down the Motion which it deemed of the greatest importance. "Counts out" being almost the rule on Tuesdays, he thought it reasonable that the Government should allow this power of moving the adjournment of the House to be reserved for private Members' days. It did not follow, because the power was reserved, that it would be constantly used, and it would not do the least harm. In proof that the proposal which he made was reasonable, he pointed to the fact that in the arrangement of the Paper for Government nights the most important Business was always put first.

MR. DODSON said, he thought the noble Lord had called attention to a difficulty which would not be met by the Amendment. Even if, as indicated, uninteresting Motions sometimes had precedence of interesting Motions on Tuesdays, it was obvious that the power to move the adjournment of the House would not help the discussion of the interesting Motions. Neither would the preservation of the power of moving the adjournment help the noble Lord in cases of "counts out." The question, too, of whether the House should have the power of departing from the ballot which now regulated the order of private Members' Motions was quite independent of the Resolution, although it might be one well worthy of consideration. Under the circumstances, he suggested that the hon. Member should move an Amendment in some other form.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman and his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) that some reconsideration of the order of Business was desirable, for he believed that great inconveniences often arose from the system of balloting. He was, however, afraid that the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) would rather tend to increase the present difficulty, and lead to some unfairness to private Members. He hoped his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to divide the House. The Amendment of his noble Friend was in an opposite sense to that of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, and he thought it met the case better.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had hoped, when the Prime Minister introduced the Resolution, that there would have been some discussion, in order that the House might express an opinion on its principle, because until they knew what the Resolution meant they could not discuss any Amendment which might be made upon it. The Prime Minister said that he would make a concession by changing the number 40 into 20; but, in his (Lord George Hamilton's) opinion, the Resolution as it stood meant that, no matter what answer was given to any Question, no Member could move the adjournment of the House, however great might be the number of Members who held his views, if there was a single person in the House who objected to that course. That was the argument——[Mr. GLADSTONE: The first part.] He (Lord George Hamilton) presumed that it meant by leave of the House. But he wanted to know what was meant by "leave of the House?" The "evident sense of the House" had been interpreted to mean the evident sense of the majority of the House. As, therefore, there was much confusion as to the way in which this word "House" was used in the different Resolutions, he thought, if this Resolution was to be passed, that they ought to clearly indicate whether what was meant was the unanimous consent of every Member in the House. If one person could stop the Motion for Adjournment being employed, what concession was the Prime Minister going to make? The great mass of the House, he thought, was strongly against an improper use being made of this power; but, on the other hand, there were times when it facilitated Public Business by the discussion of matters of paramount importance. With regard to Questions, the present Government had a great advantage over their Predecessors. In the late Parliament the House insisted upon every Member reading his Question; whereas in the present Parliament the House would not allow any Member to read his Question, but required him simply to name the number of it, and the Government could give almost any answer they chose. But, surely, there ought to be some remedy against answers which were either improper or evasive. He asked the House to consider whether they would assent to this principle, or that there should be some limitation in it. It seemed to him that if a certain portion of the House was in favour of a Motion for Adjournment, that Motion, under certain conditions, should be possible; and he initiated this discussion in order that there should be a clear opinion as to what must be the wish of the House, so that when they got further down the Resolution they should not be told that they could not raise the principle.

Mr. GORST said, that the privilege of asking Questions of Ministers was one of the most valuable possessed by Members of that House, and the power of moving the adjournment of the House was a great means of compelling the Government to give full and satisfactory answers. If, however, that power were taken away, the House might expect a large number of answers from the Treasury Bench practically refusing the information asked for. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was very fair in giving answers to Questions addressed to him; but he had Colleagues who would not scruple to evade Questions put to them if the power of moving the adjournment were taken away. What they wanted was a day on which they could put Questions with the certainty of being able to force an answer from the Treasury Bench. If that power were allowed them on Tuesday, it would practically re-act on the other days of the week. Tuesday was selected for the purpose, because Tuesday's Sittings were almost invariably wasted in their Parliamentary Business. By the ballot a string of Notices were placed on the Paper which Members did not care about, and therefore they sanctioned the rising of the House at an early hour. By giving the right of moving the adjournment of the House on Tuesday, in the event of an evasive reply being given, they would insure that, throughout the week, Ministers would reply to the Questions put to them. He hoped that the House would not part with this valuable power altogether.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought that the House hardly appreciated the very grave and great importance of the 2nd Rule. There could be no doubt that the Rule must be of great importance hereafter, particularly after the 1st Resolution had been passed. They had to consider the Rules in regard to the Resolutions. He admitted that great abuses had taken place with regard to Motions for Adjournment; but they should not in consequence consent to give up the power entirely. He might state that he had attended a long time in the House, and he had never once moved a Motion for Adjournment; but on one occasion he had seconded one on a Question with regard to the Afghan War, when the answer was of a most unsatisfactory character, given to one whom he regretted was no longer alive (Sir William Palliser). He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) seconded the adjournment simply in order that his hon. Friend might receive a fair and proper answer from the Government on a very important question. What he wished to put before them was this—Would not the Government allow an Amendment to be introduced to the effect that a Motion for Adjournment might be made in case of a certain number of hon. Members rising in their places in favour of it. He said that a certain number of Members, and not the majority, should determine the question when it arose. If otherwise, the Government would always be able to prevent an adjournment. In his opinion, the House would be most unwise to part absolutely with such a right. Unless some such concession as that he had indicated were made, he feared the Resolution would be debated at great length.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he thought the House should consider that the power under discussion, much as it had been abused, was the only safety-valve existing in all their proceedings, and therefore ought not to be abolished under colour of the comprehensive reformation with which they were confronted. This was a power which secured everything moving evenly and seriously, because the Government knew that if the Questions put were not properly answered the remedy would be resorted to. They knew that emergencies arose in the life of Parliaments as of nations, and, knowing that, they must not sit down on the safety-valve of their Parliamentary system. That which the Government was now proposing proved they hardly understood the nature of the proceeding. What they proposed was that those who were on their trial should be called upon to decide whether or not they would hear and disprove the charges brought against them. The persons accused were those who were to say whether they would shut the mouths of their accusers and so acquit themselves untried. For any one Member to be able to jump up and move the adjournment when he was a little mortified was, he admitted, excessive; but, at the same time, he did not think the Parliament of England should be altogether deprived of that old freedom. If, however, that were done, something would happen one day that would make them regret the levity with which it had parted with its undoubted privilege.

MR. LABOUCHERE thought that the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was an exceedingly practical one. On both sides of the House there was a feeling that the Resolution as it stood was somewhat strigent, and a little too much to the advantage of Ministers. He did not say that Ministers absolutely tried to evade answering Questions, but the House knew that sometimes a Minister did not answer a Question very clearly; and if, when he did that, there was no appeal except to a majority of the House, it was, practically, an appeal from Pontius Pilate to Caiaphas—that was to say, from the Government to the Government's mechanical majority. Of the numerous Amendments to the Resolution, that of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was about the worst, because the practical outcome of his proposal was that Tuesdays should be devoted to Motions for the Adjournment of the House. The most practical Amendment was that which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); but he could not, and would not, enter upon a discussion of the merits of it. The effect of it was that if 40 Members wished that the Motion should be proceeded with, it should be allowed without there being any subsequent appeal to the House. He would not stand upon 40 Members; but that number seemed to him to be a reasonable compromise, which many hon. Members were inclined to support. It would much simplify matters if the Prime Minister would say that such an Amendment would be accepted.

MR. J. R. YORKE said, he thought the Prime Minister, in bringing forward these Resolutions, might have done what was usual on the Motion for reading Bills a second time. He might have given a general sketch of the Amendments which the Government were prepared to accept, in a modified form or not, and also of those to which they would give a determined opposition. In his opinion, the right hon. Gentleman was himself mainly responsible for the desultory character of the discussion that had arisen. It was his (Mr. J. R. Yorke's) intention to support the Amendment. It was perfectly true, as the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had said, that the condition of private Members had long been getting worse and worse. The term "private" Members was altogether a misnomer. It would be much more exact to speak of them as "unofficial Members." When he first came into the House those Members had their fair share of the public time, and it was always held private Members could advantageously bring forward the manifold grievances which arose from time to time. Now, however, all that was changed, and the Government almost monopolized the time of the House. As it stood, this Resolution was a second edition of the *clôture.* He should support the Amendment for the reasons urged by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst)—namely, that if the power of adjournment were taken away, as proposed, great temptation would be given to Members of the Government to give evasive and discourteous replies to Questions. The Amendment would put a considerable screw on the Treasury Bench, and that would have a very good effect. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had also expressed a very true opinion when he said that the Rule was altogether too stringent. He (Mr. J. R. Yorke) thought that if the Government would intimate their consent to the acceptance of the principle that 40 Members rising in their places could demand that a Motion for the Adjournment should be moved, it would do much to simplify the passage of the Resolution.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that the complaints of the hon. Member as to the course taken by the Government were most unreasonable. It was impossible for the Prime Minister to have made a statement with reference to all the Amendments upon the Paper in introducing the Resolution. Such a course would be most irregular and most inconvenient. When an Amendment was reached which raised the point referred to by the hon. Member, then the Government would state the reason why the Amendment could not be accepted. At present the Prime Minister had stated what modification he was disposed to accept—namely, a change in the numbers. That was the only change which the Government upon reflection was disposed to accept on the Resolution. If it were not irregular to raise the discussion on the present Amendment, he could inform the House why the proposal for allowing 40 Members to move the adjournment would defeat the object of the Resolution altogether. There would be no room for anybody to bring forward those grievances of which the hon. Member (Mr. J. R. Yorke) spoke; but there would always be some eloquent patriot who would come down and move the adjournment of the House. What they had now to consider was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, which had not been as yet supported by any Member of the Opposition. Indeed, the hon. Member who had just sat down spoke against it. What would be the effect of it? The private Member who had, he would say, the greatest amount of assurance would move the adjournment, and then it would become impossible for any hon. Member to put a Question of which he had given Notice until that Motion was disposed of. It was quite plain that if they recognized the right of moving the adjournment at the beginning of Business, they would disorganize the whole conduct of Business in the House. They could have no arrangements which would not be broken up by Motions for Adjournment, whether on private Members' nights or on Government nights. It was said there might be an emergency when there ought to be an opportunity of making such a Motion; but hon. Members appeared to forget that they had such an opportunity every day at the close of the Sitting. [*Murmurs.*] He knew that some hon. Gentlemen would prefer the hours between 5 and 8 o'clock in the evening for those Motions for Adjournment, which would disarrange Business; but if there was some great national emergency when the Government must be asked for an explanation and some statement should be made, it would involve too great a sacrifice for hon. Gentlemen to come down in white neckties at 11 o'clock at night. He trusted that the House would not assent to the proposal that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays any Member should be at liberty to occupy as much of the time of the House as he pleased by a Motion for Adjournment.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had promised to confine himself to the question immediately before the House; but he had given the House clearly to understand not only that the Government did not agree to the very wise and prudent suggestion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), but that they would yield to no proposal, and would insist on carrying the whole scope and spirit of the Resolution intact. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had sought to justify that determination on the part of the Government by an argument which hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House must, he thought, feel to be unworthy of his position. The right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that the privilege, which, he admitted, in great emergencies might be usefully employed, of moving the adjournment, might always be had recourse to at the end of the Sitting—that was to say, at 2 or 3 in the morning, on a great national or international emergency, some hon. Member, when the representatives of the Press had retired and Mr. Speaker and everybody else were exhausted, might rise and exercise that privilege. Yet that was the deliberate advice which the right hon. Gentleman, speaking on the part of the Government, gave to independent Members on both sides of the House. He protested against the view the right hon. Gentleman had taken of the whole of that Resolution, and also against the suggestion he had made with reference to it. He was not disposed to deny either that during recent years the number of Questions put at the commencement of Business had greatly increased, or that the exercise of the privilege of moving the adjournment had also, to some extent, but to no very great extent, increased. But why had that increase taken place? Simply, he maintained, because the time at the disposal of private Members had been so restricted by the action of the Government that matters which formerly formed the subject of distinct Motions had been put down in the form of Questions, very much, he thought, to the saving of the time of the House, and much, also, to the convenience of the Government. But if the present Resolution passed as it was introduced, what, he asked, would be the value of those Questions? Under the present system an hon. Member who received an unsatisfactory reply to a Question addressed to a Member of the Government was able to make himself disagreeable to the Government by moving the adjournment, and so obtaining the information that he desired; but if an essential modification was not made in this Rule there would be absolutely no guarantee that a question, perhaps of the greatest interest and importance, would receive an adequate answer from the Ministers of the day. The House and the country would thereby be deprived of that information which they had a right to demand, and they would be left at the mercy of a powerful Minister with a mechanical majority at his back. He deeply regretted that the Government should have devised that scheme for rendering the Questions, when put, less useful than they were now, and also that they had not assented to the reasonable and moderate proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton for amending it.

MR. WARTON said, he had never himself moved the adjournment of the House, and he believed that the privilege of doing it had been often grossly abused; but he complained that the Government now sought to take advantage of that fact to inflict on the House a grievous wrong, and to deprive them of a resource which was frequently of much importance. He wished that, on the contrary, they would lend their ear to the request of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and condescend to enlighten the House as to their ideas with respect to the proposed Rule; but instead of that they maintained a studied reticence, all except the Home Secretary, who was as flippant as his Colleagues were silent. That was not the way they should deal with a question of this vital importance. He wished to hear—and the Conservative Party, who were never flippant or reticent, wished to hear—from them what was intended by the phrase "the leave of the House." Was that to be ascertained by a division, or by a certain number of Members getting up in their places and declaring their opinion that an hon. Member should be allowed to move the adjournment of the House? In his opinion, the only merit of the Amendment was that it limited the operation of the Resolution. The Resolution itself seemed almost unnecessary after the *clôture* Resolution which had been passed. In presenting this and the following Resolutions to the House, the Government must bear in mind that, as they had taken their stand upon the *clôture* Resolution, hon. Members on this side of the House were far less disposed to consider the remaining Resolutions, which he, for one, was prepared stoutly to oppose.

MR. GIBSON said, he attached very high importance to the Resolution before the House, and hoped that the Government would take an early opportunity to make some reasonable concessions to wishes which were not confined to one side of the House. The Prime Minister, in moving the Resolution, had adopted a conciliatory tone; but what he undertook to do practically came to nothing. It had, no doubt, often happened that Motions had been made of a wholly immaterial character, prompted sometimes by temper and sometimes by vanity; but, nevertheless, occasions might arise of some important crisis in home or foreign affairs, when the Opposition, who differed strongly, resolutely, and conscientiously from the Government, would have a right to present their views to the House and the nation by moving the adjournment. It was no answer to say that hon. Members could ballot or might wait until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. It was no answer to say the Opposition could, if they pleased, by framing a Motion of Want of Confidence, practically compel the Government to grant them a day, for it might be that the question was one upon which the House ought to have immediate information. Within the four corners of the Resolution now before the House, even with the very moderate suggestion to substitute 20 for 40, no power was given to any Member of the Opposition, or to any section of the Opposition, however respectable or powerful, or to the Leader of the Opposition, even if supported by a section of the Ministerial side, to rise to move the adjournment without the leave of, perhaps, the very Minister whose conduct was at stake. This was little short of a gross scandal. In short, whether leave was to be granted or not depended upon the will of the Minister of the day; but it was not to be expected that hon. Members could rely upon the consideration of Ministers as a sheet-anchor. He, therefore, urged the Government to reconsider their attitude, and to make a modification of the Rule which might be acceptable to the House generally. He did not accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) with pleasure, because he had no desire to interfere with the already limited time of private Members. But there was no alternative. If the Government refused to give them public time, they must ask for a portion of the time of private Members. Should a reasonable concession be made, he did not see why the discussion on this Resolution should occupy a considerable time, as, no doubt, in various instances the right of moving the adjournment of the House at Question time had been abused, and some remedy was necessary.

Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he considered that they had now before them a most important question dealing with a practical evil; and he thought the Government were responding to the sense of the House when they afforded a means of relief against a tyranny under which they had been groaning for several years past. The evil was one which they felt so much that they would go almost any length in order to bring their proceedings into something like order, and make the transaction of their Business fairly efficient. It was perfectly intolerable that when the House had arranged the Orders of the Day in a certain way any one Member might get up and propose a Motion on some grievance, and so lead to a discussion that might last for three or more hours, and prevent the Orders coming on. Still, he felt some difficulty in going the whole length of this Resolution; and he should be glad if the Government could see their way to some middle course. They might put a check on the objectionable practice, without absolutely forbidding a Motion for Adjournment on an occasion of extremity and urgency. For his own part, he was much inclined to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which would subsequently come on for consideration. Whatever was done at present must be experimental and tentative; and they ought, therefore, to be careful, lest they went to such an extreme that a reaction would result.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, that, as the Rule stood, no hon. Member could move the adjournment of the House for any purpose, or however urgent and important, without the consent of the Government. If such a Rule were adopted, hon. Members knew what they had to expect. He, however, ventured to appeal to Her Majesty's Government not to make this Resolution a Party question, as the first had been; and he was certain that any concession which the Government might make in reference to it would be hailed with general applause by the House. As one who was anxious that the House should be enabled to prevent the scandals which had been occurring of late years, he was ready to make any reasonable change in their Procedure; but the present proposal was too drastic, and was far beyond the necessities of the case. He hoped the Government would not alter their Procedure in such a way as would do violence to the feelings of moderate men—a course which would result in an agitation that would necessitate the withdrawal of the obnoxious Rule.

MR. DILLWYN said, he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would not accept as the law of the Medes and Persians the dictum of the Home Secretary, who had chosen to express his opinion prematurely upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), an Amendment which was not before the House. He (Mr. Dillwyn) also ventured to hope that the House would not be detained much longer on the Amendment now under discussion.

VISCOUNT SANDON said, the tone of the Home Secretary showed them what they had to expect. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had told the House in so many words that the Government would not accept any Amendment which would seriously modify the provisions of the Resolution, and had set down his foot in advance upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. But unless that were accepted the House would have no safeguard at all. The fact was, that in this as in many other of the Resolutions Her Majesty's Government had been too prodigal of their words. To carry out their intention the Resolution should have run — "No Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made at any time without the consent of the Government of the day." If this Resolution were agreed to in its present form, hereafter it would be in the discretion of the Prime Minister of the day whether any pressure should be put upon him or not in respect of any particular subject.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, there were two points on which the House was agreed—first, that the power of moving the adjournment at Question time was a very valuable privilege; and, second, that it had sometimes been abused. Members were willing to assist the Government in regulating the exercise of that power, but they were not willing to aid them in abolishing it. The Rule as it stood, however, would abolish it. If it passed, it would place the House absolutely at the mercy of the Ministry for the time being. It might be convenient and agreeable for the present Ministers to be freed from the annoyance of impromptu debates on Egypt or Ireland. Doubtless, some of these discussions were disturbing and a source of trouble; but they had better submit to them than part with a power that they themselves would find, when once again in Opposition, the value of. If the Government would consent to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), the discussion might close there. It was not all that Members wanted, but it was an improvement on the Ministerial proposal, and as a compromise the House would be willing to agree to it. But as the Government did not seem disposed to accept it, he would offer another suggestion. His proposal was even less than that of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and it was simply this. If a Member asked a Question, and did not get a satisfactory answer, he might have the power of explaining his Question. It might be said that if he had such power he would abuse it. He might take a lengthened time—half-an-hour, an hour, or two hours—to make his explanation. That certainly would be an abuse of the privilege; but, to provide against that, the time at which he was at liberty could be restricted. He was very much opposed to the practice of restricting speakers, as it was highly objectionable; but they had introduced the system of measuring out speeches, and this would only be a development of the same idea. If they allowed the Member who wished to move the adjournment to make a statement, and they allowed a Minister to make another in reply, the matter in many instances would end there. The House would be satisfied, the aggrieved Member would be satisfied, and no further discussion could take place. If any discussion did take place, then it would only be with the sanction of the House. But by this plan, the power of explaining a Question and getting a detailed reply would be retained. He might add that the plan was in operation in France and America, and he believed worked satisfactorily in both countries.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR admitted that the suggestion of the hon. Member for

Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) would be an improvement on the proposal of the Government, but it would be a very small improvement. He thought that too much emphasis had been laid on the necessity of moving the adjournment in order to compel the Government to give a civil answer. He had a higher reason, which was that the right might be required to enable the House at some grave crisis to discuss some important question relating to affairs at home or abroad. If they took away the power to move the adjournment, except with the assent of the Government—[Mr. GLADSTONE: The assent of the House.] He assumed that the Government might have a mechanical majority in the future as they had in the past, and therefore he substituted the word "Government" for "House." If some important question were suddenly to arise, the Government would be able to put pressure upon their followers to prevent the Motion for Adjournment from being accepted. That was the reason why the House should be in possession of some provision by which large minorities might be enabled to force a discussion when absolutely necessary upon the Government. He could not make out what the Government meant to do on this question, for the Home Secretary certainly did say that no Amendment that would put it into the power of the minority, however large, to interfere with the Government Business would be accepted—["No, no!"] —but he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) believed that if the Government would accept some such Amendment as that of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), the discussion on this Resolution would be greatly facilitated.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the words of the Home Secretary had been very much misunderstood. His right hon. and learned Friend did not say that the Government absolutely refused all Amendments to this Rule, but that on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) it would be irregular to bring forward arguments with regard to other Amendments. And his right hon. and learned Friend added that when they came to the Amendments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), the Government would be prepared to state why they had made their original proposal and their objections to those Amendments. Nothing had fallen from any Member of the Government to show that there was an inflexible determination on the part of the Government to force their views on the House. It might have been convenient if his right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) had made a statement when moving the Resolution with regard to the Amendments on the Paper; but when the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth was once moved, it was impossible for the Government to make a statement with regard to the other Amendments.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, there were Amendments on the Paper before the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton which might take days to discuss, and, in his opinion, nothing would facilitate the discussion more than a statement of the views of the Government with regard to that and the other Amendments. The position taken up by independent Members on one side and the other was that it would be immensely to the public danger that any Government should have it in their power to say to their majority—"Refuse to listen to the Motion, which is one that impugns our dignity and which demands information which it is of vital consequence to us not to give." He put aside Party considerations when he said that it would be dangerous that any Government, Liberal or Tory, should be able to say, "You shall not raise this question," though it might be of the highest importance in relation to matters at home or abroad. He believed it would be disastrous to deprive the House of this power, which had often been exercised to the advantage of the State, and he therefore hoped the Government would be disposed to come to a compromise on the subject. He was convinced that if some such proposal as that which had been shadowed forth by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton were adopted by the Government it would meet with general acceptance. He confessed that he should hesitate before voting for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, because that Amendment contemplated the abolition of the power of moving the adjournment of the House at Question time on Government days; and it was to be remembered that towards the end of the Session the Government took precedence on almost every day of the week. In the public interests, therefore, no matter what Government was in power, it was desirable there should be the power of asking the attention of Parliament and the country to matters of grave interest and pressing emergency, and that it should not be in the power of the majority behind the Government to refuse them that liberty.

MR. GLADSTONE asked permission to say that the Government wished to meet the Opposition in an equitable spirit, and he would therefore observe this much, that although the Government could not accept the terms of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), yet, if the sense of the House was generally in its favour, they would be prepared to entertain the principle of it in preference to that which they themselves preferred—namely, the reference to the vote of the majority.

SIR HENRY TYLER said, he was in favour of retaining the present power of calling attention to urgent affairs on any day.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS appealed to the hon. Member for Portsmouth to withdraw his Amendment after the statement of the Prime Minister.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved to insert, after "that," in the first line of the Resolution, the words "while the Committee of Supply is open." The principle of the Amendment was that while Committee of Supply was open, Members had proper opportunities of bringing questions before the House and ventilating grievances; but they had not such opportunities when Supply was not before the House, which was in the opening and closing weeks of the Session, and his Amendment was designed to meet that case. The importance of the Amendment was relative to others to come after, about which he hoped the Leader of the Opposition would express as favourable an opinion as he had about this. If the Government were resolved to carry the Rules in the exact words in which they had submitted them, the Rules would not have much validity, because they would be carried in the teeth of the Opposition, who would be tempted to change them when they could; but it would be otherwise if the Government accepted Amendments without caring from which quarter of the House they came.

Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to insert the words "while the Committee of Supply is open."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he confessed that he sympathized with the Government in their objections to making the Motion for Adjournment during the time set apart for Questions. He had himself been obliged to move the adjournment in the early part of that evening, because the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) attempted to prevent him from completing the remarks he desired to make; but he (Mr. Newdegate) had sufficient respect for the House to withdraw the Motion immediately after he had an opportunity of setting himself right. He must, however, say that this habit of putting a mass of insignificant Questions in the House ought to be curtailed. The hon. Member for Northampton had spoken of the House as having degenerated in recent years, and he (Mr. Newdegate) ascribed this apparent degeneration more to the habit of putting Questions to the Government than to anything else; because, although those Questions were put in the presence of the House, the House itself had no power whatever of expressing an opinion either upon the matter of Questions or upon the matter of the answers. In fact, hon. Members sat there as so many lay figures during this questioning and very questionable process, and the only escape they had was by moving the adjournment of the House, which often led to excessive debate, and, at the same time, precluded the House from expressing an opinion by means of a division upon any of the subjects thus anomalously brought before it. He thought, then, that the Government would do the House a service in endeavouring to put a check upon this horrible mass of Questions, which, so far as their importance was concerned, were not worthy of the attention of the Local Government Board, or, in very many cases, even of a parish vestry. He had heard hon.

Members say that the time of the House had been so monopolized by the Government that it was impossible for them to bring forward subjects which interested their own constituents, and might interest the country, otherwise than by putting Questions. He admitted that the extravagant action of a certain section of the Irish Members during the last four or five years, and the kind of monopoly which they had been allowed to establish for Irish Questions and for their own views, was a course of proceeding unjustified by the importance of the country they represented, and apparently attributable to nothing but their own view of their own self-interest.

Mr. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the Question then before the House was the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he thought that the Amendment, no matter by whom moved, had reference to the Resolution before the House; but he would beg pardon if he had transgressed. He had thought that he was entitled to speak to the Resolution as a whole; but if he was limited to the Amendment—which was a mere modification of one of the proposed Rules, intended to limit the time during which the Rule was to operate—in that case he could only say that he did not wish for a limitation of the Rule at all; and he assigned as his reason that, while he knew that he differed from many hon. Gentleman on his side of the House, he was in favour of the principle of the Rule as proposed by the Government. He had no wish to trespass on the time of the House; and if he had infringed the Rules of the House in speaking upon the Resolution generally he hoped the right hon. Gentleman (the Speaker) and the House would forgive him, because his only desire was to express the strong opinion he entertained against the present system of questioning the Government with the view of eliciting from the Government absolute opinions on subjects upon which, according to its present Forms, the House had no opportunity of expressing its opinions. The great body of the House were thus treated as a set of mere lay figures. This practice seemed to him (Mr. Newdegate) unjustifiable. He knew that it did not tend to promote the dignity of the House, and he believed that it did not advance the interests of the country.

Mr. DODSON was disposed to agree with much that had been said by the Mover of that Amendment. He would, however, remind the House that his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government had promised to accept the principle of the important Amendment which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton intended to move. That being the case, he thought it would be better if the present Amendment were withdrawn, and the Government would consider how best to deal with the question at a subsequent stage.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was glad to hear the views of the Prime Minister confirmed by the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken; but he did not know how these speeches were to be reconciled with that delivered by the Home Secretary a quarter of an hour ago. He was glad to hear that there was some prospect of concessions being made; but he thought the time had come when the Government might go further, and tell them at once how far these concessions were to go. Were they going to accept his own or the hon. Member for Wolverhampton's Amendments? Though he admitted that the Amendment was being met in a conciliatory spirit, it would be pressed to a division unless some more definite statement were made by Her Majesty's Government.

Sir HENRY TYLER said, he concurred in the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, that a discussion was being raised on Amendments yet to come. The Prime Minister had said that the Government would be disposed to consider Amendments when they came to them, with a view of seeing what concessions could be made. But it was absurd for the right hon. Gentleman to ask them what concessions they were going to make on Amendments which had not been discussed. If hon. Members thought the Amendment a right one, and that they could not trust the Government to deal fairly in the matter, let them vote for the Amendment. After Supply was closed on the Appropriation

Bill, Members had many opportunities for bringing questions forward. Supply, too, was always set up early in the Session. There was really no reason for giving exceptionally large powers of moving the adjournment at such a time. The House met to transact Business, and it was a large power for Members to move that no Business be done and the House adjourn. The privilege was an abnormal one, and ought only to be used on grave occasions.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, this was all very true of ordinary Sessions; but he reminded the Solicitor General that at present the House was sitting after the Appropriation Bill had been passed; and though they had before them a matter of the importance of the Egyptian Question, they had no opportunity of discussing it except through the courtesy of the Government. This being the case, he thought that hon. Members would, in view of the increased restrictions, hesitate before allowing that Bill to pass out of their hands again in the same way, with the opportunities it afforded for the discussion of grievances.

MR. J. R. YORKE said, that a great deal too much had been said about the abuse of the custom of putting Questions to Ministers. That abuse was, in a great measure, due to the fact that the Government had been appropriating more and more of the time of private Members. If the Government would give some clear indication of the course they proposed to take, they would very much facilitate the attainment of the object in view; but he believed they had not made up their minds, and were fishing for a policy, anxious to regulate their concessions by the amount of support they were likely to receive.

COLONEL STANLEY said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General had not produced any reason why the noble Lord should not persevere with his Amendment, or why, in view of the New Rules, private Members should not be chary about parting with the limited opportunities for the discussion of grievances which they now possessed. The argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman cut both ways, for, if this power was only made use of on rare occasions, it might be all the more necessary to retain it. He quite agreed with what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope(. It would be quite possible for a future Government to get rid of Supply earlier than they did in past years, and thus to shut out from hon. Members one of the legitimate opportunities of bringing grievances forward.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the two Front-Benches appeared to be engaged in an anti-Irish plot. By requiring 40 Members to support a Motion for Adjournment, the majority of the Representatives of the Irish people would be shut out from making such a Motion. For another reason he thought the proposal a bad one. If an hon. Member had the opportunity of explaining the cause of his moving the adjournment, he might get 100 or 200 Members to support him; but the proposal was that 20 or 40 Members should rise to support the Motion before they had heard the hon. Member's reasons for making it. With the grand measure of reform which the Government had just obtained, they had now no excuse for preventing the exercise of the privilege of Members in cases of grave necessity, for they possessed the power to shut up the debate by using the *clôture*. This Rule, if passed in its unamended form, far from checking the abuse of interrogatories, would add to it, for hon. Members and their Friends would multiply Questions in order to obtain, in a tortuous way, information which might easily be brought out in a three minutes' speech. The only time when the Rule ought to apply was on an occasion when Public Business was declared urgent. He renewed his protest against the little anti-Irish conspiracy between the two Front Benches and their expressed readiness to accept the 40-Member provision, both well knowing that until the Irish franchise had been extended the people would continue to be misrepresented by a majority of the Irish Members. He should support the Amendment of the noble Lord; but, in his opinion, it ought to go much further.

MR. GORST said, he thought that unless the Amendment were carried, when Committee of Supply was closed Members of the House would be actually muzzled. The Government would be absolute masters of the situation. They could stifle every complaint and every murmur, and reduce the country to a condition of discontented silence. The

Government was really in the hands of the permanent officials, who were all men of far greater experience than the Members of the Government with the exception of the Prime Minister. Take the Home Secretary. The permanent officials in his Department were all men of far greater experience than he was, and their opinion was intrinsically worth far more than his on all matters relating to the Home Department. But the reason why the Home Secretary had really more weight than they had was because he had to defend the action of the Government in the House. Instead of having the Home Secretary sitting on the Bench, they might as well have phonographs at the Table to grind out the answers which had been inspired by the permanent officials of the Home Office. But the reason why the people of this country submitted to all kinds of petty tyranny in every Public Department was because every act of every Department could be called into question in this House by means of the Motion for Adjournment, and that kept the people contented with the bureaucracy under which they were governed. For that reason he intreated independent Members to join the noble Lord in forcing from the Government such a concession as would enable any grievance which existed to find expression in the place where it ought to find expression—on the floor of the House.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he should not discuss the principle of the Resolution; if any material change were desirable in it, the question could be raised by an Amendment. At present, he would confine himself to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), which, he maintained, ought not to be adopted, for it was intended to allow Motions for the adjournment when the Committee of Supply was not open. The speech they had just heard was wholly foreign, with the exception of the last few words, to that Amendment, which would primarily apply to the remainder of the Session; and if it were adopted, Motions for the adjournment of the House might be made without limit. This might lead to a great prolongation of their Sittings, and a large amount of time would be expended at a great inconvenience to the House. That important operation of the Amendment was one which, in their view, constituted a strong practical objection to its acceptance. Let him observe that there was not the slightest likelihood in the future, any more than in the past, but that Committee of Supply would not be closed till shortly before the Appropriation Bill was brought in, towards the end of the Session. To close it before was so rare and inconvenient, that it was on all sides admitted to be a process that ought only to be resorted to under extraordinary and pressing circumstances; and he would put aside the question of its being prematurely closed. They would, therefore, only have to consider the question when Committee of Supply was set up and closed at the usual times. The Committee of Supply was set up immediately after the Report in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and was not closed till shortly before the passing of the Appropriation Bill; consequently, there was practically no time during which this Amendment could have any operation. But, in ordinary times, there might be a few days when the Committee was closed—namely, the days when the Appropriation Bill was in progress. Those were the days when there was no occasion or opportunity for preliminary Motions for the adjournment of the House, because, on those days, the Business of the House did not last more than two three hours, as the Appropriation Bill was almost the only Business on the Paper, and Motions for Adjournment could be made at the close of the Notices without any inconvenience. He submitted that the Amendment of the noble Lord was not applicable to ordinary times, whereas, at other times, it would inflict cruel inconvenience on many hon. Members of the House. He, therefore, regarded it as unnecessary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the natural and only inference which could be drawn from the Prime Minister's speech was that he had considerable dread of the result of the Motions for Adjournment; and it was naturally to be concluded also, that there were subjects which the Government did not wish to be discussed during the present Session. They knew that private Members had no ordinary means of bringing forward Motions; and it must be taken for granted, then, that the right hon. Gentleman looked with dread upon any unusual opportunity being afforded to any Member to bring forward a Motion, the discussion of which might prove to be disagreeable. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that in ordinary Sessions there would be no opportunity for moving the adjournment, even if the Amendment were adopted, and that he did not imagine that in future Autumn Sessions would be the rule of the House. If that was so, he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) failed to understand his great reluctance to accept the Amendment. If the Amendment were carried, it would have very little effect during the course of an ordinary Session. But there was no security that there would be no Autumn Session, and during an extraordinary Session like the present the Amendment would have an important and powerful operation. The argument urged against the proposal by the Prime Minister appeared to him to be the strongest argument in its favour. He thought every Government should be made to understand that it could not call Parliament together with impunity, in order to carry through exclusively Government Business, without giving it power to discuss, while in Session, such matters as it might think proper. The right of moving adjournments before Supplies were asked for, and after they had been granted in ordinary Sessions could have, as the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had pointed out, only a limited operation; but it would come into powerful operation if the Government called Parliament together for an Autumn Session, not for the purpose of general legislation, but for the sole purpose of carrying some Government measure which they were unable to carry during the ordinary Session. Consequently, the noble Lord's Amendment would act as a check upon the practice of the abuse of Parliamentary Procedure which the Government had initiated, and which future Governments, following their pernicious example, might perpetuate, and would make it impossible for the Government to call Parliament together in order to pass Government measures, and, at the same time, gag the mouth of Parliament so that it could do nothing else. That argument alone was sufficient to induce him to vote for the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 50; Noes 87: Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 364.)

SIR HENRY TYLER moved, as an Amendment, the insertion, after the opening word of the Resolution "That," of the words "unless, as it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, in conformity with the evident sense of the House." The hon. Member said, that the words which he sought to introduce would govern the whole of the remainder of the Resolution, and that whatever words might hereafter be adopted, in the spirit of conciliation indicated by the Government, would not be affected by their insertion. Moreover, the words were those for which the Government themselves had warmly contended in the 1st Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

> After the word "That," to insert the words "unless, as it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, in conformity with the evident sense of the House."—(*Sir Henry Tyler.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he objected to the Amendment, on the ground that it introduced the discretion of the Speaker, and thereby placed a serious burden on that right hon. Gentleman in this matter, where there was no necessity for it whatever. They were all agreed, he thought, that a restraint ought to be put on the present licence in moving the adjournment, and that it ought to be put on, either by referring the matter to the judgment of the House, or of a certain portion of the House. It was, he thought, equally agreed, that they ought not to make a gratuitous addition to the burdens of the Chair, which had been always serious, which were at present great, and which were not likely to be lighter in future. Under the 1st Resolution a burden was laid on the Speaker, because the matter was one of considerable difficulty and delicacy, and the Government did not see any other mode of proceeding that would not import the element of Party feeling.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he would admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, while rejecting the Amendment, had at least done so in a conciliatory spirit. He (Lord George

Hamilton), therefore, was emboldened to point out to him that, as there was generally a fuller attendance of Members at Question time than during the rest of the evening, it would be easier for the Speaker to ascertain what was the "evident sense of the House" then than at any other time. The Government, however, had intimated that they were prepared to consider some Amendment which would, to some extent, mitigate the objections almost universally felt to the Resolution as it stood; and he would urge, in compliance with a feeling which he thought was prevalent throughout the House, that no words should be left in the Resolution which were capable of a double construction. There was no question, whatever, but that the words "by leave of the House" should be interpreted in the sense that the leave given should be universal; and to make it certain, he now gave Notice that he would by-and-bye move an Amendment requiring that the "leave of the House" should be that "of the majority of the House."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he agreed very much with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, that it would not do to put that duty on the Speaker; and he was glad also to acknowledge the fair and conciliatory tone in which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken. That was not a Party question, and it ought not to be dealt with in the spirit of Party. They all agreed that only on matters of great importance should that privilege be exercised; but nobody would deny that cases arose now and then in which it was absolutely necessary for the public interest that a question of great importance should be brought forward in the House, and that Ministers should give an answer or an explanation. The question might be a very inconvenient one, and one which the Government of the day desired to stifle, and was the reason why in the public interest, the minority of the House should be able to have the question discussed, when they showed that there was a real desire for its discussion. He was inclined to ask his hon. Friend (Sir Henry Tyler) not to press his Amendment.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought it would be useful, in connection with the Amendment, if they could have an authoritative declaration from the Chair of what was meant by "the leave of the House." Did it mean an unanimous leave, or the leave of a majority? Sometimes it happened that when a Bill was considered as amended, the Member in charge of the Bill proposed to read it a third time immediately. That could be done by the leave of the House, and it had been done once or twice in that Parliament. He had, in the case of some minor Bills, objected to its being done, and had been informed that the leave of a majority was sufficient. But he understood that, in regard to leave, there was a difference between a Bill being read a third time and the case under the present Resolution, and it would be highly desirable to have an authoritative statement from the Chair as to what "leave of the House" meant.

Mr. SPEAKER: I may say, in answer to the noble Lord's Question, that the understanding with reference to the leave of the House is that it involves unanimity on the part of the House. [Lord Randolph Churchill: Unanimity.] Whenever the Question is put from the Chair, "Is it your pleasure that so and so be done?" if there is a single dissentient voice, the leave of the House is not given.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he wished to ask the further Question, Whether the reading of a Bill the third time, immediately after its consideration as amended, was by the leave of the House? He asked the Question because of the fact that on a recent occasion, when he had objected to the third reading of a Bill immediately after consideration of the Bill as amended being taken at one Sitting, he had been told by the Speaker that the leave of the House, meant the leave of the majority.

Mr. SPEAKER: The case mentioned by the noble Lord is not a case of question as to the leave of the House being obtained. Occasionally two stages of a Bill are taken at one and the same Sitting, and more especially is that the case when the end of the Session is near, and when urgency is pleaded, and that is done not by leave of the House, but by vote of the House.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SHEIL, who had an Amendment upon the Paper, to insert, after the word "made," in line 1, the words—

> "Unless such Motion is made in consequence of a reply to a Question, when, on the demand of fifteen Members, it may be debated,"

said, that for the convenience of discussion, he would postpone it.

MR. O'DONNELL, in moving an Amendment for the purpose of preserving the right of moving the adjournment of the debate when Urgency had not been voted, said, he could, under those circumstances, understand that there might be a reason for interfering; but he could not see the object of curtailing the valuable Privileges of the House when the state of Business was not urgent. He did not suppose the Government would accept his Amendment; but, considering the number of times the Motion had been resorted to with benefit to the country, he thought the right of making it ought to be preserved.

MR. SHEIL seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to insert the words "when Public Business has been declared urgent."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words b here inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he felt bound to compliment the hon. Member opposite (Mr. O'Donnell) on his sagacity in discerning that the Government would not accept the Amendment; at the same time, he must be allowed to consider that far less than the hon. Member's sagacity would have sufficed to convince him of its hopelessness. It introduced a fundamental innovation, and invited the House, without Notice, to take upon themselves to legislate upon the subject which at other times was based upon the decisions of the Speaker. Why the Speaker was to legislate upon it in general, while they were to take that particular point into their hands, did not appear. The Amendment would involve the most inconvenient consequences, and, under the name of preserving the liberties of private Members, would throw the whole Business of the House into chaos and confusion. It was totally unsuited to the period of Urgency, and there was already a Rule for Urgency of a far more stringent kind. The Amendment was simply a negative; in short, he did not think it would be possible to concentrate it to many points of objection, and he therefore opposed it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, in rising to move, as an Amendment, in line 1, to leave out all the words after "made," and insert—

> "Until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of; and, if such Motion be decided in the negative, no other such Motion shall be made until the Orders of the Day have been entered upon,"

said, he believed that it was one of the most important Amendments proposed to the Resolution, as it went against its whole principle, and it would also give the Government an opportunity of explaining the reason why they introduced the Resolution. There might be an overwhelming reason for it; but, at present, the Government had not taken the trouble to state any at all. There was an opinion widely spread that the power belonging to individual Members of making Motions for the adjournment of the debate had been abused; but it was entirely an erroneous impression. It was a wonderful thing sometimes to watch how a belief of that kind was passed on from one person to another; but he had taken the trouble to look over the Records of the whole of the last Parliament, and his astonishment had been rather at the small number of times it had been, compared with the large number in which it might have been, used. The whole basis of the Ministerial argument was that it was a monstrous thing to place this power in the hands of Members, because they would be apt to use it frequently. But before the House parted with a power which was almost as old as the House itself, and which was the only hold which an Opposition had upon the Government, they should see whether it had been abused. Let them take the present Parliament, and see whether they had had many Motions for Adjournment. How many times did the Prime Minister suppose it was moved during the first Session of the present Parliament, from the commencement in May to the end on the 7th of September? Only six. In fact, the first instance in which it was employed was when the hon. Member for Swansea

(Mr. Dillwyn) moved the adjournment, he must confess with a very trivial and ridiculous object, in order to call attention to Lord Byron's Indemnity Bill. It was only once employed by the Irish Members, and that was when the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster) had made a violent attack on the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), in consequence of a speech he made at Kildare, and the hon. Member for Tipperary was obliged to employ this method of vindicating himself. With regard to the second Session of that year and the first of this Parliament, he must say that hon. Members were placed in a peculiar position, for the Prime Minister came down one day in June, and requested the House to give him the remainder of its time; and from June till the 7th of September every single day was devoted to the measures of the Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: I should like to have your dates; the question is one of fact only.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No doubt it is, and the Prime Minister is as good a judge of fact as I am.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think so.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the Government had monopolized every day of the Session from the 7th of June to the end of the Session.

MR. GLADSTONE: Do you mean to say that we appropriated every day?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not mean to include Sundays. His allegation was that, to all intents and purposes, from the 7th of June to the end of the Session, the Government monopolized the whole time of the House, and that, therefore, Motions for Adjournment, in such circumstances, were not only permissible, but were actually forced upon hon. Members. What happened in the second Session of this Parliament? Undoubtedly there was an increase in the number of Motions for Adjournment in that Session, for they amounted to 19. It must be remembered, however, that the House met in January, and did not separate until the 27th of August. During the whole of that period, this frightful abuse of the Forms of the House, so scandalous and so unconstitutional, as described by Her Majesty's Government, was exercised only 19 times in eight months. How many times did the Irish Members move the adjournment? [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: How about the Fourth Party?] Well, as a matter of fact, the Fourth Party moved the adjournment exactly four times during the Session. The Irish Party moved the adjournment 11 times out of the 19 times the Motion was made. But what was the state of Ireland at that time? Her Majesty's Government were then engaged in alternately fomenting disaffection in Ireland when it suited their own purposes, and in suppressing it when it did not. Every day there were arrests being made, evictions were being carried out, Members of Parliament were being sent to gaol, and murders were being committed. In such a lamentable state of things, the only wonder was they had so seldom exercised their privilege; and he was astonished that, instead of 11 Motions for Adjournment being made by the Irish Members during a long Session, such Motions were not made every day. Moreover, of those 11 Motions, more than two-thirds were brought about by the unsatisfactory and evasive character of the answers which were given to the Questions put by Irish Members by the then Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Had that right hon. Gentleman recollected the maxim, that "a soft answer turneth away wrath," he might have prevented most of those Motions for Adjournment. The right hon. Gentleman, however, must have forgotten it, for he, time after time, deliberately went out of his way to provoke the wrath of the Irish Members. And, again, in that Session the time of the House was monopolized by the Government. The Prime Minister had devised his beautiful Rules of Urgency, which remained in force up to the end of April, during the discussions on the Arms Act, and from that date to the end of the Session, the Government appropriated the whole time of the House, the result being that no private Member had an opportunity of calling the attention of the House to any subject whatever. Was it a matter of surprise, then, that the power of moving the adjournment was resorted to in exceptional circumstances, considering the provocation that Irish Members were daily receiving? He hoped these facts would dispel the assumption that the power of moving the adjournment had been abused. In the first part of the present Session the Motion for Adjournment had been made 13 times, and again Government monopolized the time of the House from the middle of April to the end of August. From the time when the Government introduced their Prevention of Crime Bill to the end of the Session, the rights of private Members had been entirely set aside, and no private Member could bring any matter before the House except by leave of Her Majesty's Government. Of the 13 Motions, only seven were made by the Irish Members, who were held up to reprobation as the cause of all that trouble; and yet during two Sessions, notwithstanding the very great provocation they received, they exercised the privilege only 18 times. One of the most important occasions on which the Motion for the Adjournment was made was that in order to elicit some light on the transactions arising out of the "Kilmainham Treaty." Supposing this Rule were in force, and they had parted with that right, would it have been possible to have brought to light that most disgraceful transaction —a transaction so obnoxious that its precise terms had never been made know down to this day? On another occasion, the Leader of the Opposition moved the adjournment in reference to the resignation of the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, the right hon. Member for Bradford. Everybody knew that that most extraordinary occurrence was looked upon as an indication of the complete break-up of the Liberal Party. ["Oh, oh!" *and laughter.*] Hon. Members appeared to have lost either their minds or their recollections. Why, the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had got up, and had denounced the circumstances that had led to the resignation of the right hon. Member for Bradford. What subject could have been more important to the country than that? But, under this Rule, the Leader of the Opposition could not have brought that matter under the Notice of the House without the leave of the Prime Minister. On the whole, in this Parliament, which had sat more days and hours so far than any other Parliament, there had been only 38 Motions for Adjournment, and for the majority of those the greatest excuses could be alleged, for several of them might have been avoided if Government had been more courteous in their replies. He ventured to say that, if another Government, more happy and more fortunate in public affairs, came into power, even the very small abuse of this power of moving the adjournment which could be pointed to would disappear. But what had been the conduct of hon. and right hon. Members opposite when they were out of Office? Going back to the last Parliament—that elected in 1874—he found that these Motions were nearly as common as they had been during the present Parliament; but not a word was then said by the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Bench, who were then in Opposition, as to this frightful abuse of the Forms of the House, which they declared required instant and extraordinary remedy. In the first Session of the Parliament of 1874, the Motion was made four times; and on one occasion, most extraordinary to say, it was made by the present Prime Minister, and why—because Mr. Disraeli made a statement on Public Business. On the 21st of July, 1874—a time when the Liberal Party were very active—the hon. Baronet the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) moved the adjournment, because of a statement made on behalf of the then Government in relation to the Fiji Islands. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) did think that was an abuse of the Forms of the House. In the second Session of that Parliament, the Motion was made eight times, nearly always by Liberals. In the first place, it was made by Mr. Lowe, who brought forward the case of Dr. Kenealy. On the 19th of July, 1875, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) made the Motion, in order to bring before the House the state and progress of Public Business; and on another occasion it was moved by an Irish Member, the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry)—the only time Irish Members made it during the Session. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) had said just now that Motions for the Adjournment were made only by "pushing patriots," and, assuming all the airs of a burly

Democrat, something like Mr. Wilkes, he added, "who possessed a suit of evening clothes." Was the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India a pushing patriot who possessed a suit of evening clothes? Was the Prime Minister? In the third Session of that Parliament the adjournment was moved only nine times—on one occasion by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, and on two occasions by the present Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett). In the fourth Session it was only moved seven times; and here he found the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford asserting themselves of their privilege. And it should be remembered that in these Sessions of the late Parliament there was no monopolizing of time by the Government, who plodded along as best they could. And the late Government had carefully cultivated the art of polite answers to Questions, and did not produce the scenes with which the House had for some time past been familiar. In the fifth Session the adjournment was moved nine times, once by the Postmaster General, and another time by that pushing patriot, the noble Marquess. In the sixth Session it was moved altogether 14 times, once by the Postmaster General, and on two other occasions, once by the Prime Minister, and once by another pushing patriot, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), who, as they knew, originated those unfortunate scenes of Obstruction which had led to these Resolutions. In that Session, on the 5th of March and on the 11th of March, the adjournment was moved by two right hon. Liberal Members, one of whom was the ex-Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), and the other the Vice-President of the Committee of Council for Education (Mr. Mundella). So that in less than a week, these two pushing patriots moved the adjournment of the House on very futile and frivolous subjects. The result of all these figures went to show that the Government had not made out a case for this Resolution; and, so far from the assumption on which they based their case, that there had been an abuse of this privilege, being true, he maintained that there had been no abuse. It was quite true that, on more than one occasion, hon. Members moved the adjournment when the general "sense of the House" was against them; but there was no such case of abuse as would warrant the House in passing this Resolution. The House had parted with its power of initiating a debate on presenting Petitions, and of continuing debates at great length; and now they were asked to part with this one power which, far beyond every other, kept a check, not only upon the Government generally, but upon individual Ministers, and prevented them from trampling upon private Members who really had cases to bring before the House. In the Parliament of 1859—Lord Palmerston's last Parliament—the privilege was comparatively frequently exercised. In the first Session the adjournment was moved three times—on one occasion by that eminent Member of the House, Sir George Grey; in the second twice, one of which was by Mr. Kinglake when he brought forward the question of the cession of Savoy and Nice; in the third, only once; and in the fourth, only twice. In the fifth Session it was moved nine times, once by one of the most respected Members of the House—the senior Member for Oxfordshire (Colonel North)—and another time by Mr. Ayrton. It was moved three times in the sixth Session; on one occasion by Mr. Hennessy, when it led to the resignation of the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), in consequence of his relations with Mazzini. In the seventh Session it was moved three times, and during the whole of that Parliament 23 times. That was no such great disproportion, considering what Parliament was then, before the late Reform Bill, and what it was now. But there was one conclusive argument against giving Government the power which this Resolution would confer, and that was that they had carried the 1st Resolution. He could not conceive a more legitimate use of the *clôture*—if there were any legitimate use of it—than for the Speaker to put it in force when a Member moved the adjournment against the wish of the whole House, when he had concluded his speech and the Minister had replied. But by adopting the *clôture*, the Government had put themselves out of Court.

His Amendment did not meet the Government's proposal with a direct negative, though it had very high authority in its favour. He wished it was in his power to mention that authority; but he might say it was one to which the House was accustomed to pay very great attention. The effect of the Amendment was that no adjournment could be moved until all the Questions on the Paper had been put and answered. The object of that was very clear. Hon. Gentlemen often moved the adjournment in a moment of bad temper or excitement, resulting from what they might consider to be the unsatisfactory nature of the replies they might have received; and if they had time to reflect on those answers, and to consult their friends, they might feel disposed not to persevere with their original intention. He also proposed that, should the adjournment be negatived, it should not be competent for anyone to move the adjournment again until the Orders of the Day had been entered on. He doubted whether it was in the power of any Member of the House to overvalue that privilege, and he hoped the Opposition would not part with it, without putting on record one of the most obstinate stands that could be made against the tyranny of a Ministry. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "made," to insert the words "until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of; and, if such Motion be decided in the negative, no other such Motion shall be made until the Orders of the Day have been entered upon."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that they were sometimes told from the other side of the House, that Party considerations and Party topics ought not to be introduced into these discussions. He did not remember to have recently heard anyone on that (the Ministerial) side introduce Party topics; and he was further bound to say that the great majority of hon. Members on the side opposite had abstained from doing so. But the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) had, with the most perverse ingenuity, and without the smallest necessity or pretext, introduced, only on hearsay, into his speech two of the most offensive and personal charges he (Mr. Gladstone) had ever known made in the House of Commons. In the first place, the noble Lord, who was not in the House in May last, spoke of what he chose to call the "Kilmainham Treaty" as a most disgraceful transaction. There was no Kilmainham Treaty. [MR. J. R. YORKE: Oh, oh!] He challenged the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire, who scoffed at him for that assertion, which he (Mr. Gladstone) seriously made, to move for a Committee of Inquiry into the matter.

MR. J. R. YORKE: If the right hon. Gentleman will grant me a day, I will do so.

MR. GLADSTONE: I will agree to that inquiry without granting any day. As I have answered the hon. Gentleman's question, he has evaded answering mine. ["No, no!"] Most certainly I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that he will move for an inquiry, if I grant him a day. I say, I will agree to the inquiry without granting any day. The hon. Gentleman flinches from answering me.

MR. J. R. YORKE: I will move for it as an unopposed Return. I will move for a Committee of this House.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would not oppose it. Let the hon. Member make a Motion, and pledge himself by that Motion to prove the existence of that Treaty. He would repeat there was no such Treaty; and he said further, that those who made these allegations without proof, instead of fastening disgraceful transactions upon their opponents, brought the disgrace upon themselves. He was sorry to have been obliged to deviate from the path of legitimate discussion, for the purpose of noticing an imputation to which he would attach no epithets, though it deserved them—except to say that it was one which the noble Lord himself would feel that it was absolutely impossible to pass by without a word. Then the noble Lord went on to attack his (Mr. Gladstone's) right hon. Friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), and said that he had, time after time, deliberately gone out of his way to provoke the Irish Members by his answers.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!

MR. BIGGAR: It is perfectly true.

MR. GLADSTONE: That was not an unnatural thing for the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) to say, and he did not find fault with it; but he must say that, to bring a personal charge of that kind against his right hon. Friend, without Notice and in his absence, was a course totally unworthy of any Member of that House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I have brought it often before now.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that as he knew something of the answers given by his right hon. Friend, he would at once say that he was of opinion, though his right hon. Friend had the misfortune to differ on many and most serious points, which could not be mitigated, from the Irish Members, or what the noble Lord chose to call the *bond fide* Irish Members, he was careful, in a degree beyond almost any Minister he (Mr. Gladstone) had ever known, to supply full and detailed information in his answers. In fact, the spirit and character of his right hon. Friend formed a sufficient answer to the imputations of the noble Lord as to the purpose his right hon. Friend had in view. He would now pass from that very offensive part of the noble Lord's speech and come to the arguments of the noble Lord, as to which he (Mr. Gladstone) must say the noble Lord, upon that occasion, had had his usual infelicity in many statements of fact that he had made. The noble Lord had obligingly referred to an occasion on which he (Mr. Gladstone) had been guilty of moving the adjournment of the House, but had not the good taste or courtesy to refer to the reason for which it was made. He said it was after a statement regarding the Business of the House. Yes; but he omitted to state that that was a most important occasion, when it was necessary to make a declaration of a most important change of policy of the Government of the day in regard to a Bill which had been long and hotly contested, and which absolutely required Notice from the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Like Arabi's trial.

MR. GLADSTONE: It was a subject which required Notice, and in regard to which he did not hesitate to say that, if there had been a Rule in operation requiring it, not 20 or 40 Members, but 100, had it been requisite, would have risen in their places to sanction the Motion. The noble Lord ought to have had the common candour to have made that explanation, and to have noticed that it was the occasion, and the only occasion, on which he (Mr. Gladstone) had moved the adjournment before Business had begun. But if that was the noble Lord's way of conducting Business, some day he would probably be sorry for the example he had set; but he would pass on from that, only remarking further that 18 Members showed the importance they attached to the occasion by taking part in the debate which ensued. Then the noble Lord made a complaint that in 1880, practically and to all intents and purposes, every day from the end of June or beginning of July, was monopolized by the Government. Now, he found that what happened in 1880 was this—on Fridays Motions by private Members were brought forward on Supply on every day when it was put down up to the 20th of August. So much for the noble Lord's allegation about the end of June or the beginning of July; but in that year it was not until the 14th of July that priority was taken on Wednesdays; on the 20th of July that priority was taken on Tuesdays; and yet, with those limits of the 14th of July, the 20th of July, and the subsequent 20th of August, the noble Lord said that the Government took, practically, every day from the end of June or the beginning of July. So much for the accuracy of the noble Lord when he ventured to instruct them on matters of fact, a proceeding on which he (Mr. Gladstone) had before tendered him some friendly admonitions. Perhaps it would be rash of him to suppose that the noble Lord's other figures were right; but, supposing they were, they seemed in a great measure to prove their case. This practice of moving the adjournment of the House before the commencement of Public Business was one which, 20 or 25 years ago, was absolutely unknown to the House; and he thought he was quite correct in saying that, until about 10 years ago, it had not become a serious fact for the contemplation of the House. He was himself responsible for the conduct of the Business of the House between 1868 and 1874, and he certainly could not recollect that, in any period during the existence of that Parliament, that matter of preliminary Motions for the Adjournment became a burning serious question for consideration. He did not recollect any occasion on which it was made use of. The noble Lord gave four times in 1874, and then he proceeded to give eight, seven, and nine times.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said in 1874 the number was the top one.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would point out, as a fact, that last Parliament, unless he was very much mistaken, was the first in which it had become a serious evil; and it was quite evident that in the present Parliament it had become a very serious evil indeed. The adjournment was moved 19 times in 1881, and 13 times in 1882. He said nothing about Irish Members in the matter—he looked at it apart from either England, Ireland, or Scotland—but one of these Motions represented a serious invasion of the time of the House. Moreover, he believed it would be found that, out of those Motions, at the very least five-sixths, and probably more, were on evenings of Government Business; and their consequence was to take away from one-third to one-half, and sometimes even the entire evening. The noble Lord said that though it had been slightly abused it was a valuable privilege. His answer to that was that the occasions were very rare on which it was a valuable privilege; and he confidently said that not 1 in 10, and he thought not 1 in 20, of the occasions on which those adjournments had been moved were occasions on which the "general sense of the House" would ratify the arrangement. But they were not going to propose the extinction of the privilege, but only its stringent and effective limitation. The noble Lord proposed that they should only be moved once; but the phraseology which he used was rather singular. He proposed that if the Motion should be decided in the negative it should not be competent to make the Motion again; but he (Mr. Gladstone) need hardly point out that if it was decided in the affirmative it was totally unnecessary to make any provision, because the House itself would have disappeared. The noble Lord further proposed that no second Motion of Adjournment should be made until the Orders of the Day had been entered upon. It was not under double Motions of Adjournment the same evening that the House had suffered. They had been exceedingly rare.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Take to-day.

MR. GLADSTONE: He knew it. He had not forgotten it. The occasion was entitled to commemoration in the annals of the country. The noble Lord's Amendment cut off a secondary inconvenience, and the possibility of what he might call the extravagances of the abuse. The noble Lord proposed to continue the body of the abuse. He thought it good; whereas the contention of the Government was that, in the main, the power was not good. No doubt, he did not admit it to be an abuse; but the Government regarded it as the one thing which, with the smallest justification, had cruelly invaded the Business of the House, curtailed its time, disturbed its Order, and dissapointed Members as to the Business which was to come on; and it was, in fact, an abuse that loudly called for correction. The noble Lord thought the general practice good, and the rare exception bad. The Government, on the other hand, thought the general practice bad, and the rare exception good. They were prepared to give space for the rare exception, and to ask the House to cut up the general principle by the roots. That was the general principle on which they were quite willing that provision should be made for rare exceptions in which the practice might be necessary. He hoped the House would reject the Amendment.

MR. GIBSON: Sir, there is one thing very apparent in the speech just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and that is, that the Government had not, until they had the statistics given by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), themselves examined the figures bearing on this question. Certainly, it is very surprising to find a very grave and serious change, that may be a necessary one, proposed without a single figure, or a vestige of a statement relating to figures, being submitted to the House by the Government. The House had a right to expect—I do not say from the Prime Minister, as he has so many important political matters to which to give his attention, but certainly from one of the subordinate Members of the Government, who has more leisure than the Prime Minister to look into details—some statement showing on how many occasions the adjournment has been moved. It has been given by the noble Lord; but, then, we should have had more full and complete details. The figures should have been produced to show how many of these adjournments have developed into debate; how often they have lasted for hours; and how often for only two minutes and a-half, the time that the Motion of the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) lasted to-night. The Motion of the hon. Member for North Warwickshire lasted only two minutes and a-half, and the Motion of my noble Friend lasted well under the hour; and if we went into details we should find that the figures that have been given are susceptible of great reduction. The Prime Minister used the term "invasion of the time of the House;" but we have no figures to indicate how often on these occasions there has been a real invasion on the time of the House. Then, again, on how many occasions was the Business of the Government interfered with; and how often was the adjournment moved on Government nights, as distinguished from those nights when the business of private Members was before the House. The Prime Minister seemed not to have clearly present to his mind the fact that he had himself moved the adjournment of the House. He said, however, that he had only done so once. [Mr. Gladstone: Circumstances required it.] Quite so; and that fact was important. Of course, the Prime Minister, who is a man of great Parliamentary position, would not have taken that step and appealed to the majority of the House unless he did think it was necessary. That goes, of course, without saying; but the proof that the Prime Minister gives that his judgment was sound was shown by the fact that 17 speakers in different parts of the House followed him. But there is no provision, under the Rule, that if 40 Members wished to follow the Leader of the Opposition, he should be excluded from it. The Prime Minister, at the close of his speech, said that the Government were anxions for the extinction of this—I do not call it right or privilege—but existing power. The right hon. Gentleman, however, thought a rare exception sometimes to be attended with good. I do not discuss the point in detail; but I repeat that, in the Rule as it stands, the rare exception, as well as the wide abuse, is absolutely shut out from the smallest chance. He says he will not accept the Amendment of my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock; but I would suggest that, consistent with his entire argument, and consistent with the drafting of the Rule, it must fall in with the views of the Government to take out all the words down to "and" in the 2nd line, so as to put at the end, instead of at the beginning, what ought to be the general condition, instead of its being dragged in as an after-thought. It may be a matter of some importance, particularly as I hope there may be something to say on the part of the Government. It will be found, if the right hon. Gentleman will look at it, and those, also, who have considered the construction of the Rule will look at it, it will be found that to put first the general condition, that no such Motion shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, will simplify the matter enormously when it comes to accepting what are really Amendments, though the Government may describe them as modifying somewhat their primary ideas.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I fall in with the view of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, that he would furnish the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) with some of the information for which he asked. Out of 14 times in which the Motion for Adjournment was made in the Session of 1882, only three times was the Motion made on private Members' nights. All the other Motions interfered so far with Government Business. One occupied six or eight pages of *Hansard*, another four, and another 28. So far as he had examined *Hansard*, there had been 40 of these Motions in the last three Sessions—22 by Irish Members and 12 by Conservatives, of which six were by the followers of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—namely, one by the noble Lord himself, two by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), two by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and one by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). There were six occasions on which it was moved by Liberal Members. Two Motions by Irish Members occupied each a whole Sitting of the House that Session. He did not wish to minimize the opportunity which hon. Members representing Ireland should have of ventilating their grievances, or those of their constituents; but he questioned whether the debates on these Motions had tended very much to the settlement of the questions raised, and he would further ask whether Irish Members, upon questions of the sort they raised, had not ample opportunity of obtaining information by means of Questions addressed to Ministers? ["No, no!"] Out of 45 Questions on the Paper that evening, 20 related to Ireland; they were mostly of a personal character, and had been adequately answered. Of the two occasions on which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock and his followers had raised debates on Motions for Adjournment, one was on the 16th of May, when the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) raised a debate which lasted a whole Tuesday afternoon on what he described as the Kilmainham Treaty; and in that discussion he applied the term "infamy" to the conduct of the Government, and showed thereby that he alone, with the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), thought such an epithet a legitimate one in Parliamentary debate. ["Order!"]

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked if the hon. Member was in Order in referring to debates of the House in the present Session?

MR. SPEAKER ruled that the hon. Member was in Order.

MR. BUCHANAN said, he was endeavouring to supply the information that seemed to be wanted by the Front Opposition Bench. The other occasion on which a Motion for Adjournment occupied a great deal of time was at the end of July, when it was moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) on the subject of Egypt, who had every opportunity, just as Irish Members had, of obtaining adequate information by putting Questions to Ministers, in which respect he (Mr. Buchanan) admired the assiduity of the hon. Gentleman, for he had a Question on Egypt every day on the Paper, and he generally asked three or four verbal Questions in addition.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that, in his opinion, the House was to be congratulated that the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) had confined himself to the present Session, for if he had gone over other Sessions at equal length the whole night would have been taken up. He was not quite sure that the Government had gained much by what the hon. Member had said; for he admitted that only on four occasions had any material part of a day been taken up by those Motions for Adjournment. On two of those occasions the subjects were Irish; and, considering the engrossing character of Irish questions during the Session, two nights were not an extravagant length of time to have been taken up with those Motions. On two other occasions, as the hon. Member for Edinburgh had said, the adjournment had been moved by Gentlemen whom he absurdly described as followers of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock. But what were those occasions? The first was when the adjournment was moved by himself. He did not wish to refer to the Kilmainham Treaty, as he believed that the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) had been given a day for bringing on a discussion on that subject. [MR. GLADSTONE: I consented to the inquiry, but not to give a day.] Then the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to give a day. [MR. GLADSTONE dissented.] Then the offer of the right hon. Gentleman was assuredly the vainest offer that had ever been made; because it would be impossible for any private Member to bring forward any Motion on the subject during the present Session. What was the value of the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman unless he intended to offer facilities for its acceptance? On the second occasion to which the hon. Member for Edinburgh had referred, the adjournment was moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and the subject was the bombardment of Alexandria. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) could hardly conceive of two more proper occasions for making such a Motion; and he thought they furnished the best argument for refusing to accept the proposed alteration, more particularly the former, when taken in connection with the language which had been used on the subject by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), and which more than justified the challenge thrown down to the Government by his hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire. If he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had to select the statistics on which to rest his objections to the Government proposals as they now stood, he should select the statistics which, for a very different object, had been given to the House by the hon. Member for Edinburgh.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he wished to explain, with reference to the suggested inquiry into what had been described by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) as the "disgraceful transactions at Kilmainham," that he (Mr. Gladstone) stated that he would offer no opposition to a proposal for such an inquiry; but to interrupt the present course of Business for the consideration of such a subject was a thing he could not at all agree to.

Mr. J. R. YORKE said, he proposed to move for the inquiry as an unopposed Return—a Return including the Correspondence.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, perhaps the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to communicate with them in the first place.

Mr. J. R. YORKE assented.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, with regard to the Kilmainham Treaty, that though he was not in the country when that document was completed, he thought that no transaction in the career of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), or in the career of the Prime Minister, did greater credit to either of them than what was known as the Kilmainham Treaty. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not quite understand those cheers. If hon. Gentlemen on that side were prepared to take upon themselves the responsibility of allowing appalling crime and heartrending eviction to continue, he did not envy them that responsibility. The Prime Minister had remarked that no Minister had ever given fuller information than the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster); but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) could say that he could not remember an occasion of controverted points in which that right hon. Gentleman gave any information that was accurate. In fact, it was his opinion that the tone and manner of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland were direct incentives to Motions for Adjournment. ["Oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]

Mr. SPEAKER called the hon. Member to Order, and said it could not be allowed on a Motion of that kind to make an attack on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, continuing, said, nothing could be more dexterous or delusive than the reply of the Prime Minister to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). It was that noble Lord's main point that Motions for Adjournment had been abused by right hon. Gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Bench; but to that point the Prime Minister made no allusion whatever, and though he was accompanied by the loud bassoon of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), he never attempted to justify the occasion on which the Vice President of the Council moved the adjournment. Nor had they had any explanation of the conduct of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in moving the adjournment on another occasion with respect to the affairs of Fiji. The Prime Minister had merely contended that circumstances justified making Motions; but that was the justification they all relied upon. He believed that by passing this Resolution the House would be surrendering one of its most useful and valuable privileges. As the Resolution stood, according to the interpretation put upon it by the Speaker, a Motion for Adjournment could be prevented by the objection of a single Member of the House. That meant the taking away from Members of the entire control over a large portion of the Business of the country, and chiefly the foreign policy of the Government. In that Session they had had abundant examples of the manner in which the foreign policy of the Government was conducted. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had almost invariably declined to give any information in reply to the interrogatories addressed to him on the subject of Egypt. They had, therefore, this fact—that while Questions were the only means of getting information which was left to the House, they were absolutely futile unless they were accompanied by the power of moving the adjournment of the House in case of an unsatisfactory answer. If the right of discussion on the Motion for Adjournment were abolished, it would be absolutely in the power of the Government to prevent any discussion of their foreign policy, either by refusing an opportunity or by the refusal of the materials. It was said that that House was being gradually reduced to the position of a Continental Assembly; but if that Resolution were carried, he submitted that they would be reducing it to a far lower level when they took out of the hands of Members this great and useful power of checking the Ministry when necessary. All that a Member of the French Assembly had to do in order to raise a debate upon foreign policy was to place a Notice of interpellation on the Table, and the Government were bound to find a day for its discussion. But under the proposed Rule no such opportunity of discussion would be afforded to this House.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that the speech which he had made a short time ago furnished the strongest possible argument for the opposition to that Rule. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed a considerable amount of indignation, and had repudiated, with some warmth, the implied censure which had been cast against him by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in charging him with having, on one occasion, moved the adjournment of the House. The right hon. Gentleman justified his action on the occasion in question by saying that it was in consequence of the Government of the day having announced a vital change in their policy with regard to a Bill which was then before the House. The right hon. Gentleman further said that the course he took was justified by the fact that he was followed by 18 other speakers. But the right hon. Gentleman appeared to forget that, if this Rule had then been in force, and if the Leader of the House (Mr. Disraeli) had used his majority as it was feared on the Conservative side of the House the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister might use his, the House might, upon the occasion in question, have denied to the right hon. Gentleman the right of moving the adjournment of the House, and he would not have been able to call attention to the change of policy which he accused the late Government of having made, and he would have had no opportunity of expressing his views upon it. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman had given a very strong reason in favour of the question of adjournment being left as it was, or, at any rate, to the general feeling of the House at large. If a certain number of Members—he (Colonel Makins) was indifferent whether the number was fixed at 20, 40, 50, or 60—rose in their places in support of the Motion for Adjournment being made, it would afford a guarantee that a considerable section of the House were of opinion that there was a justification for moving the adjournment. But if it was in future to be in the power of the majority to put an end to a simple Motion for Adjournment, the rights of the minority would, in his opinion, be seriously jeopardized. He hoped the Government would be prepared to make some concession in the matter. He gathered from the right hon. Gentleman that they were prepared to consider in principle the Amendment proposed from their own side of the House by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), although they would not agree to the precise words on the Paper; and he hoped some Member of the Government would state distinctly how far their concession would go.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that a great many speeches had been made, including the speech of the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down (Colonel Makins), entirely in ignorance of the statement which had been made by his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister a short time ago. They all seemed to proceed from the assumption that the power of raising a debate at short notice, by moving the adjournment of the House, was to be abolished altogether. Now, Her Majesty's Government did not propose that at all; they only proposed to impose certain restrictions upon the use of the time of the House by Motions which, it was generally admitted, had been for some years, to a certain extent, abused. The Government, by the present Resolution, proposed to limit this right in a certain manner; but his right hon. Friend had stated some hours ago that, although he refused to accept the precise words, he was not indisposed to adopt in principle the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The Government were willing to accept the first words of the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock) (Lord Randolph Churchill)—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of;"

and having announced their willingness to accept that part of the Amendment, would it not meet the views of the House generally, and save a great deal of time, if they were to dispose of that part of the Amendment of the noble Lord, and then proceed to consider the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which, in principle, the Government had already announced their intention of accepting? The debate hitherto seemed to have proceeded on the assumption that the power of moving the adjournment of the House was to be done away with altogether, or, at all events, that it was only to be exercised at the will of the majority. That was not so, and the Government had, a long time ago, announced their intention of accepting an Amendment which appeared to him to concede all that was desired by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

VISCOUNT SANDON said, the difficulty in which the House was placed was that they were unable to induce the Government really to tell them what they meant to do in regard to the Resolution. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had repeated again that the Government did not intend to hold by their original plan, and adhere to their original proposal for preventing Motions being made for the adjournment of the House. It was manifest that the first intention of the Government, in submitting the Resolution now upon the Paper, was to provide that no Motion for the Adjournment of the House should be carried without the assent of the majority. That appeared to him to be proved to demonstration. All the House had since obtained from the Government was a statement that they would be prepared to assent, somewhat in principle, although not in words, to the proposal of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). Then, why should not the Government be frank with the House on this occasion, and tell them what they meant to do—seeing the extreme anxiety manifested by the House upon the matter? He would remind the House of a difficulty which occurred upon this very subject in the year 1881 —at the time of the disastrous negotiations about the French Treaty, and when the Chambers of Commerce and the commercial community of this country, with which he (Viscount Sandon) was closely connected, manifested—and, as events subsequently proved, justly—a great anxiety to know what the effect of the negotiations would be. At that time, Returns of various kinds were laid upon the Table of the House. The Prime Minister would probably recollect the case, which was one of great interest. The Returns had relation to Foreign Tariffs, and he (Viscount Sandon) suggested, at the time, that they should be placed upon the Table in English. But, instead of being presented in English, they were persistently placed upon the Table in the French language. It was in vain that he tried by the ordinary means, putting Questions to the Government, and by adopting other courses, to persuade the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to give these Returns, which the commercial community demanded, and were largely interested in, in English At last he was compelled to move the adjournment of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister considered the matter of so much importance that he answered the Motion himself, and replied in these words—

> "I make no complaint of the noble Viscount moving the adjournment of the House, because I think that, under the circumstances in which he stands, he having no other means of bringing forward the matter in any other way is perfectly right in taking that course."

Now he (Viscount Sandon) ventured to say that that was a case in point. A Member of the House, who had been connected with a former Government. asked that certain Returns, which were of great importance to the English commercial community which he represented, should be laid upon the Table in the English language. This reasonable request was refused. He tried by Question and Motion,and so on, to get these Returns in English, and he was persistently thwarted by the Minister of the day blocking his Motion, so that it could not be brought on after half-past 12 o'clock. The only means left him of bringing the matter before the House was by moving the adjournment of the House, and he had read the words of the Prime Minister, in which the right hon. Gentleman said that he was perfectly justified in taking that course, because he had no other means of obtaining his object. He thought that was a very good case in point. He was sorry that it was one in which he should have been personally concerned; but he regarded it as a matter of interest, and that they should all contribute their quota to the discussion, in elucidating the principle which should guide them in dealing with the Resolution.

MR. GORST said, he thought that as the debate proceeded, the greatest possible encouragement was given to hon. Members on that side of the House to continue the discussion. He had been present in the House throughout the night, and he had witnessed during the course of the evening the most remarkable development which the mind of Her Majesty's Government had undergone. In the early part of the evening, they had a speech from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), who had probably now left the House to enjoy himself in evening attire. The right hon. Gentleman, in the most sarcastic tones he could command, supported the Rule as it stood, and spoke of those who had felt it their duty to move the adjournment of the House as "pushing patriots;" and he added that when the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was brought forward, the Government would state the reasons which would prevent them from adopting it. Hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House were somewhat cast down by the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but still they persevered, and they were rewarded for their perseverance. Later on, the Prime Minister said the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton would receive consideration at the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and they would not pledge themselves not to be converted by the arguments which might be addressed to the House. That announcement raised the drooping hopes of the Opposition; and now the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) informed them that the Government were prepared to accept in principle the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, although they would not pledge themselves to the exact details. If Her Majesty's Government would now go a step farther and tell the House what it was they really meant to do, and what it was they really meant to accept, he thought they would be able to make much more rapid progress with the Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had been good enough, in his speech, to describe the Motion for Adjournment as one which had been making continual inroads upon what he was pleased to call the Business of the House. But what was the Business of the House? The idea of Her Majesty's Government seemed to be that it was to pass the Government Bills and to vote the Government Supply; but there was a large part of the Business of the House which, no doubt, was not so pleasant to the Government, and probably they were fully prepared to forget it—and that was the Business of criticizing the conduct of the Executive Government — not only criticizing their policy on great matters, but criticizing the administration of the various Departments in the minutest details. If the Prime Minister would tell the House what proposals he intended to make for enabling the House to discharge that part of its duties so that hon. Members might not be deprived of a full opportunity of criticizing the administration of the Executive Government, then a considerable portion of their opposition to the further progress of this Rule would probably cease. But he should like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the various powers and privileges which Members of the House had enjoyed for criticizing the conduct of the Government had been gradually taken away from them; and it was only by discovering fresh methods and fresh means of calling the Government to account that they had been able to do their duty. Up to the year 1861 there was a Motion made every Friday that the House at its rising should adjourn until the following Monday. That Motion was always, on that day, the first Business of the House; and upon that Motion it was the weekly custom and the weekly opportunity of the non-official Members of the House to bring forward any grievance against the Government of the day. That custom was done away with in 1861, and in substitution for it was introduced the present practice of putting down Supply as the first Order of the Day on Friday, with the avowed object of enabling Members, on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, to bring forward these Motions. But that arrangement had this fatal defect—that the House had no power over the Motions to be brought forward. They were reduced to the necessity of resorting to the ballot; and any Member by gaining priority, by means of the ballot, could introduce a Motion of comparatively little importance, and prevent much more important Motions from being brought forward at all. The result was that the House, when it met on a Friday, might have many important matters down on the Paper for discussion; but it was, as a rule, prevented from discussing anything beyond the first and second Motions which had secured priority by the ballot. There was another thing which the Government had done of late years — they had adopted the practice of not setting up Supply again, after the first Motion had been negatived. The consequence was that no further Amendment could be moved, and the Government now-a-days attempted to utilize Friday night by getting money in Supply, and the effect was to deprive private Members of the advantage they ought to possess of being able to bring forward matters in which they were interested on the Motion for Adjournment on Friday night. At present no one with any skill in Parliamentary tactics ever thought of putting down an important Motion for Friday. And here he would ask, what it was that gave rise to these repeated Motions for the Adjournment of the House? It was the failure of the old Motion for Adjournment on Friday, and the substitution of Supply as the first Order of the Day. It was in 1861 that the Motion for the Adjournment on Friday was abolished; and he found that, as early after its abolition as 1863, the number of extraneous Motions for the Adjournment of the House had risen to nine. If he recollected rightly, from 1863 down to the present year, 1882, the number of annual Motions for Adjournment had grown from 9 to 13. He thought it would be admitted by the House that these figures showed there had not been any very great growth of the so-called abuse of the Privileges of the House. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister tell the House what provision he intended to make for the discharge of that most important function of the House, the criticism of the administration of the Executive Government of the country in all its details? And then, in all probability, the Opposition would be prepared to allow the Resolution to go forward. He thought the right hon. Gentleman, unintentionally no doubt, had misunderstood the argument of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). The right hon. Gentleman was extremely angry with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock for having mentioned the adjournment which he (Mr. Gladstone) himself had moved some years ago. That Motion, said the right hon. Gentleman, was a matter of absolute necessity. No one had attempted to accuse the right hon. Gentleman of having made an improper Motion. The simple object of the noble Lord was to show that an instrument which the right hon. Gentleman had himself found it necessary to use when the Conservative Government were in power was an instrument of warfare which ought not to be improperly got rid of. If the proposed Rule had been in existence the right hon. Gentleman could not have made that Motion in the manner in which he made it in the last Parliament; at least, he could not have made it without having, in the first instance, obtained the leave of Mr. Disraeli, who was then the Leader of the House with a majority at his back. He (Mr. Gorst) did not know enough of the circumstances of the case to know whether Mr. Disraeli would have given leave or not; but, if it had been a matter on which the majority of the House was disposed to use its power, the right hon. Gentleman would have had to go as a suppliant to Mr. Disraeli, and ask him to allow him to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of enabling him to attack the policy of the Government. Surely it was a far more proper position for the Leader of the Opposition to occupy, not to be placed in the humiliating position of having to go to the Leader of the House, and ask the leave of his political opponent, but to be able to get up, of his own free choice and from his own sense of right, challenge the policy of the Government and of the majority of the House. Then, again, the right hon. Gentleman entirely misunderstood the argument of his (Mr. Gorst's) noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) about the Government having taken up the time of the House. It was not a matter of dates, nor a question of particular days, but the broad fact which the noble Lord asserted; and although the right hon. Gentleman contradicted some of the noble Lord's dates and figures and criticized the form of his expressions, he (Mr. Gorst) did not think the right hon. Gentleman would venture to contradict the broad fact referred to by the noble Lord—namely, that during the existence of the present Parliament Her Majesty's Government had taken more of the time of the House and had monopolized more of the time of Parliament than in any other Parliament which ever sat in modern times. The Government, therefore, ought not to be surprised if, when by so taking up the time of the House, they suppressed the opportunities of non-official Members, those non-official Members seized other opportunities in a legitimate manner, and made Motions for the adjournment of the House more frequently than formerly, in order to bring important questions under the notice of the House. He regretted that his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock had made use of the expression "Kilmainham Treaty." He (Mr. Gorst) imagined it was because his noble Friend was not in the House in the early part of the Session that he had made use of that unfortunate expression. He (Mr. Gorst) never spoke of "the Kilmanham Treaty." He always spoke of the "understanding" or the "alleged understanding" which had taken place between the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The right hon. Gentleman thought that an imputation had been made against him. He (Mr. Gorst) did not impute to him the slightest wrong in the matter; but, nevertheless, he still wondered—he perpetually wondered from day to day—what that curious understanding was. And his wonder had been greatly increased that night by the speech of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), who spoke of a document which was completed before the hon. Member's return to England. Now, that was the first time the House had ever heard that there was a document, and he should like very much to know what it was. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would consent, in the shape of an unopposed Return, to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the document, which was now said to have been completed. With regard to the observation of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock about the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, he (Mr. Gorst) did not think that his noble Friend intended to make any attack upon the right hon. Gentleman in his absence, beyond stating that, of which there could be very little doubt, the right hon. Gentleman, in the answers he gave to the Questions addressed to him, was singularly provocative of Motions for Adjournment. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Well, he would not advert to that matter further. He would only say, in defence of his noble Friend, that what he intended to assert, and what in point of fact he did assert, was that the manner of the right hon. Gentleman was singularly unconciliatory. Before the House consented to part with the Amendment of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock, which was an Amendment which would very much alter the present system of moving adjournments, he thought it should be clearly understood what the Government intended to substitute in place of the Resolution which already stood upon the Paper. The Amendment of his noble Friend was an Amendment which ought to meet the views of many Members of the House; because he (Mr. Gorst) had often heard it recommended by eminent Members of the House that they should first try the experiment of not allowing Motions for Adjournment to be made until the Questions had been first disposed of. Personally, he thought it would be a very useful experiment to see whether the privilege, which had hitherto proved so useful, even in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself, would still find favour with the House in a modified form. He certainly thought that before they parted with the Amendment and committed themselves to the scheme of the Government, they ought to know what it was Her Majesty's Government intended to do, and precisely what course they intended to take in regard to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). Indeed, he thought, as the usual hour for adjourning the debate had now been reached, that it would be a wise course for the House to adjourn, so that the Government might have an opportunity of thinking over the matter, and explaining their intentions when the House re-assembled to-morrow.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, that, before the House went to a division, he should like to call the attention of the Prime Minister to the position in which the matter stood. They had had it intimated to them by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) that Her Majesty's Government were not unwilling to accept the leading words of the Amendment now proposed by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). Having had that intimation made to them, he wished to know what would be the effect of the division about to take place? The first Question which would be put by the Speaker from the Chair would be to leave out the words of the Resolution after the word "made." Was he to understand that Her Majesty's Government would assent to that as the first Question Mr. Speaker would put from the Chair, and that subsequently they would propose themselves to amend the noble Lord's proposed Amendment by substituting other words after the word "and?" He understood the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India virtually to intimate that to the House as the decision at which Her Majesty's Government had arrived; and it would be convenient, before they proceeded to a division, that there should be no mistake upon the point. If he was right in his reading of the statement made by the noble Marquess, there would be no objection on the part of Her Majesty's Government to the first Question which would be put from the Chair.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that perhaps the House would allow him to explain what it was that the Government proposed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had been good enough to point out that he thought an improvement might be effected in the drafting of the Resolution by bringing forward certain words which now appeared in the Resolution and dovetailing them in with the beginning of it, leaving the remaining part to stand distinct by itself as the concluding portion. He (Mr. Gladstone) thought the most convenient mode of raising the question would be this. He would propose to amend the Amendment of the noble Lord now before the House by leaving out the latter part of the words which the noble Lord proposed. Therefore, with the permission of the House, he would submit an Amendment in this way. The noble Lord proposed, after the word "made," to insert the words—

> "Until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of; and, if such Motion be decided in the negative, no other such Motion shall be made until the Orders of the Day have been entered upon."

He proposed to retain all the words down to the word "and," exactly as had been suggested by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin; and after the word "and," he proposed to put in the words, "and no such Motion shall be made." If hon. Members would read that Amendment in connection with the Resolution, they would see that it met the suggestion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He would, therefore, move to amend the Amendment in the way he had proposed.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he failed to see how the Resolution, as proposed to be amended by the Prime Minister, would work.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, by leaving out all the words after the word "and," to the end of the proposed Amendment, in order to add the words "no such Motion shall be made,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked how the Resolution would read if the words of the right hon. Gentleman were adopted amending the words of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that, if his Amendment were adopted, the Resolution would run thus—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon, except by leave of the House."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that, as far as he could make out, the adoption of the alteration suggested by the right hon. Gentleman would make very little difference.

MR. WARTON said, he rose, with great submission, for the purpose of suggesting a course to the Prime Minister, which he thought would tend to simplify the matter very much, and would probably end the discussion at once. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) had given an intimation that the Government would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and, by slightly altering the words of the Prime Minister, theResolution might be made to read in this way—"That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made"—those being the first words of the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—"until all the Questions on the Notice Paper shall have been disposed of." He (Mr. Warton) would strike out the words "shall have been disposed of," and insert in their place the words "and shall not then be made, unless demanded by 40 Members rising in their places." That would very much simplify the whole matter, and carry out the intentions of the Government in regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. ["Oh, oh!"]

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 79; Noes 113: Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 365.)

Question proposed, "That the words 'no such Motion shall be made,' be there added."

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he thought the time had now arrived when the House should adjourn, and he would therefore move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was quite prepared to consent to the adjournment if the House would, in the first instance, adopt the Amendment he had submitted.

MR. WARTON said, he had no desire to present himself obtrusively upon the House, after the howls with which he been received from the Liberal Benches. He understood the Government to say that they would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which would make the Resolution read thus—

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no division shall be taken thereupon."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government had never committed themselves, except that he had said they were quite ready to discuss the principle of the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). They maintained their own views; but if there was a general desire on the part of the House, then they were quite open to proceed upon the principle of that Amendment.

COLONEL MAKINS expressed a hope that, in deference to what the right hon. Gentleman had said, the House would not only be ready to discuss that principle, but to discuss it that evening and settle it.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words 'no such Motion shall be made' be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made,'—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 14*th November,* 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 14*th November,* 1882.

MINUTES.] —SELECT COMMITTEE— *Report*— Privilege (Mr. Gray), *debate adjourned.*

QUESTIONS.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—CONVICT LABOUR.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in any scheme for the employment of convict labour for making harbours in England or Scotland, the Government will consider the desirability of constructing by the same agency those piers and breakwaters on the Irish coasts which fishery inspectors and others have so frequently recommended?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the necessity of providing employment for Irish convicts is not just now urgent; but I must add that I do not think the particular works apparently indicated by the Question of the hon. Member would at any time be suitable, as convict labour can be economically employed only on a large scale. The same principle will be employed in dealing with convicts whatever their place of origin?

EGYPT—RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES—THE MECCA CARPET—MEMORANDUM OF SIR GARNET WOLSELEY.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, as the Motion for a Copy of Sir Garnet Wolseley's Memorandum as to the Mecca Carpet, which was placed on the Order Book at his suggestion is opposed, and, under the resolution of the Government to take no business but Procedure, cannot be brought forward, he will himself lay it upon the Table?

MR. ONSLOW asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would defer laying the Papers on that subject on the Table until the House had an opportunity of discussing the question?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I do not see how the House could express its opinion on the subject until it has read the Papers. I will lay the Memorandum on the Table.

ARMY—ASSISTANT PAYMASTERS.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, in case any Assistant Paymasters are promoted for service in Egypt, arrangements will be made to prevent such promotions interfering with or retarding the promotion of other Assistant Paymasters senior to them in service, and at present standing before them for promotion by seniority?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The only answer I can give to the hon. and gallant Gentleman is that the subject of promotions for service in Egypt is under the consideration of the Board of Admiralty.

INDIA—ECCLESIASTICAL DEPARTMENT—CIRCULAR OF THE BISHOP OF BOMBAY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to a Circular issued in July last by the Bishop of Bombay, in which he prohibits the chaplains and other clergymen from performing their functions in accordance with the Law of the land, and expressly places their religious duty in opposition to the duty imposed on them by the British Parliament; whether he has received any complaints of the conduct of this Bishop on this and other occasions;

and, whether he proposes to retain in the service of Government an officer who inculcates disregard of the Law, and contempt for the authority of Parliament?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, my attention has been called to a Circular issued by the Bishop of Bombay—originally read by him in church as a Pastoral Letter—in which he intimates—

> "That no persons who have contracted a marriage after one of them has been divorced for adultery, and during the lifetime of the former wife or husband, can be admitted to the Lord's Table in this diocese, so long as they continue to live together; and that no clergyman who performs a marriage ceremony for a person divorced for adultery, during the lifetime of the former wife or husband, can continue to retain my licence to minister in this diocese."

This is, no doubt, the Circular referred to by the hon. Member in his Question. I have received a complaint of the conduct of the Bishop from persons who have recently, and apparently in consequence of this Circular, been refused admission to the Communion; and, in reply, I felt compelled to say that I was not aware of any power enabling me to interfere in the exercise by the Bishop of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In publicly giving notice that no clergyman who performs a marriage under certain circumstances can continue to retain the Bishop's licence to minister in the diocese, the Bishop of Bombay has apparently overlooked the provisions of the law—20 & 21 *Vict.* c. 85, s. 57; Act IV., of 1869, s. 58—which declares that no clergyman shall be liable to any penalty or censure for solemnizing or refusing to solemnize a marriage under the circumstances indicated. Possibly, also, he may have overlooked the fact that the law reserves to the clergyman no option in the matter of performing the marriage ceremony, except when called on to perform it for a person who has been divorced for his or her adultery. But I need scarcely say that it is an exceedingly delicate and difficult matter to interfere with a Bishop who professes to be exercising merely ecclesiastical or spiritual jurisdiction. The salary of the Bishop is payable under the Statute 3 & 4 *Will.* IV. c. 85, and is payable to him so long as he exercises the functions of his office within the diocese of Bombay.

ARMY—5TH BATTALION ROYAL IRISH—VACANT MAJORITIES.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, When the two vacant majorities in the 5th Battalion Royal Irish Regiment will be filled up; and, whether the three senior Captains are not qualified for promotion?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that the two vacant majorities in the 5th Battalion Royal Irish Regiment will be filled up in a few days. Until then I must ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman to excuse me if I decline to state the qualifications of the gentlemen seeking promotion.

ARMY—THE ROYAL ENGINEERS—PROMOTION.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been drawn to the state of promotion in the lower ranks of the Royal Engineers relative to the rest of the Army; and, whether he will be prepared to modify the present rule as regards promotion to the rank of Captain?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Baronet, I have to say that the present rule as to the promotion of subalterns in the Engineers to the rank of captain was the subject of careful consideration two years ago, but that I will see whether it requires any amelioration.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—H BATTERY, 4TH BRIGADE, ROYAL ARTILLERY.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether H Battery, 4th Brigade, R.A., was not in the 1st Army Corps, and 5th for Foreign Service, at the time of the despatch of the troops to Egypt; whether, instead of being sent abroad, out of its establishment of eighty-six horses, twenty were transferred to C Battery, 3rd Brigade, R.A., and N Battery, 2nd Brigade, R.A., and forty-two as draught horses for the Regimental Transport of the West Kent and Royal Irish Regiments; and, whether C Battery, 3rd Brigade, R.A., and N Battery, 2nd Brigade, R.A., were sent to Egypt, the one being in the 2nd Army Corps, and the other in the 1st Army Corps, but below H Battery on the Roster for Foreign Service?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, that H Battery, 4th Brigade, Royal Artillery was in the 1st Army Corps, but that on the 1st of April last the regiment of Royal Artillery was re-organized, and a Roster of batteries by brigades was established. Batteries for service in Egypt were detailed on this principle. Two batteries of the 1st Brigade were detailed for the Artillery of the 1st Division, two of the 2nd Brigade for the 2nd Division, and two of the 3rd Brigade for the Corps Artillery. No batteries of the 4th Brigade were required; but H Battery, 4th Brigade, alluded to by the noble Lord, was required, like all the field batteries in England, to supply horses for active service. In reply to the last Question, I have to say that N Battery, 2nd Brigade, was the first for foreign service of its brigade, and therefore selected, while C Battery 3rd Brigade was sent because it was thought advisable that all the batteries of the Corps Artillery should be equipped with 13-pounder guns; whereas two batteries of the same brigade, standing earlier for service, were in Ireland, and armed with 16-pounders.

EGYPT (ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION) — THE POLICE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government, having insisted that they shall be consulted regarding the composition of the new Egyptian Army, apply the same rule to the forces enlisted under the names of Gendarmerie or Police; whether it is true that the Egyptian Government are enlisting Albanians at Scutari and elsewhere; and, whether there is any foundation for the statement of a Reverend Gentleman, whose letter from Cairo is published in the "Times" of Nov. 13, that there are to be "4,000 first-rate Policemen, two-thirds of whom are Europeans and Turks?"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The military arrangements have a more special political importance than the organization of the police; and it is impossible for us to enter in this House into the details of every measure taken by the Egyptian Government. We were informed some time ago, and informed the House, that the enlistment of Albanians had ceased. We are not aware that a police force of 4,000 strong, two-thirds of whom are to be Europeans and Turks, is to be raised.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether the Egyptian Government would be enabled to enlist a force under the name of a gendarmerie without consulting Her Majesty's Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had no doubt that the Egyptian Government would inform Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

EGYPT—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the renewed statements by the Correspondents of the "Standard" and the "Daily News," that two Notables were chained together, and confined in a dark cell, and that one hundred and fifty persons are confined in a prison at Zagazig, charged with political offences, where they are most cruelly treated, and where many of them have been severely flogged; whether he will cause further inquiries to be made into the truth of these allegations; and, whether, considering all the circumstances of the recent revolt, and its suppression by British Forces, Her Majesty's Government will use its good offices with the Egyptian Government to proclaim an amnesty in regard to all political offences committed during that revolt?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, it is impossible for me to enter into a discussion of every detail that any correspondent may, rightly or wrongly, give. The original statement of *The Daily News* Correspondent, that two members of the Chamber of Notables were chained together, stated or implied that they were so chained at Cairo; and on the 27th of October I read a Report, drawn up by Colonel Sir Charles Wilson and Colonel Stewart, showing that such was not the case. The new statement in *The Daily News* appears to imply that the two Notables are chained together at Zagazig. Full inquiry is being made into the condition of the prisons in the Provinces; but that as to Zagazig has not yet reached us. Returns of the number of prisoners in custody in the Provinces on charges of rebellion, massacre, pillage, and incendiarism, and all political or semi-political crimes have been called for and are coming in. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, we shall continue to give such advice to the Egyptian Government as humanity and policy appear to dictate; but it is impossible to announce beforehand what that advice will be.

VISCOUNT SANDON: I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question arising out of an answer which he made to me relative to the treatment of the Egyptian prisoners. He stated that inquiry was being made as to the allegation of the ill-treatment of prisoners in the Egyptian prisons; and I wish to ask him, Are those inquiries being made by the Egyptian or by the English authorities?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: They are being made by English military officers on special duty. Colonel Stewart is one of them.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE BOERS AND MONTSIOA.

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has received any official confirmation of the report that the Boers have attacked and routed the Barolong Chief, Montsioa, and have occupied his territory; whether Montsioa is the Chief who, during the Boer revolt, by protecting British refugees and loyal Boers, and by giving his men for use as messengers, rendered conspicuous service to this Country; whether, if this report be true, such an attack on a friendly Chief is consistent with the loyal observance, on the part of the Transvaal authorities, of the Convention of August 3rd 1881, and with the duty of subjects to their Suzerain; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take in the matter.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; we have as yet received no official confirmation of the report referred to. It is true that Montsioa was very friendly to the British during the troubles in the Transvaal; but I apprehend that love of plunder and not political feeling is the motive power which sends these Boers over the frontier; and Montsioa has no recognizable claim on the British Government beyond that which he has in common with his neighbours under the Convention of last year. These attacks are not made by the Transvaal authorities, but by individual Boers living near the border, and there have been even British subjects mixed up with the subjects of the Transvaal Republic. Papers which I have to-day laid on the Table will show what the Government have done and are doing in the matter.

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES AND ASSURANCE BILL, 1882—THE NEW TABLES.

MR. BRAND asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, considering that the new system of insurance and annuity under "The Government Annuities and Assurance Bill, 1882," cannot be put into operation until the new tables of rates have been prepared by the National Debt Commissioners, he can inform the House when these tables will be ready?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the insurance tables are practically ready. The construction of the annuity tables is delayed until the results of enlarged experience of the working of the old annuities have been embodied in new tables of mortality; this task can hardly be completed within three months from now; but I can assure my hon. Friend that there will be no avoidable delay in the preparation of the tables.

EGYPT—DESPATCH OF ENGLISH OFFICERS TO THE SOUDAN.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government approve of the action taken by Sir A. Alison in sending three officers to the Soudan without escort; what is to be the destination of these officers; what instructions have been given to these officers; and, whether Papers on the subject will be laid upon the Table?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to state that Colonel Stewart and three other officers have been sent to make inquiry as to the present state of affairs in the Soudan. They are, under no circumstances, to assume to act in any military capacity. I am not aware that Sir Archibald Alison has given them any further instructions; but the question of an escort had necessarily to be left to his discretion, and I have no reason to disapprove his decision. I cannot say at present whether any Papers will be laid on the Table.

Mr. ONSLOW asked what the destination of the expedition was. Was it Khartoum?

Mr. CHILDERS: The telegram says the Soudan; but I presume it will be Khartoum.

EGYPT—ACTION OF ITALY.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the statement published in the "Times" of the 13th instant, that the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt was constantly opposed by Signor Mancini, and also by Count Corti, the Italian Ambassador in Constantinople?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In reply to the first portion of the hon. Baronet's Question, I cannot do better than refer him specially to the Reports of Sir Alfred Paget, recorded in "Egypt," No. 17, pages 44, 72, 119, 153, 242, and 342, and in "Egypt," No. 18, pages 19 and 21. With regard to the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople, I may add that Lord Dufferin's Reports have always shown that the action of Count Corti has been of the most friendly nature.

INDIA—LIGHTHOUSE ON MINIKOI.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it has been decided to erect a lighthouse on Minikoi; and, if so, when it may be expected to be available for commerce?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, it has been decided to erect a lighthouse there under the superintendence of the Corporation of Trinity House. The work is to be begun during the present month and pushed on without delay; but I cannot say at present when it will be completed.

EGYPT—SURRENDER OF ARABI PASHA.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the order for the surrender of Arabi Pacha to the Egyptian Government was given before the procedure under which he was to be tried was arranged between the English and Egyptian Governments.

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; the order for the surrender of Arabi was given before the procedure of the trial was arranged.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—THE HANGING GALE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland What decision, if any, has been arrived at by the Irish Land Commissioners in reference to the question connected with the hanging gale provision of the Arrears Act, which the Commissioners have reserved for decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the hon. Member, I presume, refers to an answer of mine that provision might possibly be made for enabling tenants to lodge money in Court in cases of doubt to abide the decision of the case, and that the Land Commission had this point under their consideration. I can only say that up to the present the Land Commission are not able to see their way to carry out the suggestion. Meanwhile, they are making every exertion to press forward the decision of the cases already entered, and to inform the tenants of their rights and obligations under the Act.

Mr. PARNELL: When does the right hon. Gentleman expect that the decision of the Land Commission Court will be given in this matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This is one of those cases in which the Land Courts are absolutely responsible, and entirely divorced from the Executive Government. The case has been laid before them by the Government; but I cannot say when their final decision will be announced. Communications of an important nature passed yesterday between London and Dublin, and I have no doubt that a decision will be arrived at with all possible speed.

Mr. GIBSON: As all Courts are independent of the Executive Government, I should like to know if the Executive Government, in this case, have communicated with the Land Commission Court orally or by writing?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The origin of the communications came from a series of applications by the Land Commission. The Land Commission reported to the Government the difficulties in which they were placed.

Mr. GIBSON: In writing?

Mr. TREVELYAN: In writing certainly, and in more writings than one, and suggested several methods of dealing with these difficulties; and the Government, on the initiative of the Land Commission, have ever since been in communication with them on the subject.

MR. GIBSON: May I ask if the Irish Government also communicated in writing?

MR. TREVELYAN: That I am unable to say. I am unable to say in what form the communications took place in Dublin; but undoubtedly there have been oral communications.

MR. SEXTON: In view of the urgency of this matter and its great importance to many people in Ireland, I beg to give Notice that on Friday I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can communicate to the House the decision of the Land Commission?

MR. TREVELYAN: I may say that the Irish Executive are extremely sensible that they can do nothing in this question except to offer advice and suggestions.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE) —THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State of War, Whether, with a view to allow the public to witness the Royal Review of the Troops employed in the Egyptian warlike operations, it would be possible to hold it in Hyde Park instead of St. James's Park.

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the noble Lord, I have to say that I should have been very glad if it had been possible for Her Majesty to review the troops in Hyde Park; but, after well weighing the advantages of, and objections to, such a review in the middle of November, I arrived, with regret, at the conclusion that the objections preponderated. I am happy, however, to be able to say that His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief has proposed an arrangement under which many hundred thousand people will be able to see the troops. After passing before Her Majesty on the Horse Guards Parade, they will proceed by the Birdcage Walk, Grosvenor Place, Piccadilly, St. James's Street, and Pall Mall to Charing Cross, dispersing to their several destinations there. This will afford probably even greater opportunities for seeing the troops than a review in Hyde Park.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

MR. GLADSTONE: My right hon. Friend opposite the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) two days ago gave a Notice of Motion, in which he expressed an opinion that the House ought to be supplied with further information with respect to the occupation of Egypt by a British Military Force. Sir, Her Majesty's Government quite agree in that opinion, and they think that the time has come when they may state very briefly to the House so much as it is in their power to state at the present moment. It will then be for the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether the statement is such as he desires, or what course he will take with respect to it. The occupation of Cairo, as the House will recollect, took place on September 14, and since that time and from that time Her Majesty's Government have been sedulously occupied in bringing away the troops and *matériel*, which had been sent in large numbers and large quantities to Egypt, with the exception of such force as appeared to be necessary to be allowed to remain there for a certain time. The first despatch of the troops homewards began on October 4, and the process of sending them off continued until November 8, when the last departure took place. Within that time the maximum force we had in Egypt, which I believe I rather overstated on a former occasion, and which may be taken as about 33,000 men, has been reduced to 12,000 men. That being so, we have arrived at a new state of things, which is essentially a provisional state of things, because we had no intention of maintaining such a force for any length of time in Egypt.

MR. LEWIS: I beg to rise to a point of Order. Is the House to have an opportunity of discussing the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, which is a matter of vital importance to the country? [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] If we are to have this statement, a Motion should be made and the House ought to have an opportunity of discussing it. We are now, I believe, on the eve of discussing questions on Motions for Adjournment, and I beg to call your attention, Sir, to the fact that there is no Question before the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gladstone.

MR. GLADSTONE: I can only say, Sir, that I am acting as I believe for the convenience of the House, and for the purpose of conveying information without raising any question at all; but I can perfectly conceive that hon. Gentlemen opposite may think they ought to take some step, or no step—I do not care which it may be—in consequence of what I am about to say. It may be impossible for them to take any such step to-day; but they may take time for consideration. As far as regards the announcement of the intention of the Government, I believe I am acting strictly in conformity with precedent in giving certain information to the House. Well, Sir, the next step for Her Majesty's Government to take, having arrived at this particular position, will be to form a Convention with the Government of Egypt, and which will have reference to a variety of details necessary to be considered connected with the temporary arrangements for the maintenance of order and security in that country. One very important element in that Convention—possibly the principal one—will be with reference to the charge for the 12,000 men. We have said nothing up to the present time, although I do not know that we are precluded from making the claim if we thought fit to do so, as to the cost of the Military Expedition. But when the aim of the Military Expedition has been gained, and when the object is the maintenance of peace and security in the absence of a regular military Egyptian Force, which it will take some time to organize with prudence and efficiency, we think that it becomes pretty obvious that the question of the charge ought to be raised and considered between the Egyptian and the British Governments, and that will be an important subject for the consideration of the proposed Convention. There may be other particulars with regard to the time during which the present occupation may continue. In this matter we are fortunate in having a precedent before us, although the scale of operations was much larger, which I think in principle is perfectly applicable. It will be remembered that the invasion of France after the Battle of Waterloo was an invasion strictly analogous in principle, although it was effected by Allied Powers, and not a single Power; yet it was analogous to our entry into Egypt in this cardinal respect—cardinal in respect to the law of the case that it was conceived in point of law to be an invasion for the purpose of putting down a rebellious power which had obtained sway in the country, and on behalf of a Government which was recognized as the legitimate Government of the country by the invaders. On that occasion, and in the first instance, a Treaty was formed between the Allied Powers and with the Government of France, providing for the limited occupation of France—limited as to certain districts, limited in a number of particulars with regard to the cost and management of the force, limited as to the numbers of the occupying force, and also with respect to the charge which was to be imposed on France in respect of that force. The principles of that arrangement were contained in the principal Treaty between the Allied Powers and France; and then, as far as England was concerned, a further Convention was concluded in reference to the principal Treaty on the 20th of November, 1815—the Battle of Waterloo having been fought on the 18th of June previously. So much for the practical nature of that arrangement—an arrangement which, although I hope it is not likely so many points of detail will have to be considered in the present as in that case, lays down a precedent which may be properly followed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: What is the date of the principal Treaty?

MR. GLADSTONE: The date of the principal Treaty is also the 20th of November, 1815. It is headed, "Definitive Treaty between France and the Allied Powers, signed at Paris, the 20th of November, 1815." I am unable to say whether it was signed in duplicate or in triplicate, or in a multiplied form; but it was only signed by Castlereagh, Wellington, and Richelieu. I am quoting from the *Parliamentary Debates* of 1816. Then comes the question of the relations of that occupation to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman opposite suggests—and he is perfectly right in his suggestion—that the attention of Parliament should be called to this operation, and that it should be under the control of Parliament. The course taken in 1816 was this—that at the commencement of the ensuing Session the Estimates were presented; and with the Army Estimates of 1816, which will be found in page 32, there is the Memorandum—

> "The troops stationed in France being by Convention liable to be maintained at the expense of that country, it is not proposed to submit to the House of Commons any Vote on account of the charges included in the above Estimates."

I cannot say at the present moment that that will afford an exact parallel for us to follow on this occasion; but in principle it affords a parallel, because, being a charge, we shall submit that charge to the House. And although, on that occasion, no Estimate of the charge was submitted to Parliament, yet the matter was properly brought under the control of Parliament by taking a Vote for the number of men, "34,031 Cavalry and Infantry, stationed in France," costing £1,234,596 13*s.* 6*d.* No Vote, however, was taken for the cost, although the Estimate was laid before Parliament for its information, as provision had already been made for it by the Treaty. I think that that is all that I need state to the House upon the present occasion. I have no doubt that we shall, in the course of the next few weeks, proceed with the Convention in this matter; and before Parliament meets in the ensuing Session we shall be able to insert in the Estimates any particulars that may be proper for the purpose of enabling Parliament to exercise its judgment upon the arrangement which has been made. I have not attempted, at this moment, to give any statement as to the absolute cost of the Expedition down to this time; but that belongs to an entirely different subject. I hope, however, that in a short time we shall be in a position to give Parliament information on that subject.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I understand the statement of the right hon. Gentleman to be virtually in the nature of an answer to the Question which I addressed to him a few days ago, and which he promised to answer to-day. It does seem to me that the House is entitled to early and full information upon this important question as to the employment of the Forces of the Crown, and as to the mode in which the expenses of those Forces are to be met. The right hon. Gentleman refers to the precedent afforded by the Army of Occupation of France in 1815. It does not seem to me, I must say, that the cases are by any means parallel. They are not much more parallel than the North-Western Railway is with the Great Western Railway. There are, no doubt, some points of analogy between them. I rather think that if the right hon. Gentleman looks into the case he will see that there was a money Vote taken to meet the possibility of the failure of the French contribution. I think that he will see that in the Budget Speech of 1816 the matter was put in this way—that there must be a certain expenditure incurred, but that against it there was, as a set-off, the expected contribution from France, and I rather think that in one of the Appropriation Acts there was a sum of £200,000 inserted for the Army of Occupation. The House, therefore, had the opportunity of being consulted upon what had been done. It will be observed that one great difference between the two cases is that the occupation of France was a matter agreed upon in a Treaty to which all the Powers who had been engaged in the war were parties, and to which France was a party, and in which it was provided that France was to bear the whole of the expenses. We have no information of that kind with respect to Egypt before us, and it would be reasonable that the House should be informed upon the matter. I am quite aware of the power of the Government to decline to discuss this subject; but if information of that kind is still withheld, we shall certainly feel it absolutely necessary, when the time comes for taking the Vote, to ask the House to express its opinion upon the subject. There may be an opportunity, before the close of the present year, to discuss the matter of which we shall avail ourselves; but I do not think it is satisfactory to the people and Parliament of this country that we should be sitting here for several weeks in the autumn, called together at a time when these important arrangements are going on, and that we should be denied an opportunity of discussing them. In the present circumstances, however, we can do nothing but put in our protest in such a form as we may find it possible to do, by moving the adjournment of the House, or taking any other course that may be open to us. My ground of protest is this—that we were asked, in the month of August, to vote a considerable sum for military purposes for the next three months. These three months are now expired, we are aware that considerable expenditure is going on, and that that expenditure is not of the same character as that for which the Vote was taken in August; and, therefore, we have a right to complain that we are not informed more fully than we have been as to the purpose for which that money is required. Financially, I must say that, looking at the extremely rigorous doctrines which the right hon. Gentleman used to lay down if we did not give Parliament the fullest information as to any expenditure we had reason to expect we should incur, I am surprised that so much greater latitude is now claimed for the Benches on which the right hon. Gentleman now sits.

Mr. GLADSTONE: That is not the question.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: No; but I am protesting against the course which the right hon. Gentleman has taken in this matter. If the right hon. Gentleman will give me a proper opportunity, I will not further pursue this subject now. I merely wish to say that both upon this and the other matter referred to yesterday, upon the Motion of my right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), we are dissatisfied, and very seriously so, with the course which the Government have taken. I think that great misfortunes may result from the reticence practised by the Government; and, reserving for ourselves entire liberty to deal with this question as opportunity may occur, we are content simply to record our protest against the silence of the Government.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

—⁂—

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

Mr. J. R. YORKE gave Notice that he would on Thursday move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the circumstances under which the arrangement, commonly called the 'Kilmainham Treaty,' was alleged to have come into existence, and to report to the House how far the stipulations and conditions involved in such arrangement, if it should be proved to exist, were in accordance with public policy, and the interests of peace in Ireland."

He put the Motion down for Thursday, because he understood from what passed between the right hon. Gentleman and himself that it was to be taken as an unopposed Return. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to make any alteration in the terms of the Resolution he should be happy to postpone the Notice till Monday.

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is not possible for me to agree to any terms such as those read out by the hon. Gentleman, because he speaks of an arrangement commonly called the "Kilmainham Treaty." It looks as if those words were put into the Motion for the purpose of getting it opposed.

Mr. J. R. YORKE: It is strictly because the right hon. Gentleman said he would allow the arrangement which he referred to as having been called the "Kilmainham Treaty" to be inquired into that I gave Notice of the Motion in these terms.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I never recognized its being called the "Kilmainham Treaty." It is, indeed, assumed by the hon. Gentleman and others who think with him that there is such a Treaty. But if there is no Treaty, as I assert, why should this term be introduced into the Motion?

Mr. DODDS: I beg to give Notice that I shall oppose the Motion.

Subsequently,

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg to ask whether the Prime Minister will consent to any form, and, if so, what form, of Motion for the inquiry which the right hon. Gentleman challenged last night, which he severely denounced my hon. Friend (Mr. J. R. Yorke) for endeavouring to shrink from, but from which it appears the right hon. Gentleman himself is now anxious to back out?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Unless the noble Lord removes from the Question the concluding words of it, I decline to answer.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I can assure the Prime Minister that if he attached any offensive sense to these words, nothing I used was meant in an offensive sense. I withdraw them. I did not mean anything offensive; but those words are continually used by the Government. But I will substitute any other words the right hon. Gentleman suggests.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it would be very unwise on my part to draw a form of words for the noble Lord. What I referred to last night was that Her Majesty's Government would consent to an inquiry into an arrangement described by the noble Lord opposite as "a most disgraceful transaction." I conclude there will be no difficulty in designating a form of words referring to that subject sufficiently indicating it, which, at the same time, shall not contain any assumption of a nature that is not possible for us to admit. That is not an unreasonable limit to lay down; and the hon. Member, if he takes a little time to consider it, will have no difficulty in finding proper words.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the event of opposition to the Motion of which Notice had been given, he would take care that proper facilities for bringing the subject forward should be given to his hon. Friend?

MR. MACFARLANE wished to know whether it was usual or in Order for an hon. Member to move for a Treaty, the existence of which had been uniformly denied?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would adhere to the spirit and letter of what he stated last night, and thought it best to defer giving a precise answer to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) until an Amendment to the proposed Motion of the hon. Member opposite should have been placed on the Notice Paper.

MR. J. LOWTHER explained that he had in view the Notice given by the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), to the effect that he would oppose the Motion of the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke). That Notice would subject the Motion of the hon. Member to the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. He wanted to know whether, in the event of his hon. Friend's Notice being amended in such a way as to command the Prime Minister's approval, the right hon. Gentleman would make arrangements by which the Motion of his hon. Friend would escape the operation of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule.

MR. GLADSTONE thought that the words which he had used on Monday ought to have made it clear that he would act in the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to desire that he should act. But as the Question of the right hon. Gentleman was concerned with a double contingency—namely, an amended form of Notice and an opposition which might not be offered, he must decline to discuss the matter any further on the present occasion.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked why, if Her Majesty's Government were following the precedent of 1815 as to the cost of the occupation of Egypt, they did not also follow that precedent in their treatment of the leader of the military movement which they had suppressed?

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that, as the Prime Minister had stated that in the case of the French War a Treaty was framed with France in regard to the occupation of the country, he should like to know whether there had, up to the present time, been any Treaty, Convention, or Agreement between England and Egypt in regard to the occupation of Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; none whatever. Our first duty in our view when we had 33,000 men in Egypt, who had accomplished their work as an army, was to get as many as we could out of that country, in order to relieve this country from the heavy charge of continued occupation. That is a very arduous work, it has been rapidly performed, as I think, and it was concluded for the present on the 8th of November last, or just six days ago. Now it is our duty to proceed to the next stage; but we have yet no Convention of any kind existing between us and Egypt—certainly not of the kind that existed between this country and France.

MR. ONSLOW said that at the end of July they had a very important discussion as to the portion of the expense to be paid by India, when the Secretary of State for India laid down the principle that India should pay her portion. Three months had since elapsed, and a very important despatch had come from India. He would, therefore, ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would tell the

House within a reasonable time—say, a fortnight before the end of the Session —what was the determination of Her Majesty's Government as to the proportion of charge between India and this country to be paid for the Indian troops engaged in the Expedition to Egypt?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, it is only within the last few days that we have received anything like a near estimate of the actual or probable cost of the Indian troops. The estimate which was made in the summer has been subjected to a good deal of reconsideration. We shall have to compare that with similar estimates to be formed by the Secretary of State for War and the Admiralty before we can arrive at a conclusion upon the subject; but I think I may give every reasonable hope that within the time that the hon. Gentleman names before the Prorogation we shall be able to make a communication on the subject substantially corresponding to what he describes.

Mr. BOURKE said, he thought there was another Question they might ask, and which the right hon. Gentleman might be able to answer. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of a Convention. Would that Convention be laid upon the Table of the House this Session, and would it have reference to any other matter than the expense of the troops? Would it refer to anything connected with the Suez Canal, and was it intended to enter into a Convention or Treaty with any other Power but Egypt with respect to the future government of that country?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman is very sanguine if he thinks I can answer the whole of these Questions. I cannot even answer the first beyond giving him an affirmative answer in principle. He wishes to know whether the Convention when concluded will be laid on the Table of the House during the present Session? Well, the first question is how long will it take to conclude the Convention, and that I should hope would be a short time. At the same time, I cannot say, considering that we have only ended bringing away troops six days ago, that we are yet definitively prepared to conclude a Convention. The draft of it is in preparation, but it has not yet been definitively prepared. However, I do not anticipate that that will be a very complex matter, or will take a very long time, and there can be no doubt it will be presented to Parliament when concluded. Whether it will be presented during the present Session must depend upon the length of the present Session, and upon that subject it is for hon. Gentlemen opposite to ask themselves how long it will be rather than for us to say.

Colonel STANLEY: Do we understand the right hon. Gentleman rightly in saying that a force of 12,000 men will be left in Egypt; and, if so, may I ask whether it is intended to vote this number as additional to those nominally voted for the ordinary service in this country?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I think not. I do not think the way would be to vote them as additional. At the same time, that is a question which evidently enters into the preparation of the Estimates for the ensuing year, and to which no complete answer could be given at this moment; but I do believe that even then we would put them in as additional. I ought to have gone a little further in my reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), and said that the Convention of which I have been speaking will be confined to the subject of the military occupation. It will not be a Convention including other matters, nor are the Government yet in a condition to say whether any other Convention with Egypt will be requisite.

Mr. BOURKE: Or with other Powers?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Or with other Powers.

Mr. R. H. PAGET: May I ask whether, in any Convention with Egypt, that country will bear any portion of the expense of the late War, or the expenses of the occupation previous to the signing of the Convention?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. Member involves an assumption of some date. The date for which the Convention would run would have to be considered and to be fixed probably upon the spot. Substantially, I understand the hon. Gentleman to mean to ask me whether we intend to ask Egypt for the expenses of the War, or a portion of the expenses of the War. I have stated with regard to that subject all that we can state. We have made no mention of that question, and no claim upon Egypt for that purpose. I do not know that it would be right in us absolutely to preclude the exercise of the discretion of Parliament with regard to it; but we have made no claim of that kind. I may, perhaps, say, though I would rather have had my attention called to it by regular Notice, that Her Majesty's Government have no intention — have not arrived at any decision—that it would be desirable that any such claim should be made.

MR. SALT said, speaking under correction, that he had a suspicion that the expenditure now going on with regard to Egypt beyond the total sum voted in July last was contrary to the terms of the Appropriation Act. He did not wish to press that too far, because in difficult times, either of war or of the occupation of a country, it was absolutely impossible to keep the expenditure strictly within the letter of the law. At the same time, it was most important that any departure should be at all times and on all occasions as small as possible. [*Cries of* "Order!"] The House happened, perhaps by a fortunate accident, to be sitting now; and there appeared to be, according to law, a recognized opportunity for asking for Votes of Credit should occasion arise. Now, he wanted to know whether the right hon. Gentleman would be kind enough to tell the House somewhat more definitively on what day he would be able to give information to the House on a question of such great importance?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am necessarily dependent for my power of answering that Question upon intelligence which I have not yet had from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Childers) and my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook). If my hon. Friend will bear in mind that only six days have elapsed since we brought away the latest detachment of troops from Egypt, which must necessarily be made the basis of arriving at this calculation, he will see that no time has elapsed which could possibly have enabled us to make the calculation. At the earliest possible moment I am supplied with the information I shall be glad to furnish it to the House.

MR. SALT said, he would ask a Question on the subject on Monday.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

VISCOUNT SANDON asked the hon. Member for Northampton when he should proceed with the Motion affecting his Colleague (Mr. Bradlaugh)? Would he wait till the end of the Resolutions, or when?

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that he should proceed with it whenever the Prime Minister might find it convenient to give him a day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SECOND RULE (MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT BEFORE PUBLIC BUSINESS).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWENTY-FIRST NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [13th November], as amended,

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by forty Members rising in their places, nor until after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he rose to move an Amendment, standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), by which it was proposed to allow the adjournment of the House to be moved without leave before the consideration of the Orders of the Day on the occasion of any statement other than an answer to a Question being made by any Member. Statements containing controversial matter were often made at an early hour in the afternoon, and if the Resolution were passed in its present form it would in future be impossible to comment upon them. They had had a Ministerial statement that very evening which furnished ground for a Motion for Adjournment, and, if such a Motion had been made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister would allow that the course thus taken would have been quite justifiable. Then they had heard statements from Ministers on their resignation of Office. Hon. Members would recollect cases in point which had occurred recently, as, for instance, when the Prime Minister, in August last, said that if a certain Amendment on the Coercion Bill was not carried he would resign. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Well, the right hon. Gentleman said that if the Amendment was not adopted he would reconsider his position, and that was generally understood to mean resignation; and when the Amendment was rejected the right hon. Gentleman made a statement. Debate might well have been initiated on that occasion by a Motion for Adjournment; and some Members on his side of the House were, in fact, disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition refrained from initiating debate on that occasion. When the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) resigned Office, they had also heard a statement in which the right hon. Gentleman introduced much controversial matter, such as the moral law. Again, on that occasion, the Leader of the Opposition might have initiated debate by a Motion for Adjournment, and again were they a little disappointed that he did not do so. It was obviously right that, on all such occasions, any Member should be able to comment upon a Minister's statement. In 1873, one of the most important debates of the time was based upon a statement made by Mr. Disraeli. If the Rule were agreed to unamended, Ministers' statements would appear in the newspapers in the morning uncontradicted and not commented upon, and for that reason he begged to submit this Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "upon," to insert the words "unless any Member shall, by leave of the House, have made any statement other than an answer to a Question."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought the House was losing all confidence in itself, for it seemed to be assumed that in future on all kinds of proposals which had no ground of reason to support them the majority would act unreasonably and wrongly. He, however, preferred to assume that the House in general would act reasonably. At the same time, while his experience taught him that majorities would act reasonably, it also taught him that there might be a few Members who would act unreasonably. A Member of the House not unfrequently contrived to make a statement before he was interrupted by the Speaker, which statement he would have made by leave of the House because he had not been interrupted, and which, at the same time, under this proposal, would utterly nullify the application of the Resolution. The noble Lord said there was an usage according to which Ministers were allowed—nay, even encouraged—to give information to the House. That being so, it was certainly right that after a Ministerial Statement there should be a power of commenting upon it, and he should say that that power would always be given by leave of the House. He was still of opinion that it would be best to rely on the majority of the House; but there was apparently a strong desire on the part of many Members that the power of moving the adjournment of the House should be given to a certain number of Members independently of the majority. The two cases that had been mentioned, of statements by Ministers on matters of public importance and announcements of resignation, stood by themselves, and he believed that ample provision would be made for them by other methods. He hoped, then, that the Amendment would not be pressed.

MR. SEXTON said, that such an arbitrary power as was given by the Resolution before the House was not a safe possession for any body of men, for they were all likely to use it harshly and unwisely; and if the Prime Minister meant that the minority was losing faith in the majority, he was afraid they would have to admit that it was perfectly true. Nothing could be more reasonable than the Amendment. As the noble Lord had pointed out, the usage of the House enabled any hon. Member to make a personal explanation, and permitted a retiring Minister to announce his resignation, and an actual Minister to make statements on important public affairs. This being so, what could be more desirable than that, with proper limitations, the House at large should be able to comment on the statements thus made? That very evening, when the Prime Minister made a statement on Egyptian affairs, the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. Lewis) rose to Order, but was ignored by the Speaker; and the Prime Minister made an important statement, on which the Leader of the Opposition and an hon. Gentleman behind the right hon. Baronet proceeded to comment. That was to some extent irregular, and it seemed to him that the privilege of taking part in these irregular discussions could not very well be confined to right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches. If the precedent created to-day was followed, the result would be that at any time the Prime Minister might rise and develop his views before the country on a question of the first importance. The Leader of the Opposition might follow him, and the Irish Party and all other independent sections of the House would be shut out from making any observations whatever. That, certainly, was a most drastic application of the gag; and unless this extremely dangerous power was to be expressly reserved to two Gentlemen, one of whom was the Prime Minister and the other of whom had been Prime Minister, he could not say what argument could be advanced against the Amendment of the noble Lord.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that the House was discussing the Amendment under a great disadvantage, as there were no subsequent stages of the Resolution on which the question could be reconsidered. The Resolution, once passed, became the law of Parliament, and the House was invited immediately to repose unlimited confidence in the tender mercies of the Government, and, on the withdrawal of the Amendment, to accept any substitute for it that might occur to right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. He wished that the Government, when they were inclined to make concessions, would at once tell the House bluntly and plainly what those concessions were, and so save hours and hours of futile debate. Last night, for instance, the 2nd Resolution might probably have been got through at an early hour if only the Government had made up their minds as to the concessions that they were prepared to make to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). As things were, he had no confidence as to how the matter would be settled if the present Amendment were rejected, and he should therefore vote for it. The right hon. Gentleman had urged that the House should have confidence in itself, and should feel assured that debate would never be stopped on legitimate occasions. He confessed that he felt no such confidence, considering what had just happened. That evening, as had been already pointed out, two important speeches had been delivered by Ministers or ex-Ministers; but there were Questions which private Members wished to put, and one of them was a question of great consequence raised by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), a Gentleman who seldom addressed the House, and never without having something to say. The hon. Member was about to ask a Question as to finance, and had scarcely opened his lips when he was met with a howl from the Liberal Benches below the Gangway, where sat the professed economists of the House. Judging from that incident, he thought that when these stringent Rules were passed the right hon. Gentleman's predictions as to the fairness of the House would probably be falsified, and that on future occasions hon. Members desiring to address the House would not meet with the toleration so confidently expected by the right hon. Gentleman, but so little approved by many of his supporters. Under these circumstances, the noble Lord would be perfectly justified in pressing his Amendment.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought the noble Lord had very much misapprehended what the Prime Minister had said. The right hon. Gentleman had not spoken of any future stages of the Resolution, but had meant that the moment had not yet arrived for discussing the limitations subject to which Motions for Adjournment were to be permitted. There were several proposals before the House as to the number of Members by whom such Motions should appear to be supported; and the argument of his right hon. Friend was that, whatever figure might be chosen, the requisite number might be relied upon to support the Motion on every important occasion. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had not correctly described the course taken that evening as a precedent. Statements by Ministers, without any Motion for the adjournment of the House, had always been common enough; and it was open to any hon. Member, by moving the adjournment, to raise a discussion.

Mr. SEXTON: What was novel was the fact that not one, but two speeches were made.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he believed that the Leader of the Opposition had often followed the Minister by the courtesy of the House, and without any Motion being made. In the present case, the Prime Minister had seemed to indicate at the beginning of his speech that, in his opinion, such a Motion might reasonably be made, and had suggested that the occasion was one of those contemplated by the Government, when any requisite number of Members would rise in their places to support the Motion. But the noble Lord's Amendment went further than that. He had always felt it would be well if they could get the power of adjournment in the hands of some responsible person who would not abuse it; but it was extremely difficult to arrive at such a definition. The Amendment spoke of any Member who might have made a statement by leave of the House, and was not restricted to a statement on matters of the first importance like a Ministerial Statement; it was quite plain it was capable of a much wider application. Personal statements were the kind of statements that the House did not wish to have debated. They might relate to matters on which it was not desirable that any other Member should be heard. If the Amendment were accepted, the House would be in the hands of two or three Members who might desire, against the wish of the whole body, to carry on a discussion on a personal incident. Therefore, the Amendment was far too wide, and covered much more than the ground on which the Mover relied. The object of the Rule was to limit Motions for Adjournment, because they had been too numerous; and the House must take care that they did not, by regulation, increase the number. It was easy, when you began to regulate, to make Rules that might be too wide.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that when his noble Friend (Lord John Manners) observed that no opportunity would be given for considering questions not dealt with now he referred to what he thought an unfortunate omission on the part of the Prime Minister in not having given a general view of the Amendments which the Government were prepared to consent to. If they had had such a general view, much difficulty might have been avoided; but they had not, and therefore they were obliged to go on with the Rule, and to propose Amendments as the points arose. Undoubtedly the Prime Minister had said that some kind of modification would be introduced into the Resolution, which would enable some number of Members —40, 50, or 60—to call for a Motion for Adjournment. But that did not meet cases as they arose, and he thought it should not depend on the will of 40 or 60 Members; but there should be some Rule laid down, fixed in its character and operation, to regulate Motions for Adjournment. As to the observation that it might be taken advantage of by any Member to make a statement, he must point out that the Amendment was confined to the case in which a Member should have the leave of the House to make a statement. The House would always have it in its power to prevent anyone making a statement which would lead to an answer, for, if the House objected, the Member would have to sit down. It had been said that if statements had been made that called for answer, there was the power of moving the adjournment of the House; but that was going to be taken away, and the circumstances rendered it necessary for them to consider how much of the privilege was to be preserved. It was clear there must be some qualification. The proposal made in the Amendment was very much to the point, because it exactly touched the sort of cases which would not be touched otherwise. It would not be open to abuse, because there were two guards against it. One was that the House might object to a statement being proceeded with; and the other was that, under the Rule already passed, the *clôture* might be enforced. Indulgence was necessarily given to a Minister making a statement; very often a statement of an important character might demand discussion; and he did not see why 40 Members should be required to express that opinion. The Amendment embodied a practical suggestion, and he hoped the House would adopt it.

MR. LEWIS said, the only object he had in view earlier in the evening in calling the Prime Minister to Order was to draw attention to the working of this Rule. According to old usage, the Prime Minister made a statement, the Leader of the Opposition followed, and no further discussion was allowed. It seemed that all their privileges were to be sacrificed to the two Front Benches; and this was a point that must be considered. What chance had any independent Member of being heard? All the long speeches came from the two Front Benches—from those who were in Office, and those who had been. The greater part of the time of the House in a big debate, and all the best hours of the evening, were taken up by the Front Benches. As to Members moving the adjournment of the House, that was the very power that was to be taken away. Independent Members were to be bound hand and foot, and were to have no power of doing anything. Supposing Joseph Hume had been present that evening, would he not have had something to say on the financial aspect of the Egyptian Question? He knew that Hume had some bastard imitators in the House, though at present he did not know exactly where they were to be found, for since the Liberal Government came into power they had thrown off the mantle and put on the mask. The advocates of economy on the other side of the House had disappeared from the debates in Supply, and they would take care to be silent so long as their Party was in Office. The House was being bound to the coat tails of the two Front Benches, and when their occupants had spoken, they would say—"We have had enough; the rest may go out-of-doors to speak." Some personal statements which had been made in the House had been connected with grave questions of public policy. He remembered statements being made by Mr. Henley and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Walpole)—whose presence in that House they were about to lose—on their retirement from Lord Derby's Ministry in 1858; and these involved the gravest questions of public policy relating to the representation of the people and the course to be taken by the Conservative Party. According to the framing of that Rule, the House would be compelled to sit still and listen to the discourse of some right hon. Member for Birmingham on international morality without having the power of making any comment on his extraordinary inconsistency. The Amendment was but a putting into shape, a means of making lawful in the future what frequently occurred, and a provision for the maintenance of some kind of liberty to Members. The House had always allowed personal explanations, and they could always be shortened by the *clôture.* He wished, however, particularly to call attention to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was the first to break the New Rules, while the House was compelled to sit still and hear the statement which was supposed to set at rest all the grave financial questions which had arisen with respect to Egypt. But his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon was compelled by the circumstances to be a greater sinner still. The result would be the subjection of the House to the Front Benches on either side, who would exhaust all the time, and leave to the general body of the House the tail end of the debate. Private Members would find it difficult to get a hearing in the future. But the Government were trying to dam a stream —they were defying the course of nature —for the course of speech was really the course of nature, but the stream would burst out in different channels. The Prime Minister, in fact, wanted an innings all to himself, and to go out carrying his bat. If the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) was to take any part in the game, it would simply be to send the ball back again, while the rest of the field looked on, and then the game was to stop. That was the only way in which the House was allowed to discuss the manner in which our troops and money in Egypt had been disposed of. The right hon. Gentleman was driven as far back as 1815 for a precedent. If anyone else had referred to such a precedent the right hon. Gentleman would have said—"We have done with all that long ago; we have left those benighted days behind us. They should be sent to Jupiter and Saturn." With regard to the Amendment more strictly considered, it seemed to him that they were driven to vote for it, because the Government so far had not vouchsafed to say how far they would endeavour to cover the question at issue as suggested by acceding to the Amendment in the latter part of the Resolution.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he thought the hon. Member who had just sat down had exacted pretty full compensation for his enforced silence at an earlier period of the evening. The incidents, however, upon which the hon. Gentleman relied did not prove the point which he wished to prove. Nothing could have been more inconvenient or undesirable than that, immediately after the statement of his right hon. Friend on the affairs of Egypt, the House should at once have entered upon a discursive debate without time to consider the situation. It was a much more convenient course which his right hon. Friend had adopted—to place the House in possession of such information as could at present be given, and to give time to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who was mainly responsible for the conduct of Business on the other side of the House, to consider what course he should adopt. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not choose to move the adjournment, the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) could either apply the spur, or, at all events, give Notice of any action which he intended to take on the question. Besides, the Amendment would not have the effect of increasing the freedom of the House, or of giving greater facilities of debate, but exactly the opposite. At present statements were constantly made by the leave of the House, not only by Members of the Government or Members sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, but even by private Members, with regard to the Business of the House. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No.] That certainly was so, and it was a convenient practice, as they were sometimes made without any Motion for Adjournment at all. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: By the Prime Minister.] By the Prime Minister and also by others. But if such statements were to be immediately followed, as a matter of course, by an irregular discussion, the House would be inclined to exercise much greater caution in giving permission for such statements. But the Amendment would tend to fetter, and not to increase, the liberty of Members of that House. He would suggest, too, that neither the Amendment of the noble Lord, nor the two immediately following it, were exactly in their proper place. There was an almost universal accord that the practice of moving the adjournment of the House, with a view to raising discussions, was one which ought to be limited. Would it not be possible for the House to agree with the words of the Resolution down to the words "except by leave of the House." Any Amendment by way of exception might then be moved. But surely the general rule ought to be that the leave of the House should be required for any statement to be made. The Government admitted that some exception should be made, and the exceptions should be dealt with after the words down to "by leave of the House" had been agreed to.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH, in reference to the last observation of the noble Marquess, said, they had been told that the law of the House meant the law of the majority. With great deference to his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), who committed himself somewhat to the language of the Amendment, he thought it would be unwise to attempt to lay down the cases in which exceptional permission might be given. He should have no objection, however, to such an attempt being made if Notice were given of them, and if they were quite sure that an exhaustive list of them could be made. In his judgment, the privilege of moving the adjournment of the House was a privilege which the House ought not to part with. He regarded it as a safety-valve; still, he agreed that it ought to be placed under limitation; but the question was what the limitations should be. In his opinion, they had already made a sufficient limitation by the prohibition of the Motion for Adjournment at Question time. If the Resolution of the Government were adopted in its present form, what would happen? The Government had not proposed to prohibit the Motion for the adjournment of the House after the Notices of Motion had been entered upon. If the prohibition to make this Motion were to come to an end as soon as the Questions were disposed of, interruption would immediately arise on the discussion of the first Order of the Day. Therefore, he urged the House to be satisfied with curing the evil of which they had had considerable experience during the last few years. He should deprecate laying down the occasions on which it would be permissible to move the adjournment; but he desired that the House should retain this very important power.

MR. RYLANDS said, he had a great desire to preserve the rights of private Members in that House. He was also alive to the fact that the privilege which private Members had enjoyed of moving the adjournment had been, he might almost say, abused to an extent which had caused a great deal of dissatisfaction in the House; and yet he looked with jealousy on any proposal to place in the hands of the Government the power of determining whether that privilege should be used. He understood that the noble Lord was, by his Amendment, seeking, if possible, to relieve the stringency of the Resolution as it was proposed by Her Majesty's Government. But he understood, also, from Her Majesty's Government that they were not prepared to stand by their Resolution, because they perceived that in its present form it would rob private Members of one of those privileges which among Members generally was esteemed very highly indeed. Probably the subsequent Resolutions would cut off, to a large extent, the means Members possessed of bringing forward questions on going into Committee of Supply. If, then, they were to have no Motion for Adjournment, it was clear that small sections would never have a chance of expressing their opinions in Parliament. As for the Front Benches, they might be left to take care of themselves. He did not believe there was the slightest chance that either the *clôture* or the other Resolutions would prevent the Front Opposition Bench from having a full opportunity of expressing their opinions. But outside the two great Parties—that was to say, outside their Leaders—there were opinions which ought to be, from time to time, discussed in the House. In the past two or three Sessions the Motions for Adjournment pressed upon his recollection like a nightmare. On many occasions, when important Business was waiting to be transacted, it had been unexpectedly dislocated, and the time of the House wasted by the discussion of some subject which was not worthy of the exercise of a privilege which he, for one, esteemed so highly. While he was prepared to accept the Resolution, which would prevent individual Members from trespassing, on small pretences, on the time of the House by making Motions for the adjournment, yet he was altogether opposed to limiting the right in such a manner that it could not be exercised with some comparative facility. What, he asked, was the Government prepared to do in regard to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler)? Such a modification of this Rule would be a fair and legitimate protection to individual Members. He hoped the Government would look favourably on the proposal. If, as he understood, the Prime Minister gave his assent to that, he should vote against the Amendment of the noble Lord.

SIR RAINALD KNIGHTLEY said, that the concession made was to the Front Opposition Bench, and not to independent Members at all. As one coming within that category, he viewed with very considerable jealousy the tendency to turn the House into a place where a kind of duel between the two Front Benches might be fought out. The consideration formerly shown to independent Members was departing; and it was obvious that though the number of 60 would prove a sufficient protection for the Leaders of the Opposition, it was of no use whatever to private Members, and was, in fact, no concession at all.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that there was no sort of agreement between the two Front Benches in regard to this matter; and if his hon. Friend (Sir Rainald Knightley) looked at the Notice Paper, he would find in his name an Amendment similar in terms to that of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) for the reduction of the number to 40, which, he hoped, would eventually be accepted. He pressed upon the Government how much it would be to their advantage if they would only tell the House definitely what they intended to do with regard to that Amendment. If they accepted it, he assured them that there would be a great saving of time. It had been suggested that they should accept all the words down to "by leave of the House," but that, he urged, would be fatal; because the Speaker had ruled that this meant that any single Member might object, and with these words once in the

Resolution there would be no power to strike them out. The proper course, therefore, would be to come to some conclusion before their insertion. He contended that this was the time to decide whether the Motion for Adjournment might be made after a statement by a Minister or any other Member. If the Prime Minister admitted that when a Ministerial Statement had been made, it was the privilege—nay, the duty in some cases—of hon. Gentlemen to challenge it, what objection could he have to inserting words which preserved that privilege? He should vote with the noble Lord unless they could be told what the Government really meant to do. When the debate began yesterday, the Secretary of State for the Home Department said that no concession would be made; but later on it had been admitted that the Government were prepared, at any rate, to discuss, if not to accept, the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and later still the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India said that the Government would not only be willing to discuss, but would accept the principle. If the Government would state that the Motion for Adjournment should not require a majority, but that a certain number of Members might determine that the Motion might be made, and the question be discussed—if they agreed upon that principle, then they would prevent a great deal of heat, and Members on his side of the House would be willing to discuss the matter with the Government. At all events, they ought to preserve this privilege of freedom of debate and this check upon Ministers. While, therefore, he quite agreed that something ought to be done in the matter of restraining the Motions for Adjournment, for they were at times highly inconvenient, still they were entitled, before they went to a division, at least to know the course intended to be pursued by the Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he must ask to be allowed to say a few words after the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman. Of course, it was only by permission of the House that he did so, because he was in a similar position to a Minister in charge of a Bill who had exhausted his right to speak. He wanted, however, to explain three things, and he would endeavour to do so in about three sentences. The right hon. Gentleman had stated the admissions of the Government as to the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) more narrowly than was the fact, for these admissions included rather more. It was not possible at that stage to enter fully upon the question of the Motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, for it would be an abuse of the liberty the House had accorded; but he was ready to redeem the expectation held out, and when they came to that Amendment the Government would fully their views. He trusted the House would repose sufficient confidence in him to pass on to the Amendment. With regard to the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, he was quite aware that a certain construction had been put on it; but that construction had been disclaimed in the course of last evening. As regarded the Resolution itself, he would draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that any Motion for Adjournment could be made by leave—that was to say, that any Motion for Adjournment that was approved could be made. The effect of accepting the Amendment would be to introduce partial specifications into the Amendment. He hoped that it would not be necessary to take that course, as the Resolution was quite clear as it stood.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the return of tranquillity between the two Front Benches was a most inauspicious sign. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) took with him, he thought, the general sense of the House when he said that the right of private Members to move the adjournment was a right which ought not lightly to be given away by the House. He wished to point out to the House that even if the Government accepted the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), it by no means took away the necessity for such an Amendment as that of the noble Lord, and by no means met this case. There were several groups in the House that did not belong to any Party, and in future there might be more such groups. They had the Irish Members there, and if they said that only 60 Members should have the right of saying there should be an adjournment they thereby deprived the Irish Members of the power of moving the adjournment. The same might be said of the Radicals. The Free Traders were not 40 when they came into the House, and those who were in favour of the abolition of slavery were not 40 when they entered the House. He was afraid that the tendency was in favour of a good understanding between the two Front Benches, and that private Members would be silenced. The occupants of the Front Benches, it must be remembered, enjoyed privileges not possessed by them. The right hon. Gentleman said he could only speak once. That, no doubt, was strictly so; but they all knew that the right hon. Gentleman could speak half-a-dozen times if he would. Now, however, the Prime Minister, in collusion he was almost going to say with the Front Opposition Benches, was asking private Members to give up the right of moving the adjournment on the ground that they had the right if they belonged to a large Party. Well, independent Members in the House should have their right independent of large Parties, and independent of the Leaders of large Parties.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, the House need not trouble itself about the regular Opposition, for whatever Party occupied that place, they would always be sufficiently numerous to command a hearing. They might not get a hearing in the specific way they desired; but, in one form or other, the Front Opposition Bench would always be strong enough to take care of itself. It was the groups of independent Members that they were concerned for. They had one independent group there now; they would probably have others in time; and it would be in the power of the majority to suppress these groups. It might sometimes be necessary to have a discussion when there were not 60 Members willing to support it, or when there were not 40 Members ready to do so. It might even be desirable to raise a debate when only five or six Members demanded it. What they were anxious to do was to secure the opportunity of discussing pressing subjects, free from the restraints either of the Ministers or the regular Opposition. The Government had preserved an unnecessary reticence. If they would say straight out what they would do, the Business would be greatly advanced. But, as it stood, they did not know whether they were going to accept the hon. Member for Wolverhampton's proposal or not, or whether only a majority could demand a discussion at Question time. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) was willing to believe in the Government, and would trust their somewhat doubtful promises. But there were others who had not the same amount of faith; and until they could have a categorical undertaking that some concession would be made, it would be the duty of independent Members to contest every point. When the concession was made they could debate it upon its merits. The House seemed to labour under the belief that these discussions at Question time were an innovation. In a sense they were; but they should bear in mind that within the recollection of the Prime Minister hon. Members had an opportunity of ventilating their grievances in presenting Petitions. The practice of making speeches on presenting Petitions was largely resorted to when it was permitted. That power was taken away from the House some years ago, and the discussions on Motions for Adjournment had really taken its place, so that the time lost in one way had been got in another. He thought they ought to have some distinct and definite promise from the Government in respect of this Resolution.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, that the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) was not at all satisfactory. The hon. Member said that he had no confidence in the Government; but he (Mr. Chamberlain) wished to point out that the Government had been assured from the other side of the House that if they would state with sufficient clearness the concessions they were prepared to make, the debate would be materially shortened. But what had said the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen)? The hon. Gentleman had said that if the House would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), that that would be satisfactory. The hon. Member went even farther than that, and said that if the Government would not accept the Amendment, he (Mr. J. Cowen) had a suggestion which he would put before the House, which was in the nature of a compromise, and which was less satisfactory than the Amendment of the hon. Member for

Wolverhampton, but which, nevertheless, if accepted, would materially shorten the debate. The proposal of the hon. Member for Newcastle was that an hon. Member desiring to move the adjournment of the debate should have 10 minutes in order to state to the House his reasons for his Motion. He (Mr. Chamberlain) must confess that such a state of things as that would be very unsatisfactory, because there would still be the waste of time of the House. What he desired to point out to the House was that the hon. Member for Newcastle last night told the House that if the Government were willing to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, it would materially shorten the debate; and yet he now got up, after the Prime Minister had expressed his determination of accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and said that the Amendment would be unsatisfactory. He (Mr. Chamberlain) could not understand that any further assurance could be required by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. His right hon. Friend had clearly stated that when he came to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, he would make a statement which would be satisfactory to the House, and which would in effect accept the principle of the Amendment. Surely what that meant was this—that his right hon. Friend, while not committing himself to the details of the Amendment, was willing to accept its principle.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked leave of the House to explain. He had said yesterday that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was a concession, but that it was not a satisfactory one.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN contended that what the hon. Member for Newcastle had said last night in the last debate was that, if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was accepted, then he thought the House might proceed with its Business, and that it would be a satisfactory solution of the matter.

Viscount SANDON said, that if there was one thing in which the House would not agree with the President of the Board of Trade it was his allegation that the Prime Minister had stated the views of the Government on this Resolution with clearness. He had consulted all the records with a view of discovering the Prime Minister's meaning; and all he found was that he said that he was prepared to entertain the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton if the sense of the House were in its favour.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I said a great deal more than that.

Viscount SANDON said, that might be so, but he was sorry to say there was no record of it. The reservation of the Prime Minister, "if the sense of the House were in its favour," was most important. How could they tell that the Prime Minister would not use his majority and affirm that 60 was not the magic number to which he would yield? For his part, he was entirely opposed to any such settlement of the question, and he agreed with the suggestion that it would be well to see if putting off the power of moving the adjournment till after Questions would not suffice. In most cases he believed that hon. Members moving the adjournment were actuated by temporary pique or excitement; and the lapse of a little time would, perhaps, prevent any Motion being made. He was extremely jealous of this power of moving the adjournment; and although they must take anything they could get, yet he considered it no concession that the power of adjournment should be placed in the hands of 60 Members. The Home Secretary and those who acted with him seemed inclined to put too much in the hands of the Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that this power should not be placed in the hands of non-responsible persons; but all persons who disagreed with the Government were non-responsible persons. All the promises of the Government were totally lacking in that clearness which the President of the Board of Trade claimed for them; and he would strongly urge hon. Members to be very slow to yield up one of their ancient privileges.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he was glad that the President of the Board of Trade had broken the cold chain of silence which had hitherto bound him in this discussion. With his experience as a private Member fresh in his recollection, the right hon. Gentleman must be in sympathy with independent Members. But the right hon, Gentleman did not persuade him that they ought to take the Government on trust. For his part, he was not in favour of the confidence trick in politics, or in anything else, and he preferred to consider each question as it arose. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman had inspired him with some additional distrust when he spoke favourably of the number 60. He held that the number 60, or even the number 40, would be no sort of protection whatever. What independent Members wanted to secure was the rights of small minorities, the rights of majorities were fully guarded. There was some danger of the two Front Benches entering into some arrangement for their own protection, and leaving the other Members out in the cold. He trusted they would stand by the present point in dispute. He warned the Government that no protection of 60, or even 40, could by any possibility find acceptance from the minority with whom he had the honour to act.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, that the right of minorities had been exercised to an absurd extent. There had been 20 Motions for the Adjournment of the House at Question time this Session between February 6 and August 15, or seven more than was stated last night. The smallest minority in the House, the so-called "Fourth Party," had taken more than their share of those Motions, the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) having moved the adjournment three times at Question time. There were also other instances in which Members threatened to move the adjournment unless the House listened to tedious and irrelevant speeches. It was high time that this should be put an end to, and he rather regretted that any concession should have been promised.

MR. GORST said, he would not follow the hon. Member for Southwark in his tedious and irrelevant remarks, not one word of which had been germane to the subject under discussion. He (Mr. Gorst) thought the Prime Minister would admit, after a Ministerial Statement had been made in the House by a Gentleman who was just retiring from Office, or by any other hon. Member, with the leave of the House, that there should be some means by which such a statement could be checked. A Motion for Adjournment under such circumstances had always been considered highly proper. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), when he had himself moved the adjournment of the House some years ago, had done so in consequence of a Ministerial Statement, but if they passed the Resolution in its present form, or even with the 60 Members shadowed out by the President of the Board of Trade, they would entirely destroy the power of the House to move the adjournment and raise a discussion after a Ministerial Statement. It was impossible to arrange beforehand to have 60 Members, a Ministerial Statement often being suddenly sprung upon them. He hoped, therefore, that the noble Lord would not withdraw his Amendment unless a further assurance was given that some modification would be introduced into the Rule to enable the House to use its most Constitutional power when Ministerial Statements were made.

MR. DALY said he should support the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock. He (Mr. Daly) felt bound to complain of the indefiniteness of the language used by the Prime Minister, which, in nine cases out of ten, he failed to understand. The right hon. Gentleman told them he would redeem the expectations which he had held out; but, from past experience, he declined to accept such a vague and general assurance. The House was entitled to a more distinct explanation of the intentions of the Government before they allowed another portion of the liberties of private Members to be sacrificed.

SIR HENRY TYLER observed that the House was in much the same position as it was in last night. The Government refused to tell them what they would do until they had passed the words "except by leave of the House." The Government virtually asked the House to open its mouth and shut its eyes and see what they would give it. In order to obviate objections, he proposed to amend the Amendment of the noble Lord by inserting after the word "Member" the words "of the Government," so that it would run thus—

> "Unless any Member of the Government shall by leave of the House have made any statement other than an answer to a Question," &c.

[The Amendment not being seconded, was not put.]

Mr. PARNELL said, that last night the Government told the House they agreed in principle to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and it would simplify matters much if, after having had time since then for deliberation, they could announce the particular number of Members they were willing to accept. It was impossible for hon. Members at present to say how they would be affected by the Resolution, and it seemed to him that a great deal of time was being wasted by the reticence of the Government. He did not mean to say that the Government were not entitled to reserve any announcement they might have to make about a future Amendment; but in the interest of the time both of hon. Members and of the Government the Prime Minister might very well break his silence upon the point. They had several proposals before them. They had the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), which was 60 on a requisition, and they had also the proposal of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil), which was 15. He himself should very much prefer the number 15 to the number 60; but seeing that there was such a very wide divergence of views on that side of the House, and looking at the interest which hon. Members opposite below the Gangway took in this subject, surely it would not be too much to ask the Government that they should take the House into their confidence and announce what determination they had come to with regard to this number. Such a course, he thought, would enormously facilitate matters, and probably enable them to pass on to the consideration of subsequent Amendments. If, on the other hand, the Government had not come to any conclusion, they had a right to say so; and they would then know where they stood, and how far they should support the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, there had been so much discussion as to what course should be taken on his Amendment, that he thought it might possibly save time if he stated what he understood the Government intended to do. The object of the Amendment was to do away with placing the power of granting leave to move the adjournment of the House in the hands of the majority. He understood that the Government conceded that principle to him, and that they were willing that power to move the adjournment of the House should be subject to two conditions—first, that it should be granted by leave of the House, which meant by leave of the House unanimously. Of course, that did not meet the case of minorities. The Government, as he understood, also conceded the principle of his Amendment that the Motion might be made with the concurrence of a certain number of Members, and that number of Members was a question on which there were several Amendments before the House. Clearly, the range of discussion would be between the two numbers of not more than 60 and not less than 10, which had been proposed.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he hoped when the hon. Member for Wolverhampton rose that he would have thrown some light upon the subject; but he was disappointed. As for the kind intentions of the Government in allowing Motions for Adjournment to be made with the consent of the Whole House, he could only say—"Thank you for nothing." There would always be found one or more Members who would interpose and prevent it. They quite understood, however, that the Question before the House was what number the Government intended to accept as the limit within which such Motions were permissible. If the Government would enlighten the House on that point, the discussion would be very materially shortened.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 85; Noes 123: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 366.)

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON rose to move to insert after the word "upon" the words "unless a Member who is also a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council makes such Motion."

Mr. SPEAKER ruled that, inasmuch as the hon. Member's Amendment came after the word "upon," the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), which came after the same word, and of which Notice had been previously given, had priority over that of the hon. Member.

MR. H. H. FOWLER, in moving to amend the Resolution by leaving out, in lines 3 to 5, the words

> "Except by leave of the House; the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon question put forthwith, but no division shall be taken thereupon,"

said, that as his Amendment had been repeatedly referred to in the course of the debate on this Resolution, he should content himself with formally moving it.

Amendment proposed,

> In line 3, to leave out after the word "upon," to the word "unless," in line 5.—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'except' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, his hon. Friend remarked that his Motion had been largely discussed already. That was quite true. In the course of these discussions the mode in which the Business had been transacted last night, and especially to-night, had not been satisfactory in the view of most persons. He must place on record that it had been in the last degree painful to himself. Probably in the speeches of not less than 30 Members opposite had this miscarriage been attributed to himself, because he did not enter into a review of the Amendments in proposing the Resolution, and thereby, as it was said, save the time of the House. For him to have done anything of the kind would have been irregular; but he recollected very well, on a former occasion, on moving an important Resolution with the indulgence of the House, adopting that course. And what was the result? A long general debate followed upon his speech, every Amendment he had noticed being discussed, the result being that many hours of the time of the House were wasted in a preliminary debate. On that occasion it was complained that the waste of time was obviously his fault, because he had referred to these points in his preliminary speech. Now, exactly the opposite charge was made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen. He had a pretty strong opinion upon the character of the discussion; but he thought it would not contribute to the progress of Business if he were to give expression to it. The reason why he was specially desirous on his own behalf to take this Motion in its proper order was that the Resolution, as framed by the Government, referred the question of moving the adjournment of the House to be decided by the majority of the House; and it was their profound conviction that upon the whole that was the sound and right principle. He did not deny that there was much to be said for the merits of the Amendment, which in principle he proposed to accept. There was much to be said upon the merits of the proposition that a considerable body of Members, anxious, upon some sudden emergency to call attention to a particular subject, should have the power to do so independently of the general will of the House. But there was a great deal of difficulty about the adjustment of the matter. It was impossible to make a provision which should meet the wants of very small minorities. Very small minorities might have a very good case; but he thought that small minorities must, after all, submit to have their case disposed of by the judgment of the House. For example, to allow so small a number as 10 Members to set aside, by the authority of a Resolution, the regular course of Business in order to introduce something which they believed to be important, and which they might declare to be urgent, but which might be nothing more than a matter of sentiment, was absolutely impossible. Consequently, no provision could be made in that matter. The wisest course, he believed, would be to leave the matter to the majority of the House. He confessed he had been pained many times during the discussion to hear it coolly stated and assumed by various Gentlemen on the other side of the House, that an appeal to the majority was an appeal to a Minister. He had never known so great an indignity cast upon the House. It was an outrage upon the House to state that an appeal to the majority was an appeal to the Minister. If he had the right to say so, he believed there was no man living who had the honour of being a Minister so long ago as he had himself, and there was no Minister who had been so often defeated in the House. He was convinced he was right in that statement, and no person, therefore, was better entitled to repel the charge—the outrageous charge, as he called it—that it was in his power as a Minister to command the vote of the majority of the House upon the case of an equitable demand made by a minority. He had made that protest warmly, because he felt it to be little less than an insult to the majority to make any such statement. It would, in his opinion, have been better if, trusting to their own traditions and habits, and to the spirit of equity which generally governed the proceedings of the House, they had been content to leave the matter with which the Amendment dealt in the hands of the majority; and he believed that an appeal to the majority, acting as it did in the light of day, would have been, on the whole, the best arrangement. That was the conviction of the Government. Reference had been made to an occasion, in 1874, when he moved the adjournment of the House, and it was said if this Rule had been in operation that could not have been done without an appeal to the Leader of the House. He should have made no appeal to Mr. Disraeli, as he then was, except as Leader of the House; and he was perfectly convinced that in such a case the authority would have been given by Mr. Disraeli and his majority without the smallest difficulty. The position of the Government was peculiar in this matter. The House had entirely failed to deal with this matter, and the Government had taken it up in relief of the House, and in substitution for what it would have been far more desirable if the House had done for itself. They had stated over and over again how deeply they lamented that the Executive Government should have to act in this matter. They had taken it up because progress could not be hoped for in any other way. They did not feel justified in pressing their own convictions upon the House with as much tenacity and firmness as they would exhibit in the case of a great legislative measure, because now the House was legislating for itself and not for the country. Therefore they accepted cheerfully this principle of allowing a certain number of persons to claim the right of moving the adjournment; but they nevertheless accepted it with considerable misgivings. which turned upon the difficulty of the selection of a particular number. His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had selected the number 40. He was not sure that in a given state of things a practice might not arise with regard to certain subjects on which minorities were very conscientiously and energetically banded together, of forcing on the discussion of those subjects in which they felt a special sectional interest, to the great inconvenience of the Business of the House. At the same time he fully admitted that if he should attempt to meet that danger by substituting a larger mumber than 40 Members, he would be open to the reproach that he would be moving further and further away from giving satisfaction to the smaller minorities. Therefore, if they were to fix a number, he did not know that they could have a better number than 40. But there was another limitation which it would be well to introduce into the Resolution—namely, that it should be binding upon those who might wish to move the adjournment to declare that the Motion was for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance. After all, it was for questions of urgency and suddenness that such a Motion was intended. It was not for discussing such questions as the County Franchise, the Land Laws, Corrupt Practices, Disestablishment, the Currency Laws, and matters of that kind. But he was by no means sure that even those words would be effectual, because an hon. Gentleman might be so possessed with his own particular attachment that he might be ready to make the declaration; but still it would be a check so far as it went. It would be understood, therefore, that they accepted the substance of the Resolution of his hon. Friend, although they differed from it in point of form. He wished to leave quite open the question whether, as a subsidiary mode of procedure, there should also be a power for a smaller number of persons, say 20, or possibly still less, referring the matter to the judgment of the House—that was the majority. He had gathered from the debate that the House wished to try the system he had sketched, with all its risks, and having pointed these out, he would give the specific words of his Admendment. His proposal was, that, after the provision that "no Motion for Adjournment shall be made except by leave of the House," there should be inserted these words—

"Unless a Member rising in his place shall request leave to move the adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion."

While hoping that this power, given to 40 Members in an authorized and regular way, would be exercised in a different manner from the harum-scarum method hitherto pursued, he felt bound to say that it was an enormous power for disturbing the regular course of proceedings, and on that account he could not consent that it should be given to less than 40 Members. Under these circumstances, he would suggest that his hon. Friend should withdraw his Amendment, and then they might arrive at some agreement as to the leave of the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that the right hon. Gentleman blamed Gentlemen on the Opposition side for the course which they had pursued; but he was bound to say that the course taken by the Government was exceedingly inconvenient. Here was an important Amendment which the House should have had time to consider, and which ought to have been on the Table that morning, and they were now called upon to adopt it without the slightest Notice. A great part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech illustrated the extreme difficulty of dealing with the question at all. For his own part, he was ready to admit that the power of moving the adjournment should be checked; but the right hon. Gentleman had shown that the danger of acting rashly was almost as great as any arising from the state of things prevailing in times past. He believed that the suggestion of his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), that they ought to proceed in a tentative way and try first how things would go on when Members were not permitted to move the adjournment until the Questions had been asked, was a sound one. Attempts were now being made to regulate by cast-iron Rules that which before had been regulated by the good understanding of the House. He admitted that there had been an abuse of that good understanding; but there was the greatest possible danger that restriction would be carried too far, and that majorities would exercise their powers so as to interfere with the proper discharge of their duties by the minority, to the great injury of the country and of the authority of the House. The right hon. Gentleman feared that when 40 Members had the power in question there would be great danger of Gentlemen banding together. But that was the result of laying down a precise law. What was not prohibited would be allowed, what was not condemned would be permitted; and it would be found that the greatest ingenuity would be exercised in evading the regulation. It was on that account that he expressed his great regret that it was not left to the House to take such steps as might appear best in the circumstances of each case as it arose. The right hon. Gentleman desired that there should be a declaration on the part of the person moving the adjournment that he did so because he desired to discuss some question of urgent public importance. That would be almost sufficient without the requirement of 40 Members to support him. He would prefer relying upon the sense of duty and the honour which would bind men co-operating for the advance of the public interest and the maintenance of the authority and power of the great Assemblage to which they belonged. He would, however, accept as much as he could get from the right hon. Gentleman in diminution of the severity of the conditions.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he thought that, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), it was to be particularly regretted that the Prime Minister had not elicited a regular expression of opinion on the point under consideration. Under the Amendment, it would be possible for 40 Members to arrive at a common understanding, and to divert the House from its appointed Business. He congratulated the Opposition on having converted some Members on the Ministerial side to their view. The right hon. Gentleman, after protesting for weeks that the control of debates should be in the hands of the majority, now agreed to place it in the hands of a simple quorum of the House. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had had sympathy with most of the Motions for Adjournment this Session; but they had not elicited from the Government more information than might have been obtained in answer to Questions. He had increasing faith in questioning as a means of obtaining information. He desired to ask the Speaker at what time the rising of the 40 Members was to take place—whether, when a Member proposed to make a statement, or after he had done so?

Mr. SPEAKER: If I understand correctly the construction of the words, the Member who would be called upon to rise in his place would request leave to move the adjournment of the House, and, at the same time, he would state the subject-matter of the proposition he intended to bring under the notice of the House; and then, if 40 Members rose in their places to support it, the Motion would be allowed to proceed.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that considerably diminished the evil which, in his opinion, the Resolution would bring on the House. But he thought that, instead of making a desirable change in the Procedure of the House, it would, by regularizing a proceeding which was now irregular, establish the practice against which the Rule was directed.

Mr. CROPPER said, he thought a Rule would deserve the name of "gag" which prevented 40 Members bringing what they unitedly deemed a good case before the House. It was impossible to do without the power of bringing before the House matters which might be of more importance than its appointed Business. It would not be easy to obtain 40 Members to back up an irregular or obstructive proceeding.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, he was glad the Government had taken 40 as the number. It was better to have a guiding principle, and the principle of the Amendment was that 40 was a quorum of the House. The adjournment had been more often than not moved out of a feeling of pique or pettishness at an unsatisfactory answer, and they would have done with that in future, because a Member would not like to move the adjournment when he was not sure of having the other 39 Members to support him. He might find himself in solitary dignity. The Government had found that the general sense of the House was against the Rule, and they, therefore, assented to its extension. The risk of abuse was guarded by the power of closing a debate under the 1st Rule.

Mr. PARNELL said, he wished to know how the Speaker would interpret the Amendment of the Prime Minister—

> "Unless a Member rising in his place shall request leave to move the adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance."

Would the Speaker himself have to decide whether the matter was of urgent public importance, or would the declaration of the Member rising in his place, and supported by 40 other Members, be accepted as to the fact?

Mr. SPEAKER: The construction that I should put on the Amendment as it stands is, that the question of urgency should rest, not with the Speaker, but with the Member desiring to bring the question forward.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he looked upon the proposal of the Prime Minister with the greatest dislike, as he thought it was one of the worst proposals that had come from the Government during those discussions. He must say that one of the few gratifying features he had seen in the course of these discussions was that the Government had laid down from the beginning this fact, that the change in the Rules of the House had been necessitated, not by the conduct of any particular section of the House, but by the general change in the tone and temper of the House. The Prime Minister had gone out of his way to declare that the Party to which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had the honour to belong was free from the odium of having caused this change in the Rules of the House. The right hon. Gentleman, over and over again, had declared that it was an absolute necessity to his position that small minorities should be protected, and not large minorities. Let them apply that test to the proposal that was now before the House. He asked any man of common sense, did he mean to tell him that, when a Motion required the assent of 40 Members, small minorities were protected? He confessed he looked with a certain amount of wonder upon the action of the Front Opposition Bench on this subject. The Irish Party numbered about 40 all told. He might be told by hon. Members opposite that they should not have the power of moving the adjournment unless they were united; but how did that argument agree with what had been put forward by the Prime Minister, when he said that it was a perfectly notorious fact that it was impossible, except on three or four occasions during a Session, to get all the Members of a Party present to vote on any question before the House? Therefore, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said that the position in which minorities were placed was this—that while a large minority like that of the Conservative Party, with 245 Members, only required 40 of their number, or, in other words, a small fraction of their number, a small minority like the Irish Party was required to bring up every one of their number. Was that fair to small minorities? Did it not give an immense and overwhelming advantage to large, over small minorities? Another point that should not be forgotten was the fact that a Motion for Adjournment was an unforeseen and unexpected event, that arose in consequence of some circumstances of the moment. To repeat the vulgar expression of a Liberal Member, if it was the object of the Government to "choke off" the Irish Party from their power of moving adjournments, let them say so. But, if that was their purpose, how was it possible to reconcile ~~that~~ with the language used by the Prime Minister over and over again upon the question? The Motion for Adjournment, which was a privilege of minorities that should not be lightly given up, would be completely taken away from the Irish Party by the Prime Minister's Amendment. As the Resolution stood, he said candidly that the number might as well be 200 as 40, so far as the Irish Members were concerned. It had precisely the same effect. He asked whether it was worth while to add this cause of irritation to the other causes of irritation that existed in the minds of the Irish people—namely, that every minority in the House was saved from outrage, except the minority that truly represented the majority of the Irish people?

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he felt bound to tender his thanks to the real author of this Amendment—the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The result of the Amendment would be that the Mover of the adjournment would be compelled to advertise the number of those who supported him. Thus the House would be protected, in some measure, from the intrusion of individual opinions at inopportune times expressed at great length. He regretted the loss of the privileges of small minorities, which he attributed to the Irish Members; but he looked forward to the time when the Prime Minister would fulfil his promise to do something towards restoring their lost rights. Recognizing the necessity for making some change, therefore, and, as an old Member of the House, looking upon the Resolution as a man might regard wholesome but distasteful physic, he should accept the dose with gratitude.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Speaker, as a matter of Order, to inform the House what was the exact Business before it? Whether it was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) or that of the Premier he was unable to see.

MR. SPEAKER said, the Question immediately before the House was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who proposed to leave out certain words. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister proposed to retain certain words—"except by leave of the House." He should put the Question, "That the word 'except, stand part of the Question?"

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that, in his opinion, the words were absolutely superfluous. He supposed that if the Amendment were negatived, the question of 40, or any lesser number, rising in their places might be determined afterwards. It was absurd to retain the words "except by leave of the House," by which one Member might prevent the Motion being made, and also give 40 or a smaller number the power of deciding the question. Generally, Motions for Adjournment were made impromptu, and he should be sorry to see the day when such Motions should be regularly organized, as they must be if 40 Members were required to rise in their places. He repeated that he could see no reason for retaining the words "except by leave of the House."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the House had reason to complain most seriously of the conduct of the Government respecting that Amendment. The Prime Minister had spoken so eloquently about the rights of minorities that he expected some mportant concession. He was astonished, therefore, to find the right hon. Gentleman speaking as if it would be ridiculous for a minority to have the power of moving the adjournment. He reminded the Prime Minister that it was not a new power which they were asking for, but that it was a power which had hitherto belonged to every individual Member, an ancient privilege they were endeavouring to defend. The Prime Minister had made a most indignant protest against hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House, saying that an appeal to the majority meant an appeal to the Minister. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] In spite of that indignant protest, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) took leave to reiterate the statement with all the force he was capable of, and to assert that, as far as the Liberal Party were concerned, as far as the present state of the House was concerned, and the right hon. Gentleman himself was concerned, an appeal to the House of Commons meant nothing more than an appeal to the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman would remember times when the majority of the House and of the Liberal Party was not distinguished by the abject servility which was now unfortunately so marked a feature of its condition. There were times when there was really a genuine Radical Party below the Gangway, which, no doubt, contributed occasionally to the prosperity of the country by turning the Prime Minister out of Office. But now all that had changed, and they had new inventions since then. There was the Caucus, which was invented by one of the Prime Minister's Colleagues, and this Caucus, before every important division, sent out menacing circulars to every Member. [*Laughter.*] Well, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) might put his in the waste-paper basket, but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) fancied he always took care to vote as he was directed. It was, in fact, a matter of frequent comment that all the independence which used to be the glory of the Radical Party had utterly gone and vanished, never to return; and, therefore, the statement which the Prime Minister had denounced, that an appeal to the majority meant an appeal to him, was perfectly correct. The Tory majority in the late Government was much more indocile. ["Oh, oh!"] He remembered three cases of distinct revolt on the part of large sections of the Tory Party against Mr. Disraeli and the right hon. Baronet the present Leader of the Opposition, to force the Government to abandon the line of policy they were pursuing at the moment, and on each occasion they were successful in their purpose. There was a great deal of independence in the Tory Party in the last Parliament, and it would have been quite possible for the Prime Minister, or any of his Colleagues, to have appealed to the majority for permission to move the adjournment and been certain of being heard; but he regretted to say that in the present Parliament things were different. On a well-known occasion, the present Prime Minister moved the adjournment of the House; and he now said that he was able to do that, without begging leave of the Leader; but on that occasion he had no doubt Mr. Disraeli would have been very glad to have agreed to meet the right hon. Gentleman in debate. The present Prime Minister was at that time the Leader of the Opposition—[Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] He expected that "No," and was prepared for it. He knew that another person was nominally Leader; but the real Leader was the Prime Minister, and whenever anything important was on, down came the right hon. Gentleman and away went the nominal Leader. ["Oh, oh!"] He was simply stating facts. [Mr. GLADSTONE: A fiction.] He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he witnessed it with great interest and satisfaction. Mr. Disraeli, he said, would have been glad to have met the right hon. Gentleman. But what chance would there have been for a private Member? Now-a-days, at all events, they knew that when private Members proposed to bring forward Motions of Censure and asked for a day, they were laughed at, and told that these things were very improper. He would like to point out the danger attending the adoption of the number of 40, which might operate to reducing it to even a smaller number. The chances were that the 40 Members would all speak, or, at all events, a very fair percentage of the 40 would think it necessary to justify to the House the fact that they had stood up in their places. If that was a good argument, it operated very largely in favour of a smaller number, like five or six; because five or six speeches would be a less evil than 40. The Prime Minister's proposition—that the majority, or the Ministry, would listen to the supplications of private

Members to allow inconvenient Motions to be submitted, could not be seriously discussed. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to add some new words in the form of an asseveration—he (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not know whether it would be an Oath; but, if so, he feared that there would be another difficulty with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), or a Declaration by the hon. Gentleman who moved the adjournment. Nobody knew what the words were. The House was dependent for them on dirty scraps of paper, from which it appeared that the Member was to declare that he was going to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance; and these words were gravely suggested as a safeguard against abuse. Why, everybody thought his Motion related to a matter of urgent public importance. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) had thought his Motion last night one of urgent public importance; but the Prime Minister did not think so; and, no doubt, the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) would also have said that his Motion respecting Mr. Bradlaugh's trial was a matter of urgent public importance; in fact, there was no conceivable nonsense which could not be suggested as of urgent public importance. Could it be suggested that the words were proposed as a mere conventionality? He had a doubt whether anything suggested by the Prime Minister did not cover some deep-laid scheme; but, at any rate, the right hon. Gentleman never suggested an utterly meaningless and nonsensical axiom. He sincerely hoped that the House would insist upon having time given to consider this matter. According to the Prime Minister, there would be great danger in accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), because it would transform the use of a privilege, which ordinarily was irregular, into a regular use. It would be perfectly possible for the Leader of the Opposition—supposing him not to be an extremely honourable and fair-minded man like the present Leader—to get 40 of his followers week after week to rise when he moved the adjournment, in order to bring forward matters likely to damage the policy of the Government. Then, as to private Members also, there was a move—he might call it a "dodge"—which might be advantageously employed, and the Government forced them into these "dodges" by these tremendously strict Rules. It would be quite possible to arrange, at the beginning of the Session, that there should be what was called in the City a "little syndicate" of 80 or 100 private Members on both sides; that they should agree that there should be reciprocity between them; and that if any Member of this syndicate got up to move the adjournment of the House there should be an honourable understanding that the other Members should immediately rise. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Honourable understanding?] Yes, honourable. Why not? Surely persons like the noble Marquess, who had had a share in the Kilmainham Treaty, understood the meaning of the word "honourable." He (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not understand the interruption of the noble Marquess. He insisted that it would be far wiser and more cautious of the House to leave the Resolution alone. Many hon. Members had tried to deal with Procedure, but they had never touched these adjournments. They had always known the dangers of attempting it. These New Rules, which seemed to him to savour strongly of what he might call "Brummagem," and to be more adapted to a Vestry, or a Metropolitan Board of Works, or the Town Council of Birmingham, would be dangerous to the House of Commons, to its Members, and to the interests of the country at large. He hoped the House would not allow the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton to be withdrawn, but would express its sentiments by voting against the words "by leave of the House."

MR. LABOUCHERE said, it was not surprising that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) had occupied a considerable amount of time, and, at the same time, said very little with respect to the matter before the House, because they knew perfectly well that the noble Lord had a policy which he had announced in print, and that policy was by means of Obstruction to force the Government into a Dissolution. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not think that the noble Lord was supported in that policy by many hon. Gentlemen opposite. There might be some vague and general notion amongst them that he was doing good; but when it came to coming down to that House day after day, they preferred hunting the foxes. What struck him as remarkable was that, after all the wondrous professions of hon. Gentlemen opposite as to what they were going to do, and as to the terrible effects upon the Constitution of the passing of these Resolutions, they could not muster a larger number of Members than they had done the last two nights. Look at the Benches opposite. The Front Opposition Bench was full; but on the Benches behind there were about eight, nine, or ten Members. That was the whole Conservative minority who rallied there from their field sports to defend the Constitution against the inroads of the Prime Minister. The noble Lord had complained of the Prime Minister making his statement at dinner-time, when the House was comparatively empty. But whose fault was that? Why, the noble Lord's, who kept them till then discussing some idle Amendment of his own notoriously brought forward for the purpose of Obstruction.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Did you vote for that Amendment?

Mr. LABOUCHERE said he did. But why did he vote for it? Hon. Members opposite seemed to think that walking into the Lobby with them was Obstruction. He thought that the matter was very much between tweedledum and tweedledee, and he gave the noble Lord the benefit of the tweedledee, and voted with him. But he should have infinitely preferred that the noble Lord had withdrawn his Amendment, and allowed the Prime Minister to state his intentions with regard to the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler). Hon. Gentlemen opposite expected the Radicals to go into the same Lobby with them, in order to turn out the Liberals; but they had not the choice between a root-and-branch Radical Ministry and the present Government. It was Hobson's choice between the present Government and the Conservatives, and of the two he infinitely preferred the present Government. With regard to the Amendment, he thought that 40 was a reasonable number. He was at first rather in favour of inserting in the Rule 20 Members; but the Prime Minister's speech had convinced him that the larger number would be better. The noble Lord taunted hon. Members on the Liberal side with being abject slaves. Hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House were there to support a Liberal Ministry, but not to support them slavishly. If the Government proposed anything which they disapproved, they would at once oppose it. It was only because they were satisfied with Her Majesty's present Advisers that they, to a great extent, kept silent, and voted in the main with them; and he protested against the noble Lord and other hon. Members opposite perpetually jeering at Radical Members for their support of a Liberal Ministry. The noble Lord had spoken of the Conservatives being more docile than the Liberals, and yet how many Conservatives was the noble Lord able to rally? Why, three, and one unattached. That Party of three could not make up their minds as to who was their Leader. To say that the Tory Party generally were not as docile as sheep was absolutely to ignore history.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought that the remarks of the last speaker (Mr. Labouchere), however amusing they might be, did not help to elucidate the question under discussion. The House was now about to incur very serious risks, in substituting for a privilege of a private Member, which, no doubt, might sometimes be abused, something which might involve great evil. He did not wish to defend any abuse; but when an individual Member stood up to exercise that privilege, he did it under a heavy sense of responsibility, and with the liability of being called to account if he abused it; but when he secured the countenance of 40 Members, he would feel that responsibility diminished. But now it was proposed by a deliberate Resolution of the House that a minority of 40 Members should be permitted to fly in the face of the settled order of Business. That would be an inducement to private Members to band themselves together for the purpose of substituting for the Orders of the Day on any night, any subject of discussion in which they were interested. It would be a mistake to give to 40 Members who might be united, for instance, on the subject of Sunday Closing, Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, or any similar question, the power of substituting for the Orders of the Day a Motion which they might think of more importance. He did not regard the words suggested by the Prime Minister as placing any effectual check upon such an objectionable and dangerous proceeding. That particular Amendment was, he thought, a most unfortunate one, and the Government would do well to be satisfied with the limitation already determined by the common sense of the House, and not to take the further step that had been indicated, and which he feared would lead to considerable confusion and difficulty.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, that, in this matter, he was thankful for any concession they had got from the Government, and was not disposed to criticize too closely the compromise which they had offered; but he confessed that he regarded that Resolution with much more jealousy and suspicion than any other of the Resolutions submitted to them by the Government. He was exceedingly reluctant to see the House part with the power of moving the adjournment, even during Question time. No doubt, it was often exercised without sufficient grounds; yet during the present Parliament it had been sometimes used with the most salutary effect. But, in the last Parliament, the absence of that power would have landed the then Opposition in serious difficulties, because several sudden crises arose in which instantaneous action was necessary; and, in such circumstances, the right of moving the adjournment was found useful. Looking forward, moreover, to the time when those who now occupied the Ministerial Benches would again sit opposite, he thought it might prove to be a suicidal act to part now with the power which was so valuable, though, no doubt, one capable of being abused. The position of the Prime Minister was very different from that of any ordinary Member. No one would refuse him a hearing if he desired it; but a less distinguished Member of the House, if he were to depend upon the whim of the majority for a hearing, might fare ill. Of course, there was no sanctity in the number 40—indeed, he (Mr. George Russell) would prefer a lower one. Why, for instance, should not the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) muster his supporters and move the adjournment sometimes? It might be inconvenient to English Members; but there were times when it might be necessary for Irishmen to call immediate attention to some question or other, and their need was all the greater, since they were not governed from their own country.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS pointed out that the whole weight of the Amendment, as now framed, fell upon the words requiring the leave of the House. The position of an hon. Member would be very different under the Resolution from what it had been previously. At present the Motion was a matter of right, while in future the framework would rest upon the leave of the House. That matter was entirely excluded by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and for that reason he preferred that proposal, which, in his opinion, was simpler than the Resolution now put forward by Her Majesty's Government. He had a further objection to make. It was a very great pity that if the change was to be made at all the House was not informed of it yesterday. If the Government came to their final decision on the subject then, why did they not place it on the Paper last night? It was a mystery to him why such a simple expedient was neglected, the result of which was that the words were read out in a thin House at the dinner-hour, and many hon. Members who had gone away would find to-morrow that the Amendment had been carried without their having been present at the discussion. After all, the Government would not greatly gain by the words and might very well have refused to admit them. In the main, the Resolution, as amended, would carry out the object he had in view; and though he objected very strongly to the provision with respect to leave, yet he did not wish, by pursuing a shadow, to lose the substance.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not quite understand how the right hon. Gentleman was going to vote upon the Question before the House. The Question to be put would be the retaining of the word "except;" practically, however, that would mean "except by leave of the House."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: What I said was that it was a pity that the Government had introduced the question of asking leave; but I added that, on the whole, I would rather accept the substance than grasp at the shadow.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not think it would be asking leave at all. Supposing the words were struck out, he could not imagine many cases in which 40 Members would not be ready to rise in their places if required. He should vote for retaining the words proposed to be omitted. He was exceedingly glad, however, that the Government were willing to introduce modifications into this Resolution. He did not think that this was a matter that should be decided by a bare majority; and he should be prepared, even from his own past experience, to uphold the right of a small minority, and especially of an Irish minority, to bring before the House questions which they might deem of importance. If there was any reasonable ground for their bringing such questions before the House, he was sure that they would find plenty of Members willing to assist them in doing so. Those who now sat on the Ministerial side of the House must look forward to the time when they would not be supporting a Government, and when it might happen that a Government was in Office whom they might believe was injuring the country, and in whom they might believe no confidence ought to be placed, and who was about to place the country in a perilous position, either abroad or at home. In such a case it might be most necessary to bring the facts before the public eye without delay, and this could not be done so effectually in any other way as by making a Motion for Adjournment. He was glad, therefore, that the Government had consented to place this power in the hands of a certain number of Members rather than in those of the majority or of the Government of the day. He had learned from the usual sources of information that last night the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock attributed the outcry about the abuse of moving adjournments very much to his (Mr. Forster's) action when holding the Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland. He said that a soft answer might have turned away wrath, and that he (Mr. Forster) had endeavoured deliberately to provoke the Irish Members. If hon. Members referred back to the state of things that existed last year, they would come to the conclusion that the wrath was such that no soft answer would have turned it away. Nothing could have been more absurdly foolish than it would have been on his part to deliberately provoke the Irish Members. If there was any provocation at all, it was not by him. The real fact was, that he had a very hard business to carry on inside that House and out of it with Gentlemen who thought that they ought to put their own notions of right and wrong and their "unwritten law" in the place of the law of the land. But, looking back, he did not see what he could have said that he did not say with more desire not to provoke the Irish Members, and to be as courteous to them as possible under the circumstances. His experience of what had happened last year was not that it had the effect of getting rid of Motions for Adjournment. He himself thought he had not in his position abused the great power intrusted to him. But, supposing for a moment that he had done so, he admitted the Irish Members would have been justified in making use of all the Forms of the House; and it would have been dangerous for them and the House if they had lost the power of exposing any abuse by him of his powers. Some of those Motions for Adjournment, he thought, were obstructive and frivolous, but a few of them were natural. It must be remembered that the very condition of the Prevention of Crime Act, which was passed by an enormous majority, was that the reason of the arrests made under it should not be given to the House; but he could not expect the Irish Members to accept that. They very naturally demanded those reasons, and he was, therefore, not surprised at some of their Motions for Adjournment. He trusted the result of this discussion would be that the House would pass a Resolution to prevent the abuse of the privilege, and that they would find that 40 Members rising in their places constituted a sufficient limitation. If in the working of this plan it was found that the abuse still existed, the number could be increased.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) seemed to misunderstand the effect of the words as to leave being given to a Member. They were not words that more limited the power of moving the adjournment than their omission would have done. The object of the form of the Resolution was to allow the adjournment without 40 Members rising. No one would object to the adjournment being made if no one rose to object, and that was the effect of the words.

MR. SYNAN approved the retention of the words "except by leave of the House," after the interpretation put upon them by the Home Secretary.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON complained that they were in a state of mental confusion. Many hon. Members did not know what Amendment was before the House. The Prime Minister had alluded to the painful occurrences of Monday night, and said that the blame for what had taken place should be put upon him. The Home Secretary, however, was, in his opinion, the person to be blamed. He objected to the proposals of the Government, because they were destructive of individualism.

Question, "That the word 'except' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had an Amendment which stood before that of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. The Speaker had given it a place on the Paper, and was it not irregular that it should have been removed without his consent?

MR. SPEAKER said, that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton came after the word "except," while the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Baronet came after the following words.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON moved, in line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "by a Member who is also a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council." There was not a single case in which a Privy Councillor was known to have abused the power of moving the adjournment. The intention of the Rules then under consideration was to strike at individual disorder. If they could put their fingers upon any class of Members who were innocent, then those Members should be relieved from the severity of a penal law which might be injurious in its effect, not only to them, but to the conduct of Business of the House. There was no greater mistake than to suppose that everyone in that House was equal. On the contrary, Privy Councillors were invariably called upon to speak before other Members; greater licence was allowed to the Ministers, and to Members in charge of a Bill, than to others. Degrees and differences were on all hands recognized between Member and Member. The exception he proposed was in accordance with the practice and the traditions of the House.

MR. SPEAKER asked if anyone seconded the Amendment?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I will second it.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "by a Member who is also a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Amendment did not require and did not admit of any argument. To state it was to condemn it. He believed the House would almost unanimously object to making any distinction between Privy Councillors and other Members in such a matter.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. GORST moved, in line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "in accordance with the evident sense of the House, or," arguing that these words were to be preferred to "by leave of the House." He said, his object was that any hon. Member should be allowed to move the adjournment in case no objection was made by another Member. How, otherwise, could a Member ask the leave of the House, or show that his demand was equitable?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, after the word "except," to insert the words "in accordance with the evident sense of the House, or."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the words "leave of the House" were used in the sense which attached to the phrase in accordance with Parliamentary usage. It was a very common Parliamentary phrase which was thoroughly understood, and it meant the unanimous sense of the House and nothing else. When, for example, a Member was allowed to speak a second time, it must be by "leave of the House." And he could not do so if anyone objected. This was the true sense of the words. All, then, that the Government meant by them was that if a Member moved the adjournment and nobody objected to the Motion, it would be allowed, and no further trouble would be given; but if anybody objected, it would be necessary that 40 Members should support him.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'by leave of the House' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'the granting of such leave, if disputed, being determined upon Question put forthwith; but no Division shall be taken thereupon' stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, before the word "unless," to insert the words "unless a Member rising in his place shall request leave to move the Adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "request leave to move," in order to insert the words "announce his intention of moving,"—(*Lord George Hamilton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'request leave to move,' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it would be impossible for the Government to accede to the words proposed by the noble Lord, because when a person announced his intention of doing a thing, that implied that it was a thing which it was competent for him to do; whereas it was not competent for him to move the adjournment unless he got the support of 40 Members. For his own part, he saw no ambiguity in the words "request leave;" but if the noble Lord had any difficulty on the subject, he might move to substitute for them the word "proposed."

Amendment to the said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir William Harcourt

Amendment amended, by leaving out the words "request leave," and inserting the word "propose,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 146; Noes 86: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 367.)

Mr. SHEIL next moved to substitute the word "fifteen" for the word "forty," in order that Motions for the adjournment of the House might be made on the demand of 15 Members. His object was to protect small minorities, and especially the Irish Members, none of whose sections could muster the requisite number of 40.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out "forty," in order to insert "fifteen,"—(*Mr. Sheil,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That 'forty' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have had the opportunity of explaining very fully my views on this question in a former part of the evening, and I should not be justified in going into any lengthened details now. I will simply endeavour to point out that the necessity which the hon. Gentleman imagines is, in the first place, a limited necessity; and, in the second place, only a supposed necessity, so made, not because it is reasonable for the ordinary Business of the House that any number of Members should have the power of occupying the time of the House contrary to the Rule, but in order to meet the necessities of the Irish Members. Now, considering that Ireland has more than 100 Members, it does seem, under the circumstances of the case, not outrageous that 40 of them should be united in agreeing with a Motion for discussing a question of importance to Ireland; but I admit that the Irish Members are divided amongst themselves; and I will go further and admit that not only a minority of the House, but that a minority of the Irish

Members, is not without a decided claim to the consideration of the House. It has been justly said by the late Home Secretary (Mr. R. Assheton Cross), and also by my right hon. and learned Friend the present Home Secretary and by other hon. Members, that it is, indeed, an extraordinary case if the Irish Members, constituting that minority, and numbering between 30 and 40 themselves, and having an equitable cause for moving the adjournment of the House, cannot find out of the 300 or 400 men, who may happen to be in the House at the time, some eight or ten hon. Members who would assist them in bringing a Motion forward. Therefore, I think I am justified in stating, not only that the hon. Gentleman has founded his case upon a limited necessity, but upon that which is only a supposed necessity. And now let the hon. Gentleman look at the greatness of what he asks for. He has put on his political eyesight to enable him to look at the practice, and the practice is the practice of himself and a limited portion of his Friends who sit around him; but we must provide for the Business of the House. He requires us to leave the entire Business of the House at the mercy of 15 Gentlemen to meet the wants and supposed wants of one portion of the House only. We have had great responsibility thrown upon us in consequence of the incapacity of the House through its Committees to deal with this subject. We have tried to do our best. We have in the Resolution departed materially and largely from our own views in order to meet what we thought was the "evident sense of the House." A considerable proportion of hon. Gentlemen felt with my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) in the Amendment he submitted to the House. We had a Motion also of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) declaring, no doubt, the sense of the other side of the House. Both of those propositions agreed upon the number of 40 Members. To that number we have acceded. To go below that number, to allow and tolerate and encourage such invasions of Business as we have witnessed, we cannot be responsible for, and, therefore, we must adhere to the Motion as its stands, and beg the hon. Gentleman to believe that he will, even if a large number of the House are hard-hearted enough to refuse a Motion, never fail to find sympathizers with the cause of justice and with the weakness of the few. Never!

Mr. PARNELL said, he had to thank the Prime Minister for the very excellent lesson he had just given to the Irish constituencies. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out very fairly that the Irish Members in the House of Commons were far from being united amongst themselves, and he had also pointed out somewhat justly that it was not unreasonable to expect the Representatives of a country having the right of sending 103 Members to Parliament, able to secure that a body of 40 Members should act together when they desired that the attention of the House should be brought to a distinct matter of urgent public importance relating to Ireland. That was undoubtedly so; but he thought his hon. Friend the Member for the County of Meath (Mr. Sheil) might be pardoned for having approached the question from the point of view of the hon. Members or Party with whom he acted. It would be so if the Irish constituencies had the power under the Resolution of the Prime Minister, as amended — if they could send 40 Members to the House, and maintain those 40 Members in the House, and secure their constant presence in the House, then, undoubtedly, by the Resolution of the Prime Minister, the Irish constituencies would have it in their power to secure that a discussion might be originated at any time upon a definite matter of urgent public importance to Ireland. And he thought that a discussion having been thus originated would be a discussion of a far more useful and practical character than the majority of the discussions now regulated by ordinary Motions for the adjournment of the House at Question time. But, at the same time, the Irish Members were so situated in the House that with their present number they could not hope, unless they were aided by other hon. Members—and he anticipated that upon some occasions they might obtain aid for suitable Motions for Adjournment — to gain this right of moving the adjournment of the House. Therefore, they were giving up a great right when they gave up the right of moving the adjournment of the

House at Question time. As had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. W. E. Forster), they had on many occasions exercised the right with justice and reasonableness. It was, therefore, not unreasonable that his hon. Friend (Mr. Sheil) should seek an amendment of the Resolution in such a way as would enable the Irish Members to be independent of the casual assistance which might be offered to them by English Members of the House, or by Irish Members who might sit on the opposite Benches. But comparing the Resolution as it now stood with the manner in which it originally stood, it did possess some elements of value, or would possess elements of value after the next General Election. In sitting down, he only wished to impress on the Irish constituencies the importance of the lesson which the Prime Minister had so excellently read to them that evening when he pointed out that it would always be in the power of Ireland, by returning 40 Members to sit on those Benches, to obtain a discussion at a proper time for any Irish question of urgent public importance.

Mr. ONSLOW wished to point out to the Prime Minister that this limited number of 15 Members, proposed by the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil), would not only affect matters connected with Ireland, but also matters relating to the Colonies and India. He (Mr. Onslow) was one of those who intended to vote for the number of 15 proposed by the hon. Member. He thought it rather a small number; but he could not vote for so large a number as 40. Forty were, in his opinion, much too many; but he thought they might come to some intermediate number. He asked the Prime Minister to take into consideration the apathy which was generally displayed on both sides, whatever Government was in power, in regard to Indian and Colonial matters. Indeed, it was almost impossible to get a reasonable attendance in the House when the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) made a speech on the Indian Budget, or on other matters affecting the welfare of India. It was almost impossible on such occasions, if any Member desired to move the adjournment of the House, to induce 40 Members to attend and support him. If he looked upon the question merely as an Irish one, he certainly should not support the Amendment. He agreed with the Prime Minister when the right hon. Gentleman said that they must frame these Rules, bad as they thought them to be, for the whole House, and not for any single section of the House; but he wished to point out to the House and to the Prime Minister that the question now at issue affected other interests besides those of Ireland, and in connection with which it would be impossible to get 40 Members to support a Motion for the adjournment of the House. He had never himself moved the adjournment of the House upon any matter. He saw the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) sitting in his place, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would bear him out when he said that upon Indian subjects, on which the right hon. Gentleman had taken so much interest and had obtained so much credit, not only in this country but in India, it was a matter of primary necessity, on many occasions, that the House should have some explicit views connected with Indian policy announced by Her Majesty's Government. At the present time it was almost impossible to get a discussion upon Indian subjects or upon subjects connected with the Colonies, and he therefore hoped that this Rule would not be limited by requiring the number of 40 to support a Motion for the adjournment of the House on matters which affected the Empire generally. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Forster) had defended his own conduct in the last Session. Now, he (Mr. Onslow) was one of those who had endeavoured humbly to support the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland in every possible way, and he should be sorry if his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) had cast any aspersion upon the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman last Session. They all knew the great trials the right hon. Gentleman had to go through; how, night after night, he was badgered by the Irish Members, and everyone had admired the pluck and resolution the right hon. Gentleman had displayed. It appeared to him (Mr. Onslow) that it was not owing to any fault on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that these Motions for the adjournment of the House were so constantly made. Whoever had been the Chief Secretary for Ireland at that time would have been subjected to the same Motions for Adjournment. He had merely said this in defence of the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but he looked upon this question not only as an Irish Question, but as one affecting the whole House; and he trusted that after due consideration the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would agree to some smaller number than 40. He did not think there would be any difficulty in inducing the Front Bench on the Opposition side of the House to agree to such a proposition if it came from the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. DALY trusted that the Prime Minister would consent to waive his opposition to the Motion of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil). If the right hon. Gentleman had listened to the observations made by his former Colleague, the ex-Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Forster)—and he (Mr. Daly) sincerely hoped those observations would be reported at length, and not only go to Ireland, but all over the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, because he had never heard, since he came into the House, a better justification of the policy of the Irish Party than the language used by the right hon. Gentleman that evening—if the right hon. Gentleman had listened to those observations, he might be induced to alter the views he had expressed. The late Chief Secretary had admitted that many of the Motions which had been made for the adjournment of the House by the Irish Members, while he held the position of Chief Secretary, were perfectly justifiable. He (Mr. Daly), and those who sat on these Benches, had simply embarked on a course which had been improperly designated as Obstruction, because it was patent to them that the answers given to numerous Questions put to the late Chief Secretary for Ireland were bad, coming from bad sources of information. He was one of those who, from his experience of the late Chief Secretary, would never say a word disrespectful of his purpose. He believed that the great fault of the right hon. Gentleman's government of Ireland was that he went to one source of information, and to one source only. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He believed that he was strictly speaking to the Question; and it was rather early for hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House to attempt to exercise the *clôture.* He was speaking to the Question, because he was referring to observations which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman, who was not alone eminent for his abilities, but remarkable, also, for having held a distinguished position in connection with Ireland. There were many Motions for the adjournment of the House made during the last Session, and they were made for this reason, and this reason only—that the answers given to Questions were notoriously inaccurate. He held it to be an important fact that the justice of those Motions had now been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman himself. When Questions were asked of the late Chief Secretary, the answers were sent to him from Dublin Castle, and those answers were, as a rule, evasions of the facts; and the bald facts of the Questions, taken together with the bald facts of the answers, amounted almost to a misrepresentation, and no true estimate of the reasons why the Questions were asked could be formed. There was this difference between Irish and English Questions, that in this country they had, through the length and breadth of the land, important organs of public opinion, and if it was seen that the Home Secretary had been asked a Question affecting the lives and liberties of the English people, and that he had not given a candid and straightforward answer, it was indisputable that the morning prints would very soon bring the public about his ears, and cause his dismissal from Office. He (Mr. Daly) had formed his own opinion upon these matters, and this was his opinion. He believed that all the mistake arose from not having made a clean sweep of Dublin Castle, and obtaining information from proper sources. The House had heard from the Prime Minister that this Amendment would not press unduly on the Irish Members. Let them look for a moment at the position of the Irish Members in the House. What was the effect if it was desired to introduce an Irish question? There were two ways in which they could obtain a discussion. The first was by leave of the House; but he did not believe, from his experience of the House, that while it was in the power of hon. Gentlemen opposite to call out "Divide, divide!" such a concession would be readily made; and if there was a single dissentient a Motion for Adjournment would be prevented. Not one, but 50 hon. Members would be always ready to stop an Irish debate. Then they had another alternative, and that was to make a Motion for Adjournment, in the hope that their demand would be supported by 40 Members. It must be remembered that they were only a small minority in the House. They were told by the Prime Minister that they would have no difficulty, if their cause was a good one, in getting the aid of five or six or a dozen English Members; but he was afraid that the right hon. Gentleman did not make any allowance for the prejudices which rankled in the minds of Members of the House against the Irish Representatives. If they were to ask for the adjournment of the House to-morrow, and assign a just cause for their desire to discuss a matter of the very highest importance to Ireland, what chance would they have of obtaining such supplement of English Members as would make up 40 Members, even including the whole Irish Party? He contended that these Resolutions would press unduly and unjustly on the Party with whom he acted; and he held, also, that it was a most curious corrollary upon the entire proposals for *clôture* that the late Chief Secretary for Ireland should that evening have announced that, although the reason for imposing the *clôture* was that the Government wanted to muzzle the Irish Members, the Irish Members had been fully justified during the last Session in the Motions for the adjournment of the House which they had moved.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I am sure the House is not going to allow the question to become a personal one with regard to myself; but, after the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Daly), I feel bound to make one or two observations. I have now been a long time in this House, and ever since I have had a seat here I have endeavoured to be candid. Although I have, when speaking, as I think, with fairness and candour, been now and then misunderstood, I shall go on taking that line as long as I retain a seat in this House. The hon. Member who has just spoken has spoken with great candour with regard to myself, and I do not object to what he has said; but as he has said that the few remarks I have made ought to go through the length and breadth of Ireland, I should like it to be understood what I did say. I do not admit, for a moment, that all the Motions for Adjournment, or even the Motions for Adjournment generally made by hon. Members from Ireland were justifiable; but I make an exception of two or three Motions, and perhaps most important Motions. What I had in my mind were such Motions as that relating to the arrest of Father Sheehy. I stated, and I repeat, that if any Irish Member, after this Rule is passed, were to make a Motion for the adjournment of the House in such a case as that, he would probably find himself—indeed, he would almost certainly find himself—supported by a considerable number of Members, not that after the discussion had taken place the majority, or even a large minority, of the House would consider that sufficient ground for it had been shown, but they would be of opinion that a case was shown for putting the Minister upon his defence and requiring him to give his reasons for the action he had taken, or, at any rate, requiring him to state that there were reasons of high State policy which prevented him from giving an explanation of his acts. That was all I meant to state, and it must not be supposed that I think that the action of the Irish Government, last Session, was unjustifiable. [Mr. Daly: It was in many cases.] All I said was that I was not surprised at some of those Motions having been made. But I may add that many of the Motions brought forward were as completely Obstructive as any Motions possibly could be, and they were made at a time when the House was anxious to get on with other Business. Indeed, they were Motions of such a character that it seemed absolutely necessary that some steps should be taken by the House to prevent a recurrence of such proceedings. I think that step is now being taken, and that, with certain limitations, it is most desirable it should be taken.

Mr. SEXTON said, that considering the relations which prevailed between the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House and the Irish Members who sat on these Benches, it would have been strange if the right hon. Gentleman had given such unequivocal testimony in their favour as had been attributed to him by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Daly). But, limited as the right hon. Gentleman's testimony had been by the explanation which had been given of it in the last few moments, it was remarkable evidence. The right hon. Gentleman did not say that the Motions moved from the Irish Benches were always justifiable; but the general tone of his remarks had been to import the character of justifiableness to them. The right hon. Gentleman said he had intended in his remarks to refer to certain Motions for the Adjournment of the House which had been made. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind one case in which it had fallen to his (Mr. Sexton's) lot to move the adjournment of the House. In a few words he would relate the circumstances which induced him to make such Motion. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members need not be impatient; he would be able to relate the circumstances in four or five sentences. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Forster), on the occasion to which he was referring, if it was true that a certain County Inspector in Ireland had issued to the police under him a Circular inviting them, when guarding Mr. Clifford Lloyd, to murder those whom they might suspect of contemplating an attack upon that gentleman? The right hon. Gentleman said that Mr. Clifford Lloyd knew nothing of the Circular; whereupon he (Mr. Sexton) asked if the right hon. Gentleman had any knowledge of such a Circular having been issued, not by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, but by County Inspector Smith? The right hon. Gentleman thereupon rose a second time, and said he believed that a Circular of the kind had been issued in another county, the county of Clare, but he did not know much about it, and he asked that the Question should be postponed till another day. But he (Mr. Sexton) knew that the matter was urgent, and, declining to put the Question off till a future day, he moved the adjournment of the House.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to me to say that I do not admit the accuracy of his version of the facts?

MR. SEXTON said, it was not necessary for his purpose that the right hon. Gentleman should admit the accuracy of his version of the facts. He (Mr. Sexton) was perfectly satisfied with the correctness of it, and that was enough for him. He having moved the adjournment of the House, and having shocked the House with the language of the Circular, the right hon. Gentleman rose and drew from his pocket the Circular of County Inspector Smith itself. Now, that Motion for the Adjournment of the House, the discussion upon which was the longest which took place during the Session, lasting from an early hour in the evening until the dinner hour, had the salutary effect of causing the instant withdrawal of the Circular, which, if it had remained in force, would undoubtedly have caused the loss of life. It was not to be supposed that Irish Members were in the habit of grossly abusing the practice of moving the adjournment of the House. The hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), who spoke some time ago, gave a detailed account of the Motions for Adjournment which had been made during the present Parliament; and the hon. Member for Edinburgh was obliged to confess that Irish Members had only made two Motions for the Adjournment during the last Session on which there had been any considerable waste of time. One of those Motions was the one to which he (Mr. Sexton) had just referred, and the other was a Motion made by his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), who usually knew what he was talking about, and never troubled the House with an empty speech. If no other charge could be brought against them than that they had consumed two or three hours of the Session upon matters of public importance connected with Ireland, then he contended that the Irish Party stood abundantly vindicated. It must not be forgotten that for a considerable part of last Session Ireland was living under two Coercion Acts, which were working simultaneously; that there were 600 or 700 men in gaol without any knowledge of the offence they had committed, without being confronted with their accusers, and that bodies of Constabulary all over the country were engaged in harassing the people. Could there be a more remarkable testimony to the self-control and self-denial of the Irish people than that for an entire period of six months, with the unlimited right of moving adjournments, they only did so on two occasions to such an extent as to cause annoyance or inconvenience to Public Business? He warned the House that the effect of this Resolution would be exceedingly evil, so far as the people of Ireland were concerned, for they well knew the difference which existed between English and Irish questions. An English Member had a dozen Ministers to appeal to—a dozen Ministers with subordinates at hand to procure satisfactory information for them. The English people had full opportunity of testing the accuracy and truthfulness of the replies given to the Questions put by English Members; and English officials had no interest or desire to act unjustly towards the English people at large, or to give untrue answers in regard to matters which concerned the public interests. But how was it with regard to Ireland? He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster), the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman knew, when he was in Office, and was seated on the Treasury Bench, what a business he had to manage. He had often in front of him a considerable pile of papers, containing the materials from which he had to frame his answers to the Questions put to him. He was obliged to receive every day, at his Office in Fleet Street, replies from Dublin Castle and the various Offices which converged upon Dublin Castle. What opportunity had he of testing the accuracy of the answers he was required to give? He was obliged, with a honesty which brought him to political ruin, to repose confidence in his advisers at Dublin. It was the right which every Irish Member possessed of moving the adjournment of the House which gave them a sort of check upon the inferior officers. Every Government clerk, every constable, every Commissioner, every petty magistrate knew, when he sent the right hon. Gentleman a lying answer, that it was open to the Irish Members to move the adjournment of the House, and that certain exposure lay before him. But what would be the fact now? Every official perverter of the truth from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway would feel that the Prime Minister had fixed the figure on which alone the demand of the right to move the adjournment of the House should be made, as if it had been mathematically designed to exclude the Irish Party. What would every clerk and every constable in Ireland say now? He would say—"The Government do not wish us to be pestered about these Questions, and we may give any misleading reply we please, so as to hoodwink these troublesome Irish patriots who have been so much censured by the Home Secretary and other Members of the Government. The Irish Party will not be able to get the necessary 40 Members to support them in moving the adjournment of the House; the matter will be left upon our bare statements, and we are safe for ever." That in Ireland would be the healthy effect of this Rule. He regarded the right of interrogating Ministers in that House as the most valuable right which the Irish Members possessed, far better than bringing in a Bill or making a Motion, because unless they obtained the assent of the Ministry to their Bill or Motion, it was so much waste paper and so much empty wind. But if an Irish Member put a Question, the answer was given at present under the salutary check of the possibility of a Motion for the Adjournment of the House being moved. The Irish people were fully aware that upon all Irish questions the Government were able to outvote them, and now they would know that the curriculum was rendered complete by depriving them of the right of moving the adjournment of the House in the hope of obtaining an effective answer to their Questions. In such circumstances, he left it to the House to imagine what, to the keen minds of the Irish people, would be the pretence they made of rendering the political rights of the two nations equal.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made out a case in favour of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil) which called for a reply from the Treasury Bench. He supported it himself on the ground of the inconvenience, and even evil, which attached to all attempts to infringe the Privileges of the House. With that intimation he would leave the Amendment. He had risen for the purpose of asking the Prime Minister two questions. In the first place, owing, perhaps, to the fact that the House had not the words before them on the Paper, he did not quite see how the Resolution, as amended by the Prime Minister, would work. He did not understand what was to be the course taken by an hon. Member in moving the adjournment of the House. Suppose an hon. Member got up after a Question had been answered, and said—"I propose to move the adjournment of the House," he should like to know if it would then be for the Speaker to call upon any 40 Members to rise in their places and say that they supported the Motion? Would that be the course pursued; or would the hon. Gentleman, after proposing the adjournment of the House, be able to introduce the subject upon which he wished to call the attention of the House? Would he be able to state it in order to show that it was a matter of urgent public importance? Even then it would be a very indefinite matter; but he wanted to know if an hon. Member was to be allowed, under the Resolution of the Prime Minister, to state to the House his reasons for moving the adjournment before he was interrupted by the Speaker inquiring whether 40 Members supported the Motion? He thought there was some importance in that view of the matter, and the House ought to know what view the Government placed upon the probable working of their own Resolution. Another question he wished to ask had reference to something which the Prime Minister had said himself when he was making his statement in regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The right hon. Gentleman had used an expression which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not quite catch at the time, and what he did catch he did not altogether understand. He thought the right hon. Gentleman alluded to some further power, or protection, or privilege, which might be afforded to smaller minorities than 40 who were anxious to bring subjects of urgent importance before the House. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that that would be a matter for subsequent consideration. It might influence the course taken by hon. Members in regard to the Amendment if the right hon. Gentleman would give some explanation of that expression. Hon. Members on that side of the House hoped that the Government would consider the propriety of affording some additional protection for smaller minorities than 40. He hoped the Prime Minister would find it in his power to give some reply to that question.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think I am entitled to address the House again upon the first question put to me by the noble Lord, nor can I, as to the point involved in the question, speak with authority. With regard to the second question, however, it involves a personal explanation of what it was that I did say. I will only repeat that, as we framed the Resolution, it was based on the agreement of the majority of the House, and a decision by the majority of the House. We consented, in conformity with the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), to substitute for an appeal to that majority of the House, a provision in which a certain number of Members would be entitled absolutely and unconditionally to authorize the Motion for the Adjournment. In agreeing to that substitution, I said that I left it quite open to Members to raise, if they thought fit, a further question about an appeal to the majority of the House, which evidently would not require so large a quorum. The Government having accepted the substitution of the principle involved in the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, left it open to Members to suggest any further limitation if there was a general desire on the part of the House.

MR. MAC IVER said, the House had evidently reached an Amendment of a most important character, and if the Government had another night for its consideration they might probably be able to so modify their proposal that it would meet with general acceptance. He gathered that there was no desire on either side of the House to prevent these Motions being made when matters of urgent public importance demanded that they should be made. There ought to be no wish to frame the Resolution in such a way that it would exclude the Irish Members from bringing forward real grievances. Minorities—even small minorities—were not necessarily wrong; and he would remind the House that, although not in immediate connection with this matter, the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chancellor of the Duchy of

Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) gave as the result of his long Parliamentary experience that the House of Commons was always most unanimous on subjects which it did not understand. Small minorities, even smaller than 15, might often be in a position to raise a very important issue, relating to matters which, although some few of them understood perfectly, the House would not until the subject was explained. As regards hon. Members from Ireland, he (Mr. Mac Iver) thought that, on looking back, there were many who would now be inclined to agree with him in believing that these hon. Members were right sometimes — even on occasions when the great majority of the House was against them. These Gentlemen, at all events, were not that Party in the House least entitled to respect. They were straightforward and cared neither for Whigs nor Tories. They did not angle for votes in ambiguous language that was intended to be understood in different ways. That was more than could be said for right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He would not formally move the adjournment of the debate; but he certainly thought that the progress of Business would be advanced if the Government would reconsider the terms of the Resolution.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, it was quite evident that the Amendment which the Prime Minister had accepted and the Prime Minister's present Resolution were aimed at the Irish Party in that House, and at the Irish Party alone. It was no real limitation of the power of either the Liberal or Conservative Members to move the adjournment of the House on any important question which necessitated their receiving support from 39 other Members of their Party. It was no real limitation or restriction whatsoever, because any Member with any weight with his Party could readily get 39 Colleagues to back him up; but the Prime Minister, who was continually asking the support of the Irish Party and asking the Irish Party to put trust in his good intentions towards Ireland, was now pressing through the House, provided he was not induced on second considerations to alter his intention, a Resolution that was intended to muzzle the Irish Party, and the Irish Party alone. A most important point had been raised in addition by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—namely, whether a Member, in bringing forward a question and declaring his intention of moving the adjournment of the House having regard to important and urgent Public Business, was to be allowed an opportunity of stating briefly to the House the reasons which induced him to think that an adjournment was demanded by grave motives of public utility. That was a question of the very utmost importance, no matter what the quorum might be; and he certainly thought the Resolution ought not to be passed in any form without its being clearly and unmistakably laid down, whether the Member proposing to move the adjournment of the House was merely to be allowed to say, "I move the adjournment of the House for grave public reasons," or whether he was to be allowed to state some, at least, of the reasons on which he asked for leave to move the adjournment in order to raise a debate upon the subject. To come to the initial point, this was a most unfair—he did not wish to say a most perfidious—attack upon the liberty of the Representatives of Irish constituencies. What was the number of 40 in comparison to the strength of the English Parties? The number proposed was but a mere fraction of an ordinary English Party of, say, 250. But the Prime Minister had so constructed it that it should be equal to the strongest force of the Irish Party that could be assembled by the most urgent Whip. The right hon. Gentleman meant to single out the Irish Party for a special disqualification, and to place them below the level of all other Parties in the House. It was mere affectation to say that on Irish questions, whose gravity was perhaps known only to a small knot of Irish Members, Irish Members could recruit their number sufficiently from the English or Scotch Representatives to the strength necessary to form a quorum. Were they not familiar with the treatment English Members of both Parties received when they showed themselves at all forward in supporting the Motions of Irish Members? If they belonged to the Liberal Party, they were denounced by the Press as persons throwing obstacles in the way of Her Majesty's Government; and if it happened to be a fair-minded Conservative who lent aid to the Irish

Party, he was also denounced as lending aid to Obstruction. The Resolution, if passed in its present form, would inflict a grave injustice upon a poor and, in comparison with the English, a disfranchised nation. English Members were elected by popular suffrage, while Irish Members were returned upon electoral qualifications designed to exclude the masses of the people from the franchise; and yet, forsooth! they were to be tried by this artificial standard, and while English Parties were only called upon to produce one-sixth of their number in order to justify the demand for adjournment on the least urgent questions, the Irish Party were asked to produce even more than their extraordinary total for the purpose of supporting a demand for inquiry in matters of extreme importance. He said that the Resolution in its present shape was a mockery, and that the passing of it would supply the Irish nation with another reason for being dissatisfied until they were completely separated from the control of the English Parliament.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there was some doubt, arising from the wording of the Rule, as to the course to be pursued by a Member wishing to move the adjournment of the House. An hon. Member, under those circumstances, would require the support of 40 Members; and he asked whether he would be allowed to draw attention to the nature of the question he wished to lay before the House, or whether he would simply be allowed to state the object he had in view?

MR. SPEAKER: An hon. Member desirous of moving the adjournment of the House will be bound to state the subject-matter proposed to be brought under the notice of the House; having done that, he would be asked whether he was supported by 40 Members, and, if so, he would have the right to proceed.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, it must be recollected that the demand for adjournment might be assumed to arise in consequence of some answer given, some statement made, or proceeding which had already taken place in the House. The House, therefore, could not be in that state of total ignorance as to the subject on account of which the Motion was sought to be made; and as the hon. Member wishing to move would have to state the subject-matter he intended to bring forward, the House would certainly be competent to form an opinion as to whether the Motion should be proceeded with or not, or, at all events, it would be competent to 40 Members to give it their active support. He did not think it necessary to follow the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) through the whole of his remarks; but he was unable to regard some of them as otherwise than unjust and unfair to Members on both sides of the House who had at various times given their support to Irish Members opposite. It was thought by Her Majesty's Government that Irish Members had occasionally received, upon some questionable proceedings, more support than they deserved from Members below the Gangway on that side of the House. Certainly, there had never been any disposition on those Benches to restrict Irish Members in the statement of Irish grievances; and he thought it was unfair to assert that it would be impossible to obtain a sufficient number of English Members to support a Motion proposed for the purpose of making known grievances of a serious character. It could not for one moment be supposed that this Motion, as amended, was intended to silence Irish Members.

MR. THOMASSON said, he thought, in a matter of this kind, even the appearance of evil should be avoided. It would, in his opinion, be unwise on the part of Her Majesty's Government, by adhering to the proposed number, to place it in the power of Irish Members opposite to say to their constituents that this number had been adopted for the purpose of placing them at a disadvantage. He believed that in some constituencies in Ireland a feeling of irritation towards that House already existed, and this, he contended, it was undesirable to increase.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR trusted that what had fallen from the hon. Member who had just addressed the House would not be thrown away upon the occupants of the Treasury Bench. He deeply regretted the form that this Resolution had taken, and was, moreover, utterly unable to reconcile with the statements made on former occasions by the Prime

Minister the language now used in bringing the Rule before the House. The right hon. Gentleman had, over and over again, said that these Rules were not directed against any particular section of the House, and had repeatedly disclaimed the idea that they were directed solely or especially against Irish Members. But how could he reconcile those statements with the fact that the Rule was so drawn as to be applicable to them alone? They were told now that, if their claim were just, they would have no difficulty in getting a sufficient number of Members to support a Motion for the Adjournment of the House; but that, he contended, was against the whole course of their experience during the last four years, and hon. Gentlemen who applauded the statement, he observed, were not the Members for Northampton and Newcastle, but those who, in season and out of season, had denounced every Motion which came from those Benches, however just or reasonable it might be. When their Motions for Adjournment went to the test of the Division Lobby, did they ever receive the support of 10 Members on the opposite side of the House? What support did they at any time get from Members opposite, except that of five or six, whose conduct the Irish people would always gratefully remember? And it was in the face of these instructive lessons of the past that they were now asked to surrender their right to move the adjournment of the House to the tender mercies of the Liberal Party. Without wishing to say anything against the manner in which the Resolution had been brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman, he pointed out that its pith and substance, not the language in which it was embodied, must be regarded. The Prime Minister said—"If you cannot muster 40 Members, how can you make any claim on the House?" But the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that Irish Members on those Benches, whether they mustered 30, 20, or even 10 in number, were the sole Representatives in that House of the convictions of the Irish people; and, that being so, it was monstrous to apply to them a Rule which could only be fairly applied to other Parties in the House. He believed it would be said by the people of Ireland, if the Rule were passed in its present form, that it had been framed by the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of making Irish representation in that House a greater mockery and sham than it had been before.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, on the last division he had separated himself from the Party with whom he generally voted in order to support the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. He voted that if a Member should move the adjournment of the House, he should have the right and be compelled to state the grounds of that Motion. Hon. Members from Ireland sitting near him had voted against that proposal—they were, in fact, unwilling that an Irish Member should have the opportunity of making a statement to English Members which might induce them to support the Motion for Adjournment. That was the position, as he understood it; and he must tell the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), and those who acted with him, that, to use an old English saying—"Having made their bed they must lie on it." He was surprised at their complaints against the Government, who had just put them in a minority in order to afford them a fair opportunity of appealing to English Members.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 109; Noes 43: Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 368.)

Question, "That the words 'unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion,'"—(*Mr. Gladstone*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words from the word "unless," in line 5, inclusive, to the end of the Question.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived*.

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report from the Select Committee on Privilege (Mr. Gray), with Minutes of Evidence, *brought up*, and read.

MR. SEXTON rose to a point of Order. He understood that the Attorney General was about to present the Report of the Select Committee, which had inquired into the circumstances of Mr. Gray's imprisonment. He objected to the reception of that Report, and had to bring to the notice of Mr. Speaker that, at to-day's Sitting of the Committee, he had proposed the addition to the Report of a certain paragraph, whereupon the Prime Minister, who was a Member of the Committee, moved the "Previous Question," thereby avoiding the necessity of a direct vote being given on the question proposed. As he understood it was not competent to the right hon. Gentleman to move the Previous Question, he proposed to move that the Report be referred back to the Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion of the hon. and learned Attorney General would be that the Report do lie on the Table? If the hon. Member desires to move as an Amendment, "That the Report be referred back to the Select Committee," the Question would be argued by the House.

MR. PARNELL asked whether the Motion of the Attorney General could be made in view of the fact that it was opposed, and that it was after half-past 12 o'clock?

MR. SPEAKER: The Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule would not apply in this instance.

MR. SEXTON said, he would move "That the Report be referred back to the Select Committee," to consider the propriety of the action taken to-day, the Committee having power to consider the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to enlarge the Reference he must ask leave of the House.

MR. GLADSTONE suggested that it would be well to adjourn the debate so that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) might have time to frame his Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Report do lie upon the Table."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 15*th November*, 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 15*th November*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*Report*—Privilege (Mr. Gray), *debate further adjourned.*

QUESTION.

—:o:—

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEES.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Prime Minister, When he would be able to place upon the Table the proposed Resolution as to the Standing Committees.

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman will quite understand that I am in a considerable difficulty as regards the absorption of the time of the House. But I will endeavour to give him the desired information to-morrow or the next day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SECOND RULE (MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT BEFORE PUBLIC BUSINESS).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWENTY-SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [14th November], as amended,

> "That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; unless a Member rising in his place stall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved in Resolution 2, after "Motion" (end of Mr. Gladstone's Amendment) to add—

> "Provided, That the granting of the leave of the House, if disputed, shall be determined upon Question put forthwith, but no Division shall be taken thereupon unless demanded by ten Members rising in their places."

The noble Lord said he made this Motion in consequence of words that fell from the Prime Minister on the preceding day—that a smaller minority than 40 should have the power of testing whether the House was in favour of a Motion for adjournment, that a particular question might be raised. He thought the number 10 was sufficiently high to justify a division being taken upon the Question as to whether a Motion for Adjournment might be discussed. There were many Members of the House who felt strongly upon particular questions. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), for instance, was celebrated for his strong views upon peace and war; and as this country, whatever Government was in power, was almost always engaged in warlike operations, there were constant occasions when he and his supporters might wish to bring their views before the House. Then there were the Irish Members, and as, for some time to come, Ireland might continue to be more or less in an inflammatory state, he doubted very much the wisdom of not allowing hon. Members who represented the national feeling in Ireland an opportunity of bringing forward questions which might be regarded in Ireland as of great public importance. It had been suggested that the form of words which he had put on the Paper was not the best; and he therefore proposed to alter it by adding at the end of the Resolution the following words:—

> "Or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall on a Division upon Question put forthwith determine whether such Motion shall be made."

Amendment proposed,

> At the end of the Question, to add the words "or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall on a Division upon Question put forthwith determine whether such Motion shall be made."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added,"

MR. DODSON said it would be in the recollection of the House that when this question was mooted last night, his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government said he should be glad to ascertain the feeling of the House in regard to it before the Government came to any conclusion on the subject. The noble Lord had now made his Motion, and the Government would rather like to know what was the wish of the House in respect to it.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF complained that it was scarcely fair for the Government to throw back upon the House an Amendment which had been placed upon the Paper in accordance with a suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. Much discussion had taken place already on the Resolution, and he trusted the Amendment would be accepted without further prolonging it.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD regretted that the Government had accepted the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). After a discussion of more than a fortnight upon the *Clôture* Resolution they had now allowed 40 Members to interrupt the order of Business. If this Amendment were agreed to they would go back to their former position, as it would give the House power to refuse to go on with the Motion for Adjournment. This Amendment would, in fact, restore the power of the majority.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS pointed out that the Prime Minister last night had mentioned such a limitation of the Resolution by way of addition, and not in substitution of those already existing. The Amendment of the noble Lord could not do any harm, because leave to move the adjournment would have to be given by the majority, while it would do something in favour of small minorities. He trusted, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would assent to the Amendment.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he thought the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) had wandered into the realms of misconception in regard to the effects of this Resolution. His hon. Friend had got hold of a phrase which had not unfrequently been used during these debates. He talked about a limited minority being already allowed to interrupt the Business of the House. This was not what the Irish Members as a minority claimed. They claimed the right to call the attention of the House to matters of emergency upon Motions made for the adjournment of the House. He thought the Amendment possessed certain advantages. It added one other slight advantage to hon. Members who constituted a minority. As the Resolution at present stood a minority had, as a matter of right, the privilege of standing in their places and claiming a Motion for the adjournment of the House. The Amendment now secured that a smaller number could appeal to the House to allow a discussion to take place. To accept it would be something of a concession, although not a very great one, on the part of the Government.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, this Amendment was simply supplemental of the other, and could interfere with no privilege.

MR. MACFARLANE pointed out that the 1st Resolution would be applied only on the occasion of a great debate—probably once, twice, or three times in a Session—whereas the 2nd Resolution would be applicable to minorities every day on which the House sat. The Resolution passed last night had made it 40 times more improbable that a Motion for Adjournment should be made than it was before. The Government had got more than ample security; and, therefore, he hoped they would agree to this Amendment, all that could be inflicted on the House by it being a division.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that in accepting the proposition of 40 Members last night, he had admitted that, under all the circumstances of the case, although it might be a necessary proposition, and though it had received the emphatic assent of the House, yet certainly it was not perfect; it did not give all the justice to small minorities which he believed the majority of the House on an equitable plea, whether it was a Tory or a Liberal majority, would, he was convinced, be disposed to do. It was not in the nature of Englishman or Scotsman either to shut his opponent out from all discussion. But here was a proposal to trust the majority up to a certain point; and he owned that when he had spoken of the general desire of the House, he had had in some degree a special regard to small minorities, and particularly to that which had made itself so conspicuous in the House during recent years, and on behalf of which two hon. Members who had just spoken (Mr. M'Carthy and Mr. Macfarlane) were entitled to speak. They saw an advantage in this proposal, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was also in favour of it. Under these circumstances, the Government were certainly disposed to concede it. They felt confident in the judgment of the majority; and he was bound to say likewise that he felt perfectly confident that the minorities in whose interests it was given would not abuse it by making frivolous requests to the House, and putting the House to the trouble of division. This was a concession both given and taken in a friendly spirit, and, being so, he was perfectly confident in its operation.

MR. WARTON pointed out that no opportunity would, under this Amendment, be given to a Member for stating the reasons why he wished to make a Motion for Adjournment.

MR. NEWDEGATE desired to know how the Resolution, as amended, would run? Last night they agreed that a Member might state his reasons for making a Motion in reference to a specific and important public object, and if 40 Members rose in their places the House would allow the Motion to proceed; but it appeared to him that this Amendment would bring about a supplementary arrangement which would nullify what they had agreed to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

(2.) *Resolved,* That no Motion for the Adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day, or Notices of Motions have been entered upon, except by leave of the House; unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion; or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall, on a Division, upon Question put forthwith, determine whether such Motion shall be made.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF, who had given Notice that he would move to negative the Resolution, said, that he would not bring forward that Motion; but he wished to state, in self-defence, that he thought that on the occasions when he had proposed Motions for Adjournment his action had been justified by the results.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether, in the event of 10 Members demanding permission to proceed with a Motion for Adjournment, and a division taking place in which 40 Members supported the Motion, would the votes of these 40 Members constitute a right to discuss the Question?

MR. SPEAKER replied, that in that case the matter would be settled by the majority of the House, as shown by the division.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THIRD RULE (DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Commitee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be strictly confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having spoken to any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate, or during the same sitting of the Committee."—(*Mr. Gadstone.*)

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF moved to insert in line 1, after the word "That," the following words—

"Except on a Motion for going into a Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or when the House is in Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or on any of the stages of the Appropriation Bill."

The object of his Amendment, he explained, was to exempt from the operation of the Rule debates connected with Committee. The primary functions of the House were to redress grievances and to vote Supplies. The rights of Members in connection with those functions would be seriously affected if the Rule were agreed to unamended. He thought they ought to pause before limiting the rights of those whose difficult duty it was to see that the finances of the country were properly administered, and that the various Departments in the service of the Crown were kept in a state of efficiency.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except on a Motion for going into a Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or when the House is in Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, or on any of the stages of Appropriation Bill."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE considered that the Amendment embraced a great deal more than appeared on the face of the proposal, and therefore he hoped that the House would not accept it. By usage the proceedings in Committee of Ways and Means were very largely allowed to pass without interruption as a matter of form, and there was at least one occasion in every Session when such Committees must be expedited. It would, therefore, be inconvenient to encourage any alteration in that practice by the acceptance of the definite proposal of the hon. Member. If the Amendment were passed the discussion on a Motion made on going into Committee or in Committee for the adjournment of the debate could not be confined to one subject. One Gentleman would be able to make a speech on a question of foreign policy, another—the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), for instance—might address the House on some question of economy, and a third might deliver himself of his views on an Irish question. He thus objected to the Amendment on two grounds. In the first place, he objected to legalizing as a normal proceeding the interruption of debates in Committee of Supply or of Ways and Means; and, secondly, he objected to the raising of omnibus debates on Motions for the Adjournment in Committee.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was surprised at the extraordinarily mistaken view which the Prime Minister with marvellous ingenuity had put before the House. The Amendment, which was a perfectly *bonâ fide* one, proposed no alteration in the present practice of the House, by which considerable latitude was allowed to the Member moving the adjournment of the debate. The Government seemed to be desirous to limit the speech of an hon. Member about to move the adjournment to the actual Motion for Adjournment. He could not see what use there could be in moving the adjournment if an hon. Member could not state his reasons for doing so. He wished to know whether, in future, hon. Members would be allowed to give their reasons, or would they have to sit down immediately after moving the adjournment? No more un-Constitutional change could be proposed than this attempt to gag Members, whose legitimate right it was to take the opportunity of Supply to place grievances before the House. The Government ought to state in common decency some of the reasons that induced them to propose so stringent a measure.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he quite agreed with the noble Lord that some explanation was needed as to the meaning of this Rule. Either some of the words were mere surplusage, or they proposed a very new and severe restriction on the liberty of speech. If the Rule merely meant that speeches should be strictly confined to the matter of the Motion it meant nothing, for that was the Rule already. But he assumed it meant something more, and he wanted to know what that was. An hon. Member must have some special reasons for the adjournment of the debate, and to what extent was the Rule to confine him in his statement of those reasons? Suppose there was a sudden disclosure or a sudden hint of Government policy, and an hon. Member pointed out that after that revelation the Committee ought to adjourn, was he to be allowed to give his reasons for thinking that some damage might come to the public interest if the House proceeded without further consideration? [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] He recollected some years ago, in a Committee on the Navy Estimates, the late Mr. Ward Hunt made some declarations with regard to the state of the Navy, which opened up the question whether the Navy was not in a very bad condition, and whether the Estimates then before the Committee ought not to be altogether displaced. Ought not a Member who in such a case moved the adjournment to be entitled to go into the entire condition of the Navy, and ought not Members who followed to be entitled to do the same? He contended that the Rule involved a further restriction on the liberty of speech, which the House ought to resist.

MR. DODSON said, there was no novelty in the New Rule, and there would be no difficulty on the part of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees in interpreting it. The present practice of the House was that when some Member moved the adjournment a debate might go on upon the Main Question, as if no such Motion had been made, but with this difference, that every Member who had already spoken on the Main Question was let in to speak on it a second time, and the object of the Rule now before the House was to check that practice. The hon. Member opposite said that if some revelations were made as to Government policy during a debate that might be a reason for moving the adjournment; and he asked whether a Member would be entitled to state his reasons. It would be perfectly legitimate that, in such a case, the Member should state his reasons. During Urgency last year the very same Rule, that, in moving the adjournment, Members should be strictly confined to the matter of such Motion, was in force. The effect of the Amendment would be to make the latitude which now existed considerably wider in Committee of Supply and Ways and Means. He objected to the Amendment on its merits, because it would make a Rule applicable in Motions for Adjournment which was not applicable in debates on any other subject.

LORD JOHN MANNERS confessed that a good deal of the difficulty he felt with regard to this Resolution had been removed by the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman; but, at the same time, he hoped it was not to be understood that the Rule was to be so strictly interpreted as in the case of Urgency. Suppose that, in the discussion of the Colonial Estimates, it appeared that the Government had taken some important step of policy—say, for example, had annexed an Island—and a Motion was made to report Progress, he did not think the Rule ought to be so strictly interpreted as under Urgency. He would suggest that the Government should agree to strike out the word "strictly;" and if that were so, he would advise his hon. Friend not to press the Amendment.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought the suggestion of the noble Lord a good one, as it would prevent the Resolution being misunderstood. He quite agreed with the Prime Minister that under the present Rules the voting of Supplies was very much of a farce, and that they might as well dispense with the examination of the Estimates altogether. He was aware that it was asserted by hon. Gentlemen opposite that he and his Friends did not criticize the Estimates of the present Government; but, however much he and others might be disposed to criticize the Estimates of the present Government—and their Estimates were very large—they were prevented, by the present state of Public Business, from taking that course which they would otherwise have done.

Mr. GLADSTONE rose to reply to the suggestion of the noble Lord (Lord John Manners), when——

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON submitted, on a point of Order, that the Prime Minister was not entitled to speak a second time, except to explain something he had already said; he was not entitled to introduce new matter.

Mr. GLADSTONE asked the permission of the House to explain the course he intended to take.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I object, Sir.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he wished to address a few words to the House which might shorten debate. He awaited the order of the Chair, not that of the hon. Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to point out that it is the usual practice, as the House knows, on the consideration of Bills or Motions, to allow the Member in charge of the Bill to make an explanation on any point. The House is now engaged in an analogous proceeding; and, with the indulgence of the House, the right hon. Gentleman can again speak.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he always understood that the "leave of the House" should be unanimous, and that it could not be given if one Member objected. If a single Member could object, he objected. It must be understood, if the right hon. Gentleman proceeded, it was not "by the leave of the House."

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. GLADSTONE explained that he wished to say that as hon. Members had, not unnaturally, argued that the expression "strictly confined" might be taken as indicating that there was to be some peculiar rigour in the application of this Rule, he was disposed to give up the word "strictly" on the understanding that this would be satisfactory to those who were proposing the present Amendment.

Mr. SYNAN said, he thought that the argument of the President of the Local Government Board appeared to be conclusive against the Amendment, and conclusive also against the first part of the Rule. If speakers were by the present practice confined to the matter of the Motion, what was the necessity of introducing a positive Rule on the subject? For the concluding part of the Rule there might be some reason, and perhaps it might be necessary to adopt it; but the Amendment was too wide, and the House should reject it.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he was afraid that he differed in his view of this Amendment and Resolution from many of those on his side of the House; but that made him more desirous to state, in a few words, that view. Of course, Members who were of opinion that there had been no abuse in respect of Motions and proceedings for adjournment would uphold the existing system and support the Amendment as, to a certain extent, modifying the terms of the Resolution. But he was one of those who thought that there had been great abuse of the Forms of the House, and a great and lamentable delay of the Business of the House, owing to the proceedings upon Motions for Adjournment. And he thought that this was especially shown in Committee of Supply, when admittedly the most important Business of the House—namely, the discussion upon and criticism of the Estimates put forward by the Government—was so often delayed by useless Motions for Adjournment and speeches on matters other than those immediately before the House. He, therefore, had a special objection to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), as the effect of that Amendment would be to keep the present practice in force during Supply. He (Sir Henry Holland) was quite alive to the importance of Members having full opportunity for bringing forward and discussing grievances; but would there not be abundant opportunities, even if this proposed Resolution were passed? There was no grievance, he ventured to say, that could not be properly and legitimately raised upon some Vote in Supply, or upon Motion in the House; and he could not conceal from himself that Motions for Adjournment were constantly made without even the pretence of a grievance being put forward. Then, it had been asked, what could be stated under the words of the Resolution, "the debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion?" He omitted the word "strictly," as the Prime Minister had expressed the readiness of the Government to omit that word; but, that word being omitted, he could not think there was much difficulty in determining what could be said upon such a Motion; and the more so as no difficulty or doubt had arisen upon like words, which, it appeared, were inserted in the Urgency Rules. Members could, of course, urge any grounds for supporting or opposing the adjournment, as, for example, the lateness of the hour; the necessity for time being given to answer some new point raised by the Government; some new revelation, or some special concession, and so forth. But they could not, and ought not, under cover of such a Motion, to discuss the whole of the Main Question again. If, however, there was any doubt upon this point, he would suggest to the Prime Minister that the words "the matter of such Motion" might be omitted, in order to insert the words "a statement of the grounds of supporting or opposing such Motion." For the reasons he had stated he should give his general support to the Resolution and to the principle involved in it, though he should, later on, support the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), by which the limitation to move or second a subsequent Motion for Adjournment would be confined to Members who had proposed or seconded a prior Motion, and would not include Members who had only spoken on that Motion.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON denied that he meant any personal offence to the Prime Minister when he interrupted him. He wanted, however, to be careful of the Forms of the House; and when the right hon. Gentleman addressed the House for six or seven times on the same Motion it was time to interfere. The Rules of the House, printed and placed in their hands, were very explicit upon the point—that no Member, not even a Member in charge of a Bill or Resolution, had a right to speak more than once, except by leave or by the indulgence of the House. That leave or indulgence must be unanimous. He thought the Government would do well to accept the small restriction proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth.

MR. HICKS said, they were bound to uphold the right and privilege of private Members to inquire into all grievances in that House. He would, therefore, make a suggestion which he trusted would be acceptable to the right hon. Gentleman opposite—namely, that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Portsmouth should be amended by striking out all the words after "Means," in order to insert "when the Rules of the House shall remain as they now are." That, he thought, would meet all the objections.

MR. J. R. YORKE said, no doubt many hon. Members on that side of the House were in favour of a modification of the Rules with a view to their restriction; but he believed there was a general feeling that the proper mode of proceeding in this matter had been inverted. All these different points ought to have been considered first, and then, if there appeared to be any ground still uncovered on which it was necessary to guard the House against the interference with the rights of the majority, some form of *clôture* might have been introduced less stringent than that which had just been passed. He should like to ask for a direction from the Chair as to the point on which his hon. Friend the Member for North Shropshire appealed to the Speaker just now. It was one of those points which, under the old and laxer system which had till now prevailed, had never been strictly criticized. It had been the custom, since he had been in the House, to allow a Member in charge of a Bill or Resolution greater latitude than would be tolerated in any other Member in rising from time to time to announce his intention of making a change, although he had technically exhausted his right of addressing the House. He had always understood that this was done as a means of oiling the wheels of debate, but that it was done strictly subject to the unanimous approbation of the House. As they were now entering on a new period and were overshadowed by a hostile *clôture,* he should be very grateful for a direction from the Speaker as to the exact position of any right hon. Gentleman who rose, as the Prime Minister did just now, to explain a matter of this kind. When the Prime Minister brought in his Resolutions he had two alternatives. He might have taken the course he actually did adopt, or he might have introduced the Resolutions in a Committee of the Whole House. It was, of course, easy to understand why he did not adopt the latter alternative. The position which the Prime Minister occupied was one which he deliberately adopted, with full knowledge of the responsibilities which it involved, with the knowledge that he himself could only speak once, and that he would derive the advantage of other Members lying under the same incapacity. He wished to ask the Speaker what was the meaning of "the indulgence of the House." Did it mean the unanimous acquiescence of the Whole House, or the permission of the majority? And if of a majority, how was the majority to be ascertained—by a division or some other process? Or was the question settled by an unwritten law, which it was not competent for a Member to challenge?

Mr. SPEAKER: I can only state, for the hon. Member's information, what is the usage of the House. The usage has been such as I have already stated it to be, that in the case of a Member in charge of a Bill, or of a Resolution of like character to a Bill, the indulgence of the House has been shown to such Member, but has been limited to that Member and not extended to others. And the Member taking charge of such a matter is bound to confine himself to an explanation for the convenience of the House, and is not entitled to enter upon new or debatable matters. I am bound to say that the practice has been uniform, and has been used for many years, and I should not consider myself entitled to depart from that usage without special instructions from the House.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether a Member moving to report Progress with reference to a particular Vote in Supply would be entitled to give his reasons for making the Motion—as, for example, why he thought that the building of certain ships was not at the time desirable?

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the Question of the hon. Member to be this —whether, in the event of a Motion to report Progress being made in Committee of Supply, the Member moving to report Progress would be at liberty to refer to the Vote under discussion. I think he would not be at liberty to do so.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Would he be at liberty to say anything?

Mr. SPEAKER: He would be at liberty to state his reasons for or against reporting Progress.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: What I want to ask you, Sir, is, whether a Member moving to report Progress on a particular Vote is not at liberty to say why he thinks that Vote should be postponed for the present?

Mr. SPEAKER: He would be quite at liberty to state what is suggested by the hon. Member.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, after that explanation he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. GORST rose to move to omit the words "for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate." The Resolution would then read "when a Motion is made in Committee of Supply;" and the old practice would remain except in Committee of Supply. The Government were putting fresh and unnecessary chains upon the discussions of that House, and the subsequent Resolutions were amply sufficient to prevent Obstruction. The weapon of moving the adjournment of the House should not be infrequently used. He could quote occasions on which, in former Parliaments, prominent Liberals in that House had used that weapon with great success. He was not finding fault with them for so doing—on the contrary, he thought their conduct was justifiable. The first instance he would give was during the Conservative Administration of 1868. On the 16th of July a Bill, supported by the Government for the slaughter of foreign cattle, was opposed by several Liberal Members representing large constituencies. Four successive Motions for Adjournment were made for the purpose of destroying the Bill, in which aim they were successful. Mr. Bazley, Member for Manchester, made the first Motion, and that Motion and those which followed were supported by Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. P. A. Taylor, and Mr. Cowen, father of the present Member for Newcastle. The Motions were all rejected by majorities of three or four to one. Yet those repeated efforts made by small minorities were successful. Were the Liberals of the present day willing to lay down a weapon which had served them so well in the past? On another occasion numerous Motions for Adjournment were made on a Bill brought in during the late Ministry, and those Motions were supported by the Hon. Mr. Ashley, Sir Charles Dilke, the Marquess of Hartington, and Mr. Mundella. The result was that the Bill was abandoned. The third instance he would mention was that of the debate on the Elementary Education Bill in August, 1876. On that occasion no less than 11 Motions for Adjournment were made, the principal Members taking part in the divisions and Motions being Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Forster, Sir William Harcourt, the Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Mundella, and Mr. Shaw Lefevre. If in 1876—only six years ago—when the Liberal Party was in a minority, they found that this instrument was necessary against the tyranny of a Conservative majority, why were they now going to destroy a weapon which, in their hands, had proved so effective? He was anxious to hear the reasons they would adduce for giving up that privilege. It was true that at present the minority was Conservative and the majority Liberal. But did Gentlemen opposite believe there never would be a time when the Conservative Party would be in a majority? He appealed to them to put themselves in the position of the minority, and consider whether occasions were not likely to arise on which they would want to force delay on the Government, and force on them the reconsideration of their measures and proposals. What power would they have of doing so if this Resolution were passed? Why, none whatever. Then, why part with such a useful power, when they might effect the object in view by modifying and regulating the privilege in such a way as to limit its use to cases of emergency?

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out from the word "made" to the word "that," in line 2.—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate,' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said the hon. and learned Gentleman had introduced his speech with great ingenuity, and had elicited great cheering from the Gentlemen behind him, who evidently believed that something was going to be done that would extinguish all rights of minorities. The plain answer to this was that they were not going to be extinguished. In fact, the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman had no bearing on anything whatever before the House. Every one of the proceedings which the hon. and learned Gentleman had set out in such detail, to the infinite amusement of the Gentlemen behind him, might, so far as he had heard them, go on undisturbed and unimpaired under the present Resolution as proposed by the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman had cited a series of cases in which numbers of successive Gentlemen had moved either in Committee or in the House—perhaps sometimes in the one and sometimes in the other——

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: They were all in the House.

MR. GLADSTONE: Well, all in the House; and there was nothing in the Resolution, as the Government proposed it, to prevent an exact repetition of those proceedings. Indeed, he believed that, even under the existing Rules, an hon. Member would not be allowed again to move the same Motion for the adjournment of the debate or of the House;

consequently, all those privileges which the hon. and learned Gentleman desired to preserve would be preserved by this Resolution. There was no intention whatever to restrict or limit the number of times an adjournment might be moved by different persons. But there would be imported into the proceedings in Committee a restriction which justly prevailed in regard to the House—namely, that the same Member should not make either of these same Motions twice. He hoped he had satisfied the House that the Resolution would not bring about any of the things which the hon. and learned Member had predicted and deprecated; because he quite agreed with him that though the privilege of moving the adjournment might be, and had been, greatly abused, it was, nevertheless, one of great utility, and he confessed he had known it used in a remarkable manner by Gentlemen who had only the public interest at heart. He hoped he had shown that the speech of the hon. and learned Member might be set aside, inasmuch as they conceded all it contained. But the Amendments which the hon. and learned Gentleman had invited the House to consider were of a totally different character, and he would consider very briefly the effect of those Amendments. The hon. and learned Gentleman had proposed a double change in the Resolution. The first, which was the one in point of form now before the House, was confined entirely to that part of the Resolution relating to Committee. But, in his opinion, the House had already unanimously arrived at the conclusion, upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), that it was desirable to confine the speeches on a Motion for Adjournment during debate to matter which was relevant—that was to say, to matter bearing upon the Question before the House. His second objection was that the hon. and learned Member proposed to entirely confine the operation of that Rule to Committees of the House. He contended that it ought not to be so confined, and that the limitation was a reasonable one for debate in the House itself. It would be impossible for the Government to accede to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member.

Mr. MACARTNEY supported the Amendment, and pointed out that under another of the proposed Rules power would be given to the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to silence a Member for irrelevance or tedious repetition. He asked what stronger power than that could be required?

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 103; Noes 34: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 369.)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, in moving the next Amendment to the Resolution, which stood on the Paper in his name, said, he was the more encouraged to do so on account of the course taken by the Government on the previous Amendment. When his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) proposed an important modification of the Resolution in a speech of great ability, supported by numberless facts drawn from his experience, which the Government had failed to answer, he had the pain of seeing those on whom he was accustomed to look for Leadership going into the Lobby against him. For himself, it would be his endeavour on that Resolution, as on the others, to try and cut down its operation in every way, and, to use the words of the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), to pick up whatever he could get. He now proposed by that Amendment that the power of stopping the mouths of Members—for that was what it came to—should be vested only in the Speaker, and not in the Chairman of Committees. On the 1st Resolution they had a great deal of discussion on this subject, and he thought the general sense of the House was that the Chairman was not entitled to the same confidence as the Speaker. They were much indebted to the right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) for having initiated them into the practices of Government "Whips" in communicating constantly, and, indeed, always, to the Chairman of Committees the wishes and the will of the Prime Minister of the day. His right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent had told the House that during the Parliament of 1874 he never left the elbow of the Chairman of Committees, and used to say to the Chairman—"If this discussion is not put a stop to, what will the Prime Minister say?" They had a suspicion before that that this practice did go on; but they had no idea it was carried so far. He presumed the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor) did the same as his Predecessors. The Chairman of Committees was, therefore, not in every way impartial. He was only a Government hack. [“Oh, oh!” “Withdraw!”] He would not have been justified in saying this but for the statement of the late Conservative Whip. The Prime Minister was present when the statement was made; but, though he appeared very much shocked by it, he never said that the noble Lord did not do the same. [“Withdraw!”] Well, he would withdraw the term Government “hack” if the hon. Gentleman wished; but he said that the Chairman of Committees was, at all events, a great deal more of a Party man than they had had any idea of before. He altogether objected to strengthening the hands of the Chairman. He thought it extremely doubtful what would be the position of the Speaker's Successors under the New Rules. He believed that the character of the Office would be maintained. But it was a very different thing in regard to the Chairman. He would be a partizan, who would be elected for the purpose of silencing brutally opposition to the Government. But was it not a sign of what was coming that the Chairman of Committees, for whom personally he had the greatest respect on account of his learning, attainments, and affability, but for whose conduct in the Chair he had never heard any Member expressing their admiration, had so far forgotten his position as to vote in the majority in favour of the gag? That was the partizan Chairman in whom the House was invited to place those great powers. Throughout all the Resolutions the Chairman was placed on an equality with the Chair, and at his elbows was always to be found the Government Whip; and the Chairman himself was unable to conceal his partizanship by abstaining to vote for the gag. In the face of the restrictions which had already been imposed, and the restrictions which were still to be imposed, he thought it his duty to move this Amendment, even if Gentlemen on his own side of the House signalized themselves, as they had done in the last division, by supporting the Prime Minister. He thought it necessary to do so in justice, not only to the House, but to the country; and he called on the Government to state definite reasons, based on facts, why they should abolish all their privileges, and hand themselves over, tied and bound, to the partizan Chairman of Committees. The Prime Minister had not answered the temperate argument of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham. The Prime Minister seemed to be filled with such an amount of disdain and contempt for the present House of Commons that he did not think it necessary to state any reason why these alterations should be made. [“Oh, oh!”] Except on the 1st Resolution, they had not had the slightest explanation of why these changes should be made. But he would call the attention of the House to the opinions of the present Members of the Government in 1879 and 1880. The present Home Secretary, in vindicating the Session of 1879 from the charge of barrenness, referred to the Army Discipline Bill as being equal in importance and difficulty to three or four ordinary Bills. What if the same remark had been applied to the Irish Land Bill? The Home Secretary then went on to say that he did not wish an impression to go forth that the House of Commons was incapable of performing its functions. That statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman fully justified opposition to the changes now proposed. But he would refer to the highest authority of all. In the year 1880 the Prime Minister set afoot his designs upon the freedom and privileges of the House. [“Order!”] He had frequently found right hon. Members on the Front Bench correcting each other. The Prime Minister at that time was sending out a Circular to foreign countries for the purpose of discovering methods of suppressing minorities in Foreign Assemblies. He wished to show, however, the hypocrisy and sham on the part of the Government in stating that the House of Commons was unable to do its Business. He turned, therefore, to the Royal Speech of 1880. That document stated that—

> “Notwithstanding the lateness of the period at which you began your labours, your indefatigable zeal and patience have enabled you to add to the Statute Book some valuable laws.”

The Speech then referred to the Education Act, the Employers' Liability Act, the Ground Game Act, the Malt Tax, the Savings' Bank Act, and other measures. After such expressions of opinion on the part of the Home Secretary and of himself, he challenged the Prime Minister to get up and show cause for the introduction of those further Resolutions. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) had reminded the Liberal Party that they might not always be in a majority. Well, there was one danger they would be exposed to in the event of their being in a minority. There was no subject on which they had stronger feelings than Free Trade. Well, they were aware that there had been a movement among the working classes hostile to Free Trade. ["No, no!"] He would not go into the extent of the movement; but it would be quite possible for a Conservative Government, under these New Rules, to pass measures against Free Trade within three weeks —before Liberal Members and the country had wakened up to a knowledge of what was going on. If these Resolutions were passed, he would like to know what facilities Liberals would have of arresting the progress of legislation proposed by the Conservatives? He moved these Amendments not with the object of opposing the Government, but solely for the purpose of preserving the Privileges of that House, by means of which the Liberals had won all those reforms of which they were never tired of boasting. The Prime Minister's memory would live long after they were all dead and forgotten; but he could not understand why, at a moment when the right hon. Gentleman said he did not look forward to much more active participation in the affairs of the State, he should destroy one after another, in this apparently indiscriminate manner, all the privileges which had made the House of Commons famous. If the right hon. Gentleman, tempted by momentary ambition or spite at being prevented from carrying measures on which he had set his heart, were determined to destroy the rights of the minority in that House, his reputation in the future would be greatly damaged. The noble Lord concluded by moving his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, to leave out all the words after the word "Debate," to the word "Chair," in line 3, inclusive.—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Lord Randolph Churchill

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he was glad that the concluding words of the noble Lord's (Lord Randolph Churchill's) speech had contained so formal a withdrawal of the proclamation of war against the Government which he had made the other day, and that he was only going to endeavour to get the Resolution amended. He was also glad to hear that the noble Lord's object was to preserve the Privileges of Parliament, for the noble Lord had previously told them that his intention was not to improve these Resolutions, but to make the position of the Government impracticable, and so force them to dissolve Parliament. It was satisfactory to have that statement formally withdrawn, and the pleasure would be shared by the noble Lord's own Party, or rather by the Party opposite, to which the noble Lord could not strictly be said to belong. With reference to the complaint of silence raised by the noble Lord, he (Mr. Gladstone) had not noticed the objections which had been raised by the noble Lord and his Friends to the Resolution in detail, and there were two reasons for it. With regard to the facts stated by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he (Mr. Gladstone) had not answered them in detail, because he had accepted them in the lump; and he had done the same —though, perhaps, rather rashly—in regard to some of the noble Lord's statistics. But he was bound to say there was another reason why he was content to pass over many of the noble Lord's statements, and that was, that with the noble Lord's extraordinary command of words or matter—at all events, words—he delivered himself of his opinions in terms so large, and so far beyond facts, that he (Mr. Gladstone) was content to leave hon. Gentlemen to answer them for themselves. When the noble Lord reiterated the question, "Why do you go on extinguishing all the privileges of private Members?" he did not think it necessary to enter into a discussion upon the point. Hon. Gentlemen, who had the Resolutions in their hands, and who knew what the powers of individual Members were, would see at once that all such remarks were more rhetorical flourishes that had no relation to the real facts of the case. He would now, however, come to the point. The noble Lord had revived a statement of a very extraordinary character, which was made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) with reference to the conduct of the Whips when the Chairman of Committees was in the Chair, and which the noble Lord said that he (Mr. Gladstone) did not contradict at the time. He wished the matter had been referred to when the right hon. Baronet was in his place; but as the subject had been introduced, he might follow the noble Lord in his reference. The noble Lord said he (Mr. Gladstone) had not contradicted the right hon. Baronet, and that, therefore, he must be considered as having admitted its accuracy; and as having admitted it not only in regard to the right hon. Baronet, but in regard to all other Whippers-in and Chairmen of Committees. The fact was that he was so much struck with the statement that he took it down, and he would read the Memorandum he had made of it, as well as the comment upon it which he had jotted down—

> "Sir W. Hart Dyke, Nov. 7—Under the late Government was always at elbow of Chairman of Committees urging him to get on with the Votes."

And then followed his (Mr. Gladstone's) own comment, made for reply, in these terms—

> "In that practice he was without a predecessor, and without an imitator. No Whip had ever done it before him, and none had ever done it after him."

The noble Lord could see the Memorandum if he wished.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the right hon. Gentleman had not made that observation on the statement publicly before. Why had he not made use of the note after having made it?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that he was coming to the reason why he did not state it to the House at that time. It was because he was often and very justly called over the coals for the number and length of his speeches; and, upon the occasion in question, such an enormous multitude of points were raised, some belonging to the subject, others remotely connected with it, and some within a measurable distance of it, that he was bound to pass many of them over. After the interminable debates on this subject, he had felt it necessary to lighten the ship by throwing overboard some of the cargo; and among the portion of the cargo thrown overboard was that portion of the cargo which had reference to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Hart Dyke), because he was anxious not to make an immeasurable demand upon the patience of the House. He thought, however, that now attention had been specially directed to the point, some notice of the statement should be taken at an appropriate period by the right hon. Gentleman who had formerly filled the Chair (Mr. Raikes), who, he (Mr. Gladstone) thought, must have something to say on the subject, and in regard to whom he had himself always been of opinion that he discharged his duties with great ability and impartiality. At the same time, he (Mr. Gladstone), while denying that the statement of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent had the slightest application to the present time, did not venture to challenge its truth. He could only say that never, either in his own person, or through a Whipper-in, or through any Member of the Government, had he dared or presumed to interfere with the judgment of the Chairman of Committees upon any question awaiting settlement by the House. Then the noble Lord complained that the present Chairman of Committees was a supporter of the Government, and an obvious partizan, because he voted for them in the division on the 1st of the Rules of Procedure. But his (Mr. Gladstone's) knowledge and experience were that it had been the invariable practice of Chairmen of Committees to vote upon all questions of importance in the House. [LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes, and with the Government.] No; not always with the Government. There were cases where the Chairman had not agreed with the Government; but if the noble Lord admitted that it had been the uniform practice of the Chairman to vote with the Government, then he ought not to make it a special subject of allegation against the right hon. Gentleman the present Chairman (Mr. Lyon Playfair) that he recently voted on an important question, affecting in some degree, no doubt, his own Chair, but mainly the greater Chair in which the Speaker sat. He now came to the Amendment of the noble Lord itself, and he was sorry it should have been necessary to go into matters which were beyond that Amendment. It sought to provide that the Resolution should have no reference whatever to Committees of the House, or to the Chairman of Committees. He could not help comparing it with the Amendment which they had just disposed of. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham, the other Leader, or one of the three Leaders of the three Members who constituted the Fourth Party, had, in his Amendment, proposed to cut out of the Resolution everything that concerned the House, and to leave in only what concerned the Committee.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: It is the other way.

Mr. GORST: I proposed to cut out the Chairman's power.

Mr. GLADSTONE: They had before them the Committee of the House in that Resolution. The hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to cut out the one, but to spare the other; and now the noble Lord came in and proposed to cut out what the hon. and learned Gentleman had spared.

Mr. GORST: No, no!

Mr. GLADSTONE: He would not allow the Resolution to apply to Committees at all; whereas his Amendment was exactly the reverse of that of the hon. and learned Member.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL explained that the object of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) was to assimilate the procedure in Committee with respect to matters to report Progress; but, that not having been carried, he proposed to restrict the power to the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the position of the noble Lord and the hon. and learned Member reminded him of the old story—"That which the locust spared the caterpillar devoured." He hoped the House, with the sanction of the authority of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst), would oppose the noble Lord's Amendment, the contention of the Government being that the Resolution ought to apply to the case of Committee as well as when the House should be sitting.

Mr. GORST said, that he rose for the purpose of explaining that it had not been his intention to give, by his Amendment, that which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) desired to take away. The question before them was, whether the Chairman of Committees ought to be intrusted with the power which they were about to confer on the Speaker. He did not want to attack the Chairman of Committees; but, on the other hand, he had no wish to imitate the example of the two Front Benches by indulging in the conventional praise which was given to Chairmen. They all knew what it meant. It was the correct thing to declare the Chairman impartial; but to that he demurred. A Chairman of Committees was not much better or worse than other men, and would be perfectly impartial if he were placed in a perfectly impartial position. How could they expect their Chairman to be as impartial as their Speaker, when his position was entirely different? What was the Chairman? He was a Member of the Party which had been victorious in the Elections, and when the Prime Minister distributed the loaves and fishes to his supporters, one of the loaves, and a very big loaf, was given in the form of the Chairmanship of Committees to some Gentleman who had distinguished himself by his zeal and energy in promoting the cause of the victorious Party. Moreover, the salary of the Chairman of Committees was not quite fixed; for, in the last Parliament, it was raised from £1,500 to £2,000 or £2,500, so that he had not only the consciousness that he had earned his place by his zealous service, but he had also the feeling that if he pleased the Prime Minister and the Party in power he might have his salary raised. He had also to look to the future; for he was liable to be turned out at the same time the Government were turned out. The practice was to change the Chairman with the Government. All these things being considered, how could they expect the Chairman to be impartial? The right hon. Gentleman had said that he never interfered with the Chairman of Committees; and no doubt he was correct, but his Colleagues, however, did not observe the same delicacy and reticence, and he had, during recent debates in Committee, seen Members of the Government go to the Chairman of Committees and distinctly give him instructions. The right hon. Gentleman, he thought, had misrepresented the argument about the Chairman's vote. As his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) had pointed out, the objection was not because the Chairman voted, but because it was thought he voted to confer some peculiar powers upon himself; and it would have been thought that anyone who was desirous to exhibit his great impartiality in that House would have refrained, at all events, from voting, when the Resolution was that he himself should close the debate by means of extraordinary powers. He (Mr. Gorst) regarded the Amendment as well worthy the consideration of the House, on the ground that, until they altered the position of the Chairman of Committees, they might depend upon it that, in future, whether the Prime Minister gave the order or not, the power would be exercised for the benefit and in the interests of the Government; and that those who were troublesome to the Government, and whose speeches were not pleasant, would find their acts and words interpreted in a bad sense by the Chairman. They would find that they would not be treated so generously as the tried supporters of the Ministers would be.

MR. DODSON said, he rose for the purpose of pointing out that the effect of the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), combined with that of the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken (Mr. Gorst), would be to leave nothing of the Resolution. As to the statements of the hon. and learned Gentleman with regard to the Chairman of Ways and Means, they appeared to be evolved from his own consciousness, and were not at all consistent with facts. He had said that the Chairman always went out of Office with the Government; but he (Mr. Dodson) had to remind the hon. and learned Member that, like the Speaker, he was elected, not for the lifetime of a Government, but of a Parliament. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I knew that.] Well, that was as much as to say one Leader of the Party was aware of the fact, the other Leader was not. With regard to the Chairman always going out of Office with the Government, he (Mr. Dodson), in his own person, was an instance that such was not the case; for he had had the honour of holding the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means not only under more than one Liberal Government, but also when the late Lord Derby was Prime Minister and Mr. Disraeli Leader of the House, and also afterwards, when Lord Derby retired and Mr. Disraeli became Prime Minister in the Sessions of 1866, 1867, and 1868; and he had only to add that, when he held that position—whether under one Party or the other—whoever happened to be Members of the Government made not the least difference in his relations with hon. Members on one side or the other. Then, as to the argument that the position of Chairman of Ways and Means was different from that of Speaker, of course, it was a less important Office; but in its attributes it differed only in degree, and not in kind, from the Office of Speaker. In fact, whenever the Speaker was absent, the Chairman of Ways and Means assumed the Chair as Deputy Speaker, and exercised all the powers which were vested in the Speaker himself. Then the hon. and learned Member complained that the present Chairman of Ways and Means voted the other day on the 1st Resolution, which was calculated to increase his own power. No doubt, it was a Resolution which, under certain circumstances, vested in the Chairman a not very pleasant discretion which he would be called upon to exercise; but, as far as personal feeling was concerned, he (Mr. Dodson) should have thought that he would much rather have voted against it. If, however, the Chairman considered that the Resolution—whether proposed by the Government or anyone else—would tend to improve the Business of the House, it was not only perfectly open, but it seemed to be incumbent upon him to record his vote in that manner which he thought most advantageous to the conduct of Business, in which he himself had to bear so important a part.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that a short time ago the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) remarked that they were discussing this Resolution under the dark shadow of Resolution No. 1. There was great truth in that observation; and, therefore, Her Majesty's Government should not be surprised if speeches were made and Amendments moved which would not have been made and moved if the Resolution had been moved before the 1st Resolution was proposed. He regarded the speech and Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in that light; and, under existing circumstances, they need be looked upon with no surprise; but, speaking for himself, he was, nevertheless, bound to say that, having listened to the debates of that morning, he was not prepared to vote for the Amendment of his noble Friend, or the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), because they both very nearly approached the one which was proposed, but not pressed to a division, by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). He could not, however, allow the observations that had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to pass without notice. He admitted that his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock had spoken in his usual agreeable, but slightly aggravating, manner, and had thus excited the Prime Minister to deal with topics other than those which he would naturally have dealt with in discussing the Amendment; but for all that the right hon. Gentleman—he (Lord John Manners) spoke with great deference—had exceeded what might fairly have been expected from him on the occasion, when he drew out of his pocket the notes of a speech which he had intended to deliver he did not know how many days ago, and proceeded, with their help, to administer, in his absence, a castigation to the right hon. Member for Mid Kent. Again, with great respect, in pressing the House of Commons to lose no time, and to avoid extraneous topics, the Prime Minister was quite right; but it was going a great deal too far, by the aid of notes taken from his pocket, to denounce, more or less, the conduct, as well as the language, of a right hon. Gentleman not then in the House. ["No, no!"] That, at least, was his opinion, and hon. Members opposite had a right to theirs. He had no doubt his right hon. Friend would take an early opportunity of setting himself right with the House in that particular matter. But what his right hon. Friend probably intended to convey was, that the Chairman of Committees usually sat on the Treasury Bench when he was not in the Chair; but that when he was in the Chair the only communications which could pass between him and any Member of the Government had distinct and exclusive reference to the progress of Business. Meanwhile, he would ask whether the Prime Minister meant to say that neither he nor any Member of the Government had at any time had any communication whatever as to the progress of Business, with either the Speaker or the Chairman, for, if so, that was a statement which, he confessed, drew a very great draft indeed upon his confidence and credulity. It was obvious. They had all witnessed it; and who could complain of the practice, that if the Prime Minister thought that a Member was unduly protracting a debate, he should go or send someone else to the Chairman or the Speaker, and ask if it was not the opinion of the Chair that the Member in question was offending against the Rules of the House? [MR. GLADSTONE: No, no!] Did the right hon. Gentleman say he had never seen that done? Or was it that he said he had never done it?

MR. GLADSTONE: If the noble Lord asks me whether I have done that, I say no; and I have never seen it done; but it is not that. How is it possible that I can be aware of any communications that pass between the Chair and any Member, that are made in an undertone, without leading to the interruption of the debate?

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Exactly; but did the right hon. Gentleman, with his vast experience, mean to contend that the right hon. Member for Mid Kent was the only official Gentleman who had pointed out to the Speaker or to the Chairman of Committees that some Member was unduly protracting debate? Surely it was often done; and it would be highly inconvenient if this practice were abandoned. Indeed, the complaint which he (Lord John Manners) made against all these Rules was that the House as a body was being made so jealous of the conduct of Gentlemen in Office that very great difficulty would be found in accelerating the progress of Business. He could not allow the observations on the conduct of the right hon. Member for Mid Kent to pass without uttering a protest, and explaining that, in his view, the observations of the right hon. Gentleman had been misinterpreted by the Prime Minister. On the delicate personal question he wished to say nothing one way or the other; but when the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) went on to justify the vote which the Chairman had given on the 1st Resolution, he admitted that the Chairman of Committees had voted in the exercise of an undoubted right; but it was a matter of opinion whether it was wise or unwise to exercise the right. If the question was put to him (Lord John Manners), he must say that in the circumstances of the particular case, he doubted the wisdom of exercising the right. One reason why he said that was, that the Chairman of Committees was Deputy Speaker, and that, in that capacity, he might from time to time have to give a casting vote; and he (Lord John Manners) appealed to all Gentlemen familiar with the practice of the House whether it was not the invariable custom for the Speaker in those cases to give the casting vote in such a way as to enable the House to have again the opportunity of deciding the question at issue. He remembered one very clear case in point, when Mr. Speaker Denison was in the Chair, on a Bill for the abolition of church rates. The votes were equal; but the Speaker instantly, and without hesitation, gave his casting vote against the second reading, and he did so because, in his opinion, it was the duty of the Speaker to afford an opportunity to the House of reconsidering the question. That he took to be the invariable and universal rule that guided the Speaker; and it was therefore, in his opinion, a mistake for the Chairman to have voted at all. He did not wish to press the point an inch further, except to say that the Chairman of Committees having, in the exercise of his undoubted right, given that vote, he thought it would be greatly to the satisfaction of the House if he could find some convenient opportunity of informing them whether he agreed with the interpretation which the Speaker had pronounced as his view of the Rule with respect to the "evident sense of the House." As to the Amendment, if his noble Friend pressed it to a division, he (Lord John Manners) would be unable to follow him into the Lobby.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, the Chairman of Committees was a partizan and occupied a totally different position from the Speaker. He received the "Whips" of the Party; he attended their meetings; he voted with them on occasions; and it therefore appeared that he was not in the independent position which the Speaker occupied. The right hon. Gentleman who was now President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had been promoted from the Chairmanship to a comparatively inferior Office —namely, that of Secretary to the Treasury; and though two cases had occurred a very long time ago in which Speakers became respectively a Prime Minister and a Secretary of State, they did not apply, because those were Offices of great political importance, and were not on the same footing as that of Secretary to the Treasury, which was considered a promotion for the then Chairman. The difference between the Chairman and the Speaker was great. The Speaker merged his name in that of "Mr. Speaker," whereas the Chairman was known as "Mr. Cecil This" or "Dr. Lyon That," When the Chairman, too, was not in the Chair, he became once more the ordinary combatant politician of the House of Commons.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON insisted that there was no analogy whatever between the position of Chairman and Speaker, nor were the more informal Sittings in Committee to be too closely compared to the Sittings of the House. The privilege of speaking many times in Committee, and the habit of making short and conversational speeches, were evidences of the broad distinction between the House in Committee and the House when the Speaker was in the Chair. The penal restrictions which might be placed at the discretion of the Speaker were likely to become instruments of injustice in the hands of a Chairman of Committees. He intended to support the Amendment, which he trusted would be pressed to a division.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, as a question had arisen between his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chester (Mr. Raikes), he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) might state that he had reason for saying he believed that an opportunity would be taken by the right hon. Member for Mid Kent to offer an explanation of what he had said in a former debate. As to the Amendment, it appeared to him to have very little practical use or force in it. If the question of adjournment was confined to a Member getting up simply to the point of whether it was right to adjourn at that particular time or not, the moment that was decided—being in

Committee—he could speak as often as he liked. To his mind, the Amendment did not limit the power of debate in Committee at all. The supporters of the Amendment placed upon it a great deal more weight than it would carry.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 3, to leave out the word "strictly."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. WARTON, in moving as an Amendment, in line 4, to omit the words "matter of such Motion," in order to insert the words "matters arising out of the subject then under discussion," said, he did so on account of the highly restrictive nature of the Resolution as it stood. He claimed that the House should be allowed to discuss any matter arising out of the subject under debate. It would be in the discretion of the Chairman to see that the licence was not abused.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, to leave out the words "the matter of such Motion," in order to insert the words "matters arising out of the subject then under discussion,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he looked upon the Amendment as destructive to the Resolution, as there was no difficulty in construing its terms as it stood. He could not, therefore, accept it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. SALT, in moving the omission of the latter part of the Rule, which prohibited Members who had spoken on any Motion for Adjournment, or for reporting Progress, or that the Chairman leave the Chair, from moving or seconding any similar Motion during the same debate, or during the same Sitting of the Committee, said, he approached the consideration of the Resolution in a different spirit from that which he felt when the House was dealing with the 1st Resolution upon the *clôture.* To the *clôture* he was strongly opposed, not merely upon Party grounds, but upon deeper and wider principles, as absolutely opposed not only to Conservative, but also to Radical ideas. Now, however, that it had been carried, he would endeavour to use it as loyally as possible to the House. No great and broad principles were involved in the present Resolution. He had, therefore, listened to the criticisms to which it had been subjected entirely with the view of considering how far, in the changing habits of debate, it would really work in the future. It was very necessary to guard against making the Rules too stringent, otherwise Members would be apt to be guided rather by the letter than by the spirit of them; and in that case an amount of Obstruction would be developed far surpassing any they had seen up to the present time. The practice of the House and Committee had been that those who had moved or seconded any of these Motions should not move or second any similar Motion; but the Rule proposed to extend this to every Member who had spoken on such Motion. He contended that that extension of the restriction was not necessary or desirable.

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out from the word "Motion," to the end of the Question."—(*Mr. Salt.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and no Member having' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the proposal of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Salt) had gone a great degree into the details of the Resolution, and into points which were not now before them. It was not merely an objection to the details of the Resolution, but a proposal to strike it out altogether. It was impossible for the Government to accede to that, nor, indeed, had the hon. Member advanced any argument to justify such a course. At the same time, he (Mr. Gladstone) did not say that those were details which might not require consideration. The object of the Government was to introduce into the Committee of the House a salutary Rule which existed in the Sittings of the House itself, under which a Gentleman who had moved or seconded the adjournment of the debate could not, in the same debate, move or second the same Motion. If the hon. Member's Amendment were accepted, the object of the Government would be defeated. They knew that now in Committee two

Gentlemen might move alternately as often as they pleased the Motion to report Progress, and the Motion that the Chairman leave the Chair; and if there was one provision more objectionable than another, it was that which enabled a body of 4 Gentlemen—four would be quite sufficient—by alternate Motions to stop the Business of the House. Such a number might set themselves against 400, and, as regarded Business, put them at defiance; he, therefore, hoped the Amendment would not be pressed.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he trusted his hon. Friend (Mr. Salt) would press his Amendment, for he considered the proposition of the Government the thin end of the wedge, the object of which was to sweep away all safeguards in Committee. He foresaw a time when the Government would endeavour to curtail the present privilege accorded to Members of speaking more than once in Committee. He would like to call the Prime Minister's attention to the Obstruction offered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in 1879, to a Resolution resembling the 12th Resolution of the Prime Minister. Had the right hon. Gentleman been present at that time he would have been ashamed of the conduct of his Colleague. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said he objected to upsetting great Constitutional Privileges in order to get rid of petty inconvenience; it was like burning down your house to warm your hands. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) should like the Prime Minister and others of his Colleagues to explain how it was they were trying to deprive Members of the privileges they had themselves exercised so often, and with such perseverance, in reference to the Royal Titles Act and other measures. At the close of last Session, when Members of the Opposition had been allowed, or persuaded, to leave the House, under the impression that the Sunday Closing Bill for Cornwall would not come on, a contrary arrangement was come to. If such a surprise as that could not be resisted, great evils would ensue, and important measures would be pushed forward at late hours, when hon. Members ought to be in bed. There was once a salutary Rule that Supply should not go on after midnight, and it would be well if it could be revived. The *clôture* having been adopted, the Opposition must do what they could to preserve the remaining rights of Members; and he maintained that the Amendment would afford considerable security to the independent Members of the House.

MR. SALT said, he proposed to withdraw the Amendment, and wished to explain that he had moved it under a misapprehension as to its effect, which he was informed was in accordance with the established practice of the House, that the Mover and the Seconder of Adjournment could not repeat the Motion.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he was glad the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) had consented to withdraw his Amendment; but he (Mr. Newdegate) trusted that they would not loose the whole substance of the Amendment. It seemed to him, however, that the words ought to run thus—that "no Member should be entitled to move or second any similar Motion more than once in the same debate." He thought there was a marked distinction between the proceedings on the second readings of Bills and in Committee; and why was it that that distinction was acknowledged, in the practice of the House, by Members being allowed to speak only once on the second and third readings of Bills, whilst they were allowed to speak an unlimited number of times in Committee? The reason was this—that the debate on the second and third readings was supposed to be limited to the principle or principles of the Bill—for he had known some Bills to contain more than one principle. Therefore, hon. Members were only allowed to speak once upon that stage; but when the House went into Committee on a Bill, they had to deal with a succession of important details, even if the principle of the Bill was single, and these details touched upon a great variety of subjects. It was this variety of subjects which justified the practice of allowing hon. Members to speak frequently in Committee. Now, he held that the reason for that practice ought to be remembered in the restriction contemplated, according to the intention of this Resolution, which would restrict the action of Members in Committee. It would be most inconvenient and most unjust to enact that, because a Member had spoken upon a question of adjournment, upon one clause containing totally different matter from that contained in the succeeding clauses of the measure, he should, therefore, be precluded from speaking on the treatment of subsequent clauses referring to subjects of a totally different character. It would also be most unjust to deprive a Member of his function of moving the adjournment because he had previously supported the adjournment of the debate on a totally different subject. That would be unjust on the same ground that it would be so if they deprived him of the opportunity of speaking. It would be grossly unfair if, because the same Member had spoken upon a 1st clause on the proposal to adjourn the debate, he was to be held precluded from speaking on a proposal to adjourn the debate, or to report Progress upon a 2nd clause. He would, therefore, simply suggest the striking out of the words "having spoken to any such Motion," in the 4th line, and the words "during the same sitting of the Committee," at the conclusion of the Resolution. He believed the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had placed a somewhat analogous Notice of Amendment on the Paper; and, that being so, he (Mr. Newdegate) would not make any Motion himself, but wait until the hon. Member had had an opportunity of addressing the House on the subject.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out "spoken to," and insert "moved or seconded."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was his duty to look to the Resolutions as a whole; and, doing so, he should be disposed to accede to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), as the Resolution gave other powers which would be available. He was also distinctly of opinion that another Amendment might properly be conceded, not by introducing new words, but by striking out the closing words of the Resolution, "or during the same sitting of the Committee."

Amendment *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed, in line 6, omit "or during the same sitting of the Committee."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. GIBSON moved, as an Amendment, to insert in line 5, after "similar Motion," the words "if it has been negatived." The right hon. and learned Gentleman said he did so, on the ground that any Motion that had been merely put and withdrawn ought not to fall within the Rule.

Mr. SPEAKER said, he would point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that, as line 5 had already been passed, his Motion was too late.

Mr. GIBSON said, that, in that case, he would move the Amendment in the form of a Proviso.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Rule of Debate is this—that a Member who proposes a Question to the House is considered to have spoken; and I apprehend that in the case quoted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson)—that of a Member having so risen to address the House, and being afterwards allowed to withdraw his Motion—he will still be held to have spoken, because he has risen in his place to address the House; and I should be bound to hold that, although he was willing to withdraw his Motion, still, having risen to address the House, he should, according to the Rules of Debate, be considered to have spoken.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he rose to move to add the following Proviso, of which he had given the Prime Minister Notice, although it was not in the Paper:—"Provided always, that this Resolution shall not apply to Debates which begin after half-past Twelve o'clock." The Amendment would in no way interfere with the Resolution as applicable to Government Business, inasmuch as all important Government Business began before half-past 12; but, on the other hand, the Proviso would meet the case of a Member who had, by a lucky accident, escaped the operation of the Half-past Twelve Rule, and had brought on late, and in a thin House, some Bill or Resolution which he was anxious to pass, and for which he might obtain the support of a small majority of the House. In that case, the only protection against Business being carried on to too late an hour was to move the adjournment of the House. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided always, That this Resolution shall not apply to Debates which begin after half-past Twelve of the clock."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had hoped that some hon. Member would have risen to discuss the question on behalf of the independent Members, as the Government had really very little concern in the matter, since, as the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had pointed out, the Government Business that began after half-past 12 was unimportant. It was important, however, in the interests of private Members, to keep alive such chances as they at present possessed of carrying on Business after half-past 12; and he thought the Resolution, as it stood, would operate rather in favour of private Members. If the House thought the Proviso a desirable one, the Government would be sorry to bar its consideration; but there was some inconvenience and complexity in having a different set of Rules after half-past 12 from those in operation before that hour, and he doubted very much the expediency of bringing in a distinction of that kind.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he felt bound to oppose the Proviso, which he thought would be injurious to private Members rather than otherwise. It would only apply to cases in which Bills were not blocked.

MR. BRYCE said, he hoped earnestly that such an encouragement to Obstruction as that which the Amendment of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would afford would not be countenanced by the House. It was now almost impossible for private Members to get any legislation through the House; and that Proviso would throw additional impediments in their way. It would be better to reserve all discussion as to the Half-past Twelve Rule until they came to the Resolution specially dealing with that matter. He sincerely trusted that the House would not assent to the Amendment.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he cordially supported the Amendment. He could not see that the Amendment created any obstacles to the proposals of private Members that did not exist before. He thought that the alleged complexity of keeping two sets of Rules for two different periods of the Sitting was fully justified by the changed circumstances under which the House did Business when a certain hour was passed. Before half-past 12 Members were willing to give adequate and intelligent discussion to legislative proposals. After that hour, every moment that passed diminished both that will and that power. There were upon the Statute Book monuments of the incapacity of the House to transact Business after that hour. The reason for passing Bills should be the public interest secured by the fact that the measures had been adequately discussed by persons who understood them. That was never the reason with a majority in the small hours—at that time the reason was either the unexpectedly excited hopes of a private Member, or else the desire of the Government to swell the Statute Book with quantity rather than quality. The public interest ought not to suffer for the mere satisfaction of those anxieties.

MR. DODSON said, he would not deny that some faulty legislation crept into the Statute Book after half-past 12 at night, as well as before that hour; but he would also assert that there were many valuable provisions in measures that were passed after half-past 12. The proper time, however, as he would point out, for considering all matters relating to the effect and operation of the Half-past Twelve Rule would present itself in connection with a subsequent Resolution. At present the proposed Proviso was out of place, and it would be undesirable to import it into the Rule now under discussion.

EARL PERCY said, that, unless some such Amendment as that were adoped, they would force private Members to block Bills far more than they did now. The Government of the day often objected to some particular and, perhaps, most important provision in a private Member's Bill; and then the Member in charge of it, in order to conciliate the Government, gave way, and thus changed the whole nature of the measure. In those circumstances, it was only by moving adjournments that a small number of Members in the House, late at night, could prevent a Bill being hurried through, without due consideration, in an entirely different shape from that in which it was at first put down on the Paper.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he must protest, in the interest of private Members, against the House encouraging Obstruction to the passing of private Members' Bills, and trusted that the Prime Minister would not accept the Amendment. If it was for the interest of the nation that the Government should be free from Obstruction in its efforts at legislation, so also was it that the measures proposed by Members should be fairly discussed.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, in supporting the Amendment, said, he did so because he had always been of opinion that the debates of the House were a great deal too protracted. On that ground he should support the Amendment, as the Resolution without it would act most prejudicially in relaxing the Half-past Twelve Rule.

Mr. RAIKES rose, and said, he wished to be allowed to make a personal explanation, in reference to certain observations made in the course of that afternoon's debate. He was sorry that he was not in his place at the time to hear them. It appeared that his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), a few days ago, made some observations in dealing with the Resolution then before the House cognate to the present question, and in the course of those observations employed words which he (Mr. Raikes) thought were calculated to produce an exceedingly false impression. Those words had express relation to himself, and he understood that the Prime Minister had adverted to them that afternoon.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I did so in answer to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill).

Mr. RAIKES said, he would state to the House his own recollection of the circumstances referred to; and he believed his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent, being himself exceedingly anxious of explaining away the false impression his words produced, would, if present, fully corroborate what he was about to say. The statement of his right hon. Friend was one in which he said his official duties during the last Parliament led to his being constantly at the elbow of the Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means, and urging him to get through the work as far as possible with regard to the views of the late Prime Minister. Well, what might be his right hon. Friend's recollection of the circumstances of course he could not divine; but he could only say that, so far as his recollection went, his right hon. Friend was, no doubt, constantly at his elbow, for the reason that he occupied a place in close proximity to the Chair, and of his right hon. Friend being obliged constantly to pass in and out of the House. But if his right hon. Friend ever made any suggestion to him (Mr. Raikes) that he ought to depart from his duty in conducting the Business of the House, with a view of consulting the convenience of the Prime Minister, or of anybody else, he could only say that he most decidedly had no recollection whatever of such a suggestion. If it were made, it certainly never received the slightest attention from him. In illustration of that, he might mention that he did not recollect any occasion, except one, on which there was any act of Ministerial interference with him in the discharge of his duty. On one occasion, shortly after he was appointed to the Chair, he called on the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, as "Mr. Cross." Very shortly afterwards the Prime Minister wrote those words on a piece of paper, and handed it to him. The words were as follows:—"The Secretary of State should be styled by the Chairman 'Mr. Secretary Cross.'" That, he believed, was the only occasion when any attempt was made to interfere with his action. Now came the sequel to it. The next time he had an opportunity of meeting Mr. Disraeli in the Lobby he (Mr. Raikes) said to him—"Sir, I am obliged to you for the hint you gave me yesterday as to the performance of my duties; but in this, as in all matters, I think it right to follow the example and practice of Mr. Speaker." He felt confident that his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent would, on reflection, if he were present, concur in every word he had now said, for his right hon. Friend, like himself, had no wish but to maintain the character of the Chair in that House with perfect honour and independence.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 62; Noes 145: Majority 83. — (Div. List, No. 370.)

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, Further Proceeding on Main Question, as amended, stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 16*th November,* 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 16*th November,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writs Issued—*For* University of Cambridge, *v.* Right Hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole, Manor of Northstead; *for* Preston, *v.* Right Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, Chiltern Hundreds.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CORONERS, COUNTY GALWAY.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that, although the grand juries are bound by 44 and 45 Vict. c. 35, sub-section 3, to pay the salaries of coroners half-yearly, the Treasurer of County Galway has refused to pay Mr. Coroner Lynch accordingly; and, if he will give instructions to put a stop to the practice by which salaries of coroners presented for at one assize have payment deferred until the next?

Mr. TREVELYAN: There are four Coroners in the County Galway. They are all paid at the same time—namely, at the Assizes following that at which the presentment is made for their salaries. There are no funds in the County Treasurer's hands to pay presentments made at the last Assizes until the cess has been collected and lodged to the credit of the county.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, To be so good as to inform the House what are the numbers and proportions of sick in the different branches of the Army of Occupation in Egypt according to the latest returns; and, whether any steps are in contemplation with a view to the better accommodation of the troops?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that the present percentages of sick in the Army of Egypt are—for the Infantry, 7; for the Artillery, 11; and for the Cavalry, 15 per cent. The percentages are rapidly decreasing, as the sickly season has come to an end. General Sir Andrew Clarke, the Inspector General of Fortifications and Director of Works, went to Egypt a week ago to inquire whether any improvements in the barrack and hospital arrangements are desirable. In the meanwhile, no expenditure on these services has been spared to put the buildings in a fit state.

ARMY—THE ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

Colonel O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can now state, in conformity with a promise made on the 16th of March last, what decision has been arrived at with regard to the re-adjustment of relative rank and retiring pay of the Officers of the Army Veterinary Department?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to say that this question, as well as others affecting the Estimates of next year, have been before me; but I do not think it expedient to anticipate what will be seen in those Estimates.

THE CONSTABULARY (IRELAND) — "FREE FORCE" OF ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY, TIPPERARY.

Mr. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, by Order in Council of 27th July 1882, the Free Force of Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed in the county Tipperary, South Riding, was reduced by one hundred men, the same number being forthwith added to the Auxiliary or Extra Police Force, thus, by a stroke of the pen, throwing an increased burthen of taxation on the district of some £4,000 a year; what was the reason of this sudden change; and, whether the magistrates or ratepayers of the district were consulted as to its propriety?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Free Force in the South Riding in the County Tipperary was reduced by 100 men by Order in Council of the 27th of July last, and by Warrant, dated August 4, 100 men were appointed as extra force under the Act 6 *Will.* IV. c. 13, s. 13, thereby increasing the local taxation of the county by a yearly sum not exceeding £3,446 5*s*. When I say "not exceeding," I am not to be understood as considering the sum a small one. The reason for the change was, that before the re-distribution of the Free Force, made on July 27, the South Riding of Tipperary had 176 men of the Free Force more than its proper proportion, comparing its area and population with other counties and ridings in Ireland. The change cannot be said to have been sudden, as a re-distribution of the Free Force is only possible and legal every fifth year. This quinquennial re-distribution is not a matter for the consideration of the magistrates and ratepayers. It is a question of justice between one county and another, and the loss which Tipperary has suffered is compensated by the gain of other counties which had not their proper proportion before.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—BICYCLES IN RICHMOND PARK.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, having allowed hack cabs to pass through Richmond Park, he will extend a like privilege to bicycles and tricycles?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The use of bicycles and tricycles is forbidden by the Regulations laid down under the Parks Regulation Act in the Royal Parks. As it is very generally believed that they are a source of danger to riders and drivers, I have not thought it well to propose any change in the existing Regulations.

ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Why the name of Surgeon General Hanbury, commanding the Medical Branch of the Egyptian Expedition, was omitted from the Parliamentary Vote of Thanks to the General Officers and others of the Expedition; whether Surgeon General Hanbury does not hold the relative rank of Major General, and is of the same rank as the other Major Generals whose distinguished services were specially acknowledged in the despatches of the General, the Commander in Chief of the Expedition; and, why the names of Deputy Surgeon General Colvin Smith, and the Medical Officers of the Indian Contingent, were omitted from the despatches recommending the promotion of Medical Officers, in the last despatch of the General Commanding in Chief?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the first Question of the hon. Baronet, I have to say, speaking for the First Lord of the Treasury and the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, with myself, were responsible for the language of the Vote of Thanks, that we followed the precedents, according to which it is not usual to name Departmental officers, and I see no reason for enlarging the already long lists of names embodied on these occasions. In reply to the second Question, it is true that Surgeon General Hanbury does hold the relative rank of Major General; as to the third Question, it is not for me to ask the Commander-in-Chief of an Army why he either excludes or includes in his despatches the names of particular officers; but, as a matter of fact, Sir Garnet Wolseley wrote a supplementary despatch, which will appear in to-morrow's *Gazette*, and in which I observe the name of Deputy Surgeon General Colvin Smith.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—HYDE PARK CORNER.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, as it has been found impracticable to remove the Arch at the top of Constitution Hill bodily, as originally intended, and as it is now decided to take down the Wellington Statue, and pull down the Arch, and reconstruct the same on a new site, he can state the cost of such removal and reconstruction; and, whether he will not consider the advisability (by a slight modification of the original plan) of allowing the Arch to remain in its present position, and place some handsome gates at the entrance to Constitution Hill, and thereby save an outlay of nearly £20,000?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: My hon. Friend, in the second part of his Question, has greatly over-estimated the cost of the operation of pulling down and reconstructing the Wellington Arch. The contract price for the whole improvements, including the levelling of the ground and making the new roads, is under the estimate I stated to the House in May last. It is £24,000, of which between £10,000 and £12,000 is the cost of pulling down and rebuilding the Arch. I stated in the discussion on the Vote of £3,000 that the removal of the Arch from its present position to the new place indicated in the model is an essential part of the scheme, and that I could not be responsible for the improvement unless this were agreed to. I cannot, therefore, now make any change.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked if the Estimate included the expense of a new pedestal for the statue?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE replied, that it did not, because it was possible that the old pedestal would do for the statue in its new position.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875 — EXPLOSION OF DYNAMITE AT BURY PORT, CARMARTHENSHIRE.

SIR JOHN JENKINS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware of the fact that about 300 tons of dynamite is stored in one room at Bury Port, Carmarthenshire, within a comparatively short distance of the shipping in the Port and of large works where hundreds of workmen are employed; whether an explosion of waste dynamite took place there on Saturday last; and, if he will cause inquiries to be made as to the above facts and as to the precautions (if any) taken to prevent serious accidents?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that inquiries had been made, and he had received a Report, which was too long to read to the House; but he would be happy to show it to his hon. Friend.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. MANSFIELD, R.M.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Mansfield, lately R.M. in the county Galway, has been ordered to give up his official papers to another resident magistrate, and been relieved from his duties within the past week; whether this is in consequence of his having arrested Matthew Harris, lately imprisoned as a suspect and organiser of the Land League, for seditious speaking at a public meeting; and, whether Mr. Mansfield's action is to be rewarded by temporary or permanent suspension?

MR. TREVELYAN: The want of discretion exhibited by Captain Mansfield on the occasion of the arrest of Mr. Matthew Harris was, in the opinion of the Irish Government, such as to call for disapproval. Captain Mansfield has therefore been relieved of his duties in the Portumna district, and will shortly be appointed to another district.

NAVY—THE ROYAL MARINES.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, considering the qualities shown by officers commanding the Royal Marines on land service, he will consider of securing to this arm of the Services a share hitherto denied of the higher commands and appointments; whether, out of the number of their officers who have passed through the Staff College with credit and honour, any have ever been employed on the Staff, or during many years been placed on any Committee for the consideration of Naval or Military matters; and, with whom does the power rest to set this right, whether with the Admiralty, the War Office, or the Horse Guards?

Mr. CHILDERS: My hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has asked me to answer this Question. No one has a higher opinion of the Royal Marines than myself, and that opinion is derived, not only from what has come before me at the War Office, but from my former experience as First Lord of the Admiralty. Last year I authorized the employment of Marine officers on the personal Staff of general officers, who are responsible for these selections; but the difficulty of employing Marine officers on the general Staff of the Army or military officers, which would be the necessary corollary, on the Marine Staff arises out of the circumstance that the War Department keeps no records, and the Commander-in-Chief has, therefore, no knowledge of the services and qualifications of Marine officers, and similarly the Board of Admiralty keep no records and have no knowledge of the services and qualifications of officers of the Army. The question, however, is one which I will consider with His Royal Highness and the Admiralty. Perhaps, as to the last Question, I ought to say that there is now no separate Department of the Horse Guards, and that I presume my hon. Friend means the Military Department of the War Office.

Mr. GORST asked if the communications on the subject of the Marines which were going on between the War Office and the Admiralty were extending to the consideration of whether the Marine Force might be brought entirely under the War Office?

Mr. CHILDERS replied, that he had not said that communications were going on. What he said was, that he would consult the Board of Admiralty, together with the Commander-in-Chief, on this particular point. He had never heard before of the suggestion of putting the Marines under the War Office, and he should not be very well disposed to entertain it. If the hon. and learned Gentleman thought it was a question worthy of consideration, he should be happy to listen to any argument that might be privately addressed to him.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—CLONMEL POST OFFICE.

Mr. MOORE asked the Postmaster General, What steps, if any, have been taken to secure a site for a new Post Office in Clonmel suitable to the requirements of the town and district?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, the question of providing a new site for the Post Office at Clonmel was now under consideration. He hoped it would be decided in a few days.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—CASE OF ANTHONY GALEAGHER.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that General Tisdal, investigator under the Arrears Act, heard a case at Tubbercurry, county Sligo, on Friday last, in which a tenant named Anthony Galeagher, claiming the benefit of the Act, and holding a tenancy the rents of which were payable every March and September, produced receipts dated 23rd May 1881 and 20th February 1882, each for a half year's rent, and claimed that these payments should be held to be in satisfaction for the rent of 1881, but the investigator, upon the statement of the agent, that the March rent was not called in until September, and therefore that rent paid before September 1881 could not satisfy the March gale, decided that there was upon the estate what he termed "a five months' hanging gale;" whether this decision is contrary to the instructions issued by the Land Commission to the investigators, and whether a gale "hanging" for a term less than a half year falls under the provisions of the Act; or, if so, whether it is open to an investigator to declare that a "hanging gale" exists in every case in which the rent is not called in upon the precise day on which it accrues due; whether General Tisdal, in the case in question, heard the tenant's evidence upon oath, but took the evidence of the agent without swearing him, and did not cause the oath to be administered to him until a clergyman informed him that public opinion would be brought to bear upon his conduct; who recommended General Tisdal for the office of investigator, and what his qualifications are; and, whether notice will be taken of his ruling in the case of Anthony Galeagher, and his omission to administer the oath impartially to witnesses before him?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This Question has been referred by the Land Commissioners to General Tisdal for report with regard to the decision referred to; but his reply has not yet reached me. The Land Commissioners inform me that they appointed General Tisdal an investigator on their personal knowledge of his fitness for the office. According to the Treasury Regulations, persons who have been officers in the Army or Navy are among those qualified to act as investigators.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—"INVESTIGATORS."

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, considering his recent statement that the investigators in Ireland under the Crime Prevention Act have the same power as justices in petty sessions to hear solicitors, as well as counsel, in cases heard before them, and considering that Mr. David Lynch, barrister, Investigator under the Crime Prevention Act, recently refused to hear solicitors at Tralee, and persisted in his refusal, Whether, in view of another session of the investigating court at Tralee, presided over by Mr. David Lynch, and the difficulty and cost of procuring counsel in a place so remote as Tralee, the Irish Executive will convey to Mr. Lynch a direct official intimation that he has the power to hear solicitors, and that it is desirable in the public interest he should allow the option, when application is made to him to do so?

MR. TREVELYAN: The question of hearing solicitors is one which is left to the discretion of the investigator, and no official communication with Mr. Lynch on the subject appears to me to be necessary, or, indeed, appropriate. I can hardly doubt that Mr. Lynch is aware of the legal opinion quoted by the hon. Member in favour of hearing solicitors.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF A GUARDIAN, SLIGO UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, as the result of several months of Correspondence with the Irish Local Government Board, Major Spaight, one of their Inspectors, held an inquiry, on the 2nd of last month, into the validity of the return of Mr. Hunter, a Guardian of the Poor for the Lakeview Division of the Sligo Union, in the month of March last; whether the returning officer of the Sligo Union declared Mr. Hunter elected by a majority of seven votes, and whether the Local Government Board decided, upon the Report of their inspector, that Mr. Hunter was in a minority, and there had been a majority of five valid votes on the side of Mr. M'Dermott; but, nevertheless, the Local Government Board did not declare Mr. M'Dermott to be the elected Guardian, but declared that an order for a new election would be issued; and, whether steps will be taken to withdraw the Board's letter of the 2nd instant, to the clerk and returning officer of the Sligo Union, and to declare Mr. Mathew M'Dermott the elected Guardian for the Lakeview Division?

MR. TREVELYAN: Since the inquiry referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, Mr. Hunter has furnished to the Local Government Board some additional information, with which he was not prepared at the inquiry, with regard to six votes which it had been proposed to deduct from the number recorded for him. On testing the information thus received the Local Government Board found that the six votes in question were valid votes and ought not to have been deducted. He consequently retains a majority of votes, and the Board's instructions for a new election have been withdrawn.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENTS.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Land Commissioners have recently made a rule which provides that agreements for fixing fair rents shall be under the hands of the landlord and tenant; whether they have held that, in the case of the landlords being Corporations, the agreement should be under the seal of the Companies; and, whether, having regard to the inconvenience, expense, and delay that may thus be caused in the case of Companies or Corporations resident in England, it is likely that any modification will be introduced in the rule?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners have decided that in order to comply with the provisions of Section 8, Sub-section 6, of the Land Law Act, it is necessary that agreements for fair rents entered into under that sub-section must be signed by the landlord himself. In the case of the landlords being Corporations, an agreement must bear the seal of the Corporation. The Commissioners do not consider they have any power to dispense with this requirement. The necessity for it arises, not out of any rule made by them, but out of the terms of the Statute. The Commissioners do not object, where it would be impracticable or highly inconvenient to obtain the signature of the landlord to every agreement, to allow agreements to be scheduled, and to accept as sufficient the landlord's signature to the schedule, and there is no objection to the same course being followed by a Corporation affixing its seal.

CRIME (IRELAND)—ATTEMPT ON MR. JUSTICE LAWSON—PATRICK DELANY.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the antecedents of the man Patrick Delany, and the circumstances under which he has been arrested on a charge of attempting to shoot Mr. Justice Lawson, Whether he will direct a medical examination as to the mental condition of the prisoner.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have no intention of interfering in a matter already fully provided for by law.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—HEAD CONSTABLES.

Mr. J. W. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the fact that the head constables who were in charge at Wicklow, Arklow, and Baltinglass during the agitation for the reform of the Land Laws are all Roman Catholics; whether he is aware that they have been removed within the last twelve months to less important stations; and, whether he can state on what grounds they were thus dealt with?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Within the past 12 months the head constables who were in charge of the stations at Wicklow and Arklow, and who are Roman Catholics, were transferred to other stations, and have been replaced by head constables, who are likewise Roman Catholics. For some years past there has been no head above referred to were transferred to constable at Baltinglass. Both the men the vacant stations considered most suitable for them. Their transfer to other stations was carried out for the good of the service.

EGYPT—ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. O'Kelly) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government has been or is likely to be consulted by the Khedive in the reorganization of the Egyptian Army; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will inquire into the circumstances attending Baker Pasha's departure from Constantinople before consenting to his appointment as commanding officer of the Egyptian Army.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already stated in the House that Her Majesty's Government have been, and will be, consulted by the Khedive in the reorganization of the Egyptian Army; and I have also stated on a previous occasion that Her Majesty's Government are not concerned with any circumstances that may have attended Baker Pasha's departure from Constantinople; but they are not aware that it is the intention of the Khedive to make him Commander-in-Chief.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—DECREES FOR RENT.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether Mr. Waters, Chairman of the county Leitrim, did, at the October Quarter Sessions at Manorhamilton, on the application of defendants, stay execution on a large number of decrees for rent granted by him at the previous April and June Sessions, which were already in the hands of the sheriff, and some of which were partially executed; if he will state to the House under what statute a County Court Judge can stay decrees granted by him at previous sessions, after such decrees have passed into the hands of the sheriff for execution; and, whether, by such action, Mr. Waters has exceeded the powers conferred upon him by statute?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, that Mr. Waters had been communicated with, and had replied that as the cases referred to in the Question were judicial decisions made by him as County Court

Judge in Leitrim, he must respectfully decline to explain or justify them.

SCIENCE AND ART—THE NATIONAL GALLERY—INSUFFICIENT SPACE.

MR. CAINE asked the Chief Commissioner of Works, If his attention has been called to the crowded state of the National Gallery and to the objections raised to the exhibition of pictures on screens as at present; if he will be prepared to bring forward a plan next Session for increased exhibition space; and, whether such plan, before being adopted, will be submitted for the consideration and approval of the Director and Trustees?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: An applica- has been made by the Trustees of the National Gallery for increased space for the exhibitions of their pictures, and it will be considered before the preparation of next year's Estimates. I may remind my hon. Friend that the Secretary to the Treasury intends to introduce a measure to enable the Trustees to lend or dispose of some of these superfluous pictures, and this might have some bearing on the requirements of space.

ARMY (INDIA)—QUARTERMASTERS.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now state the decision of the Government of India on the subject of Pay and Allowances of Quartermasters of the British Army serving in India and holding the rank of Captain?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Indian pay proper of Quartermasters of the British Army serving in India and holding the rank of Captain remains unaltered; but, on the recommendation of the Government of India, I have sanctioned the difference between the Indian allowances of a Lieutenant and those of a Captain being given to Quartermasters of 10 years' service and upwards who, under the operation of Royal Warrant of the 25th of June, 1881, have the relative rank of Captain. These additional allowances involve an immediate extra charge of nearly 12,000 rupees yearly on Indian revenues. I have also sanctioned the application to the Quartermasters of the provisions of the Royal Warrant laying down the period of commissioned service qualifying for increased pay.

RAILWAYS (METROPOLIS)—WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

MR. FIRTH asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has further considered the question of the circumstances under which the Metropolitan Railways run workmen's trains; and, whether he will take means to ascertain whether the provisions and intention of the various Acts of Parliament under which such trains are run are now carried into effect by the Metropolitan Companies?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, his hon. Friend had asked a Question on that subject a few days ago, and he was then obliged to confess that he had no information regarding it. But since then he had received several letters making complaints against the way in which that service was conducted; and, as the matter seemed to him to be of considerable importance, he had thought it well that a full inquiry should be instituted into it, and he had accordingly ordered an official investigation to be made, the result of which he hoped to lay on the Table, giving the statutory obligations of all the Companies in respect to that Question, and stating how far they were carried out, both in the letter and in the spirit.

INDIA (TRADE AND COMMERCE)—IRONWORKS.

MR. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for India, If there is any truth in the statement made by the Indian Correspondent of the "Economist" in the issue of November 11th, that Mr. Hope, the Minister of Public Works in India, has invited capitalists to come forward to establish ironworks in the Punjab and other districts of India, under the guarantee that the great Purchasing Department of Public Works will order a certain fixed weight of iron and steel every year for ten years; and, if so, will this order be given irrespective of the price at which equal quality of iron and steel can be purchased in the open market from other non-producing countries?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Certain proposals of the nature to which the hon. Member refers were made in Resolutions of the Government of India of the 4th of August and of the 1st of September last, which were submitted for my consideration. I have informed the Government of India that an engagement on their part to take fixed quantities of iron and steel at fixed prices annually for a term of years is, in my opinion, open to serious objection.

THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE— THE CEREMONY OF OPENING.

Mr. M'LAREN asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he can give the House any information as to the ceremony of opening the Royal Courts of Justice; and, whether he will direct that sufficient accommodation shall be provided for Members of the Bar who may desire to witness the proceedings?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The ceremony of opening the Royal Courts of Justice will take place on the 2nd of December, at 12 o'clock. I have reason to hope that Her Majesty will be able to open her Courts in person. Every endeavour will be made, so far as the available space permits, to admit, on the occasion, an adequate representation of the various branches of the Legal Profession; and I shall communicate on the subject in a few days with the Inns of Court and with the Incorporated Law Society. I may take this opportunity of stating that it will be impossible to be so free in the distribution of tickets to Members of Parliament as on the occasion of the parade at the Horse Guards. It will not be possible to appropriate to them more than 150 places in the large Hall. Of these 50 will be for ladies. I propose, then, that Members desiring to attend shall ballot for these places, and that the first 50 shall receive a lady's ticket in addition to their own. The Members' tickets will not be transferable, and as Her Majesty will open the Courts in State, Members will be expected to appear in levée dress.

Mr. J. R. YORKE: In what costume will ladies be expected to appear?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: In morning dress.

Mr. M'LAREN asked what provision would be made for members of the Junior Bar?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could not, at present, state how many of the Junior Bar would be admitted. Of course, all Queen's Counsel would be invited, and there would be an adequate representation of the Junior Bar.

MADAGASCAR—NUMBER OF BRITISH SUBJECTS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF FRANCE.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any information as to the number of British subjects resident in Madagascar compared with those of France, and, also, as to the total value of British trade (including that done between the above named island and the Mauritius), compared with the total value of French trade with Madagascar?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am unable to give the relative proportion of British and French subjects resident in Madagascar; but at the close of 1879 Her Majesty's Consul stated that the foreign community amounted to 250 persons. No statistics exist as to the exact value of British and French trade respectively, as, independently of the direct trade with England and the local trade with Mauritius, there is one of importance carried on with Natal and the Cape Colony, and also between the West Coast of the Island and India and England, *viâ* Zanzibar.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any official information concerning the mission of the Malagasy Ambassadors to Europe; and, whether he has any reason to believe that they desire to visit London in order to solicit the good offices of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to the settlement of the differences between them and the Government of France?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: When the Ambassadors left Madagascar Her Majesty's Government were informed that it was their intention to visit London and Berlin; but as yet we have received no notice of their leaving Paris with that object.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION— FAIR RENTS.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, previous to the discussion upon the subject of Court Valuers in Ireland, Returns will be laid upon the Table of the House showing the number and amount of fair rents fixed in each county and province since the above-mentioned Valuers were first attached to the Sub-Commissioners' Courts?

MR. TREVELYAN: I expect next week to be able to present a Return giving the information asked for by the hon. Member up to the end of October.

SPAIN — INTERNATIONAL LAW — SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether General Maceo, when expelled from Gibraltar, was accompanied by his wife; and, whether both he and his wife were marched out of the British lines by police officers?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Till we receive from Gibraltar the Report of the Court of Inquiry that has been sitting—and we expect it daily—I can give no further detailed information. We have no official information as to who, besides the three refugees, composed the party that was carried across the British lines. We only know that they were seven in number in all. As to the term "marched out," contained in the Question, the party were not marched, but conveyed in carriages to their destination.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: By the police, I understand.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — PATRICK WALSH, CONVICTED OF MURDER — IRREGULARITY OF SENTENCE.

MR. ARTHUR COHEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Return moved for by the honourable Member for Sligo, Whether, and, if so, in what manner, the report of the shorthand writer employed by the Crown is an official record of the sentence passed upon Patrick Walsh, convicted of murder at the Dublin Commission on the 22nd August last?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the shorthand writer's Report referred to in this Question, a copy of which has been presented to the House on the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), is not in any sense an official record of the sentence passed upon the prisoner Patrick Walsh. The entry of a judgment and sentence in the Crown Book is, in law, the record of the proceedings of the Court. It is conclusive as to what those proceedings were, and cannot be questioned or impugned by any other evidence. In the present case the shorthand writer's note is not only without authority, but, in fact, appears to be incorrect, as it omits the words usual in cases of capital convictions, which prescribe the mode of execution; which words were, in fact, used by the learned Judge in passing sentence. My reasons for supposing that the words were, in fact, used by the Judge are because that part of the sentence was not delivered extempore, but was read by the Judge from a manuscript. I am informed that this is usually done by the Judge in passing sentence of death. After delivering sentence the learned Judge handed down his manuscript to the Clerk of the Crown, who thereupon made the official entry of the sentence in the Crown Book. The Clerk of the Crown and his assistant, from their position in Court, had the best opportunity of hearing the sentence. They agree in saying that they observed no departure from the settled form of words in use on such occasions. The omission from the shorthand writer's note was apparently caused by the fact that the learned Judge read the sentence in a low tone of voice, and that there was some excitement and noise in Court owing to the exclamations of the prisoner.

MR. CALLAN asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware whether the shorthand writer employed on the occasion was not a reporter attached to *The Daily Express*, the local Conservative organ, and whether he was not corroborated by the other reporters who were present for *The Freeman's Journal* and *Irish Times*?

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman could say whether he was aware that it had been testified before the Select Committee of the House that all the reporters present united in their testimony that the words specifying the mode of execution was not used by the Judge.

[No answer was given to these Questions.]

ARMY—"THE SOLDIER'S POCKET BOOK"—FLAGS OF TRUCE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been directed to the "Soldier's Pocket Book" (fourth revised edition), by Lieutenant General Sir Garnet Wolseley, at pages 285 and

286, where it is stated that "one of the objects of the mission" of the bearer of a flag of truce may be

> "To gain time—say during an action, to allow of reinforcements arriving—when, of course, the longer he can postpone the resumption of hostilities the better;"

and where it is recommended

> "Never for one moment suspend any movement or operation you may be engaged in because the enemy has sent a flag of truce; as his object may be to gain time for the arrival of reinforcements, or for the execution of some flank or turning operation;"

and, whether he has authorised these doctrines in the British Army?

Mr. CHILDERS: The hon. Member refers me to a book which, although the composition of a most distinguished soldier, has no official character whatever. I must decline to include in my duties as Minister of War that of interpreting for the benefit of the House of Commons passages in military books, whether of the present date or composed at former periods. But out of courtesy to the hon. Gentleman I may add that I have read the passage with the context, and that so far as I can judge from the Question I do not draw from it the conclusion arrived by the hon. Member.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY BILL—THE RECENT FLOODS—WISBECH AND LYNN.

Mr. PEEL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the great damage done by recent floods, to the serious jeopardy, for instance, in which the whole tract of country between Wisbech and Lynn has been placed, and, generally, to the state of the rivers in many counties; and, whether he is able to give any assurance that the Government will next Session re-introduce and press forward a Rivers Conservancy Bill?

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY asked if the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called to a letter from Mr. Roche Smith in reference to the condition of the town of Strood, which was constantly overflowed by the River Medway, causing not only great damage to property, but much sickness in the town?

Mr. DODSON: My attention has been called to the disastrous effects of the inundations in the tract of country between Wisbech and Lynn, and I am also aware of the mischief done by the recent floods throughout the country, including the case of Strood. I still continue desirous to enable the inhabitants of river basins to take measures to protect themselves against such evils by means of powers conferred on them by Act of Parliament; and I cannot now undertake, in regard to this, any more than to any other subject, to give any assurance on the part of the Government as to the course they will be able to take with regard to a Bill next Session.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE REPORT.

Mr. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How it is the Report of the Irish Land Commission has been reviewed in the newspapers, but no copies have been delivered to Members?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the Report of the Land Commissioners was presented by command on the 9th instant, and a copy was available for any hon. Member who wished to refer to it. It was possible that the Report could have got into the newspapers through the intervention of hon. Members; but he saw a correspondence in the Irish papers—or, at all events, he saw a letter from the Secretary to the Irish Land Commission—by which it would appear that possibly it might have been by their means it was made public. He (Mr. Trevelyan) did not pass any criticism upon their action in such a case; but he was bound to say that since he had been in the Irish Office, or during the time he had been in the Admiralty, he never communicated a Paper of any sort, or the substance of any Paper to the Press. The Stationery Department was alone responsible for the delay in delivering copies to Members, and he would make representations to the Department after what had occurred.

Mr. SEXTON asked how soon would the copies be delivered?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I will ascertain that.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—HONOURS AND REWARDS—VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. CALLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, If there is any reason for excluding officers of the Veterinary Department from receiving at the hands of Her Majesty the docorations to be given at the Royal Review on Saturday next to every other branch of the Service serving in the late Egyptian campaign?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that I entirely fail to understand his Question. I am not aware that Her Majesty contemplates giving any decoration at the approaching Review; nor am I aware of any intention to exclude the Veterinary Department from any distinctions of medals or decorations which Her Majesty may be pleased personally to make.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GRANT TO THE FORCES EMPLOYED.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to propose a grant of money as a gratuity, in lieu of prize money, to Her Majesty's Naval, Military, and Indian Forces lately employed in Egypt, as was done in the case of the Forces employed at Algiers (1816), Navarino (1827), and Acre (1840)?

Mr. GORST also asked whether the attention of the Government has been called to the precedents of the grants after the Abyssinian War of some months' batta to the troops engaged, and of the grant after the Ashantee War of a month's pay to the Seamen of the Royal Navy who took part in the War?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; these Questions relate to a matter of very considerable importance in which four Departments are concerned, and therefore the case is a very complicated one. Three of these Departments are in communication with the Treasury upon the subject, and I will communicate the result as soon as they let me know.

Mr. ONSLOW: Will a portion of the money be paid out of the Indian Exchequer?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That will be part of the result to be known.

EGYPT—MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER, CAPTAIN GILL, LIEUTENANT CHARRINGTON, AND OTHERS—PUNISHMENT OF THE MURDERERS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will state what steps have been taken to punish the murderers of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, R.E., and Lieutenant Charrington, R.N.?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It would be, Sir, perhaps, premature if I were to attempt to answer literally the Question of the right hon. Gentleman as to what steps have been taken to punish these murderers. Of course, our first duty is to lay hold upon them, and upon all of them, if we can. I do not think that there will be any great difficulty connected with deciding the ulterior question; but I may read a telegram containing the latest information in the possession of the Government. A telegram was received yesterday from Colonel Warren, who has been engaged in investigating the circumstances of the murder; and it is only right to say that he has performed that task, as far as we are enabled at present to judge, with great ability and judgment, as well as energy. His language before was, that he hoped to secure "some" of them; and his statement now is, that he is "very hopeful of securing most of the principal culprits."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said he would repeat his Question on another day, when possibly the Government would be in a position to give some more definite information.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Soudan continues to form an integral part of Egypt; and, if so, whether it comes within the sphere of the military and political operations undertaken by Her Majesty's Government to support the authority of the Khedive; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to the despatch of Turkish Troops to restore order in the Soudan?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think this Question would be best answered by a series of negatives. I am not aware in what sense it can be stated that the Soudan forms an integral part of Egypt. It has been a recent conquest, and has been held in political and military connection with Egypt; but I cannot undertake to declare whether it is an integral part of that country or not. It has not fallen within the sphere of the military or political operations undertaken by Her Majesty's Government; and we are not aware that there is any question of the despatch of Turkish troops to restore order in the Soudan.

EGYPT—ARABI PASHA.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to a letter published in the "Times" of the 14th, purporting to be written by Arabi Pasha, in which he states that his action was

> "Consonant to a solemn decree of a Council under the Presidency of the Khedive and Dervish Pasha, the envoy of the Sultan;"

and, if this assertion is substantiated, whether Her Majesty's Government will use their influence to procure his immediate release?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member calls my attention to a letter which was published in *The Times* of the 14th, which purported to come from Arabi Pasha, and in which a certain allegation on his part was contained. We are not able to say whether this is a genuine letter or not; and I am bound to say that I am particularly disposed to be cautious on this subject, after having referred on a previous occasion to a letter which came to me and purported to be from Arabi Pasha, but the authenticity of which was afterwards denied. I therefore could not undertake at the present moment to say that it was our duty to proceed on any matter contained in a letter of that description.

Mr. MACFARLANE: May I ask, whereas Arabi was at one time a prisoner in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and was handed over to the persons now having him in custody, it would not be proper for Her Majesty's Government to enter into an inquiry?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It would be quite right that we should ascertain whether the letter is a genuine letter or not, and this is being investigated in the proper quarter.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the safeguards obtained by Her Majesty's Government, in order to secure a fair and impartial trial for Arabi Pacha, have been or will be extended to the cases of all the other prisoners arrested on charges arising out of the late political and military events in Egypt; and, whether the punishment, if any, which may be accorded to each of these prisoners will be subject to the same friendly supervision as that mentioned by him in the case of Arabi Pacha?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No distinction is being made between the case of Arabi and that of the other prisoners.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can tell the House whether the Government, which, in arranging a Convention with the Khedive for the temporary occupation of Egypt, acted on the precedent afforded by the close of the war against Napoleon Buonaparte, took also into consideration the precedent supplied by the same period of history for the manner of dealing with the defeated military leader who surrenders himself to the clemency of England?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to observe incidentally that the hon. Member is justified in using the words "a Convention with the Khedive," because I once used the expression myself. I should, however, have preferably used the term "arrangement" instead of "Convention." With regard to the substance of the Question, the hon. Member seems to think that the case of Napoleon Bonaparte affords a precedent which might be followed in the case of Arabi Pasha. Now, the case of Napoleon at the termination of the great war in 1815 was a very singular case, and has, I believe, been much considered as to its exact judicial character. But it is not for me to enter into a question of that kind, which, as the lawyers say, has been regarded as *inter apices*, and I shall avoid it. But I may state we are decidedly of opinion that the case of Arabi Pasha is not governed by the case of Napoleon Bonaparte, which, in our opinion, does not afford any precedent.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—ELECTION OF A GUARDIAN AT TOWN MALLING, KENT—INQUIRY AS TO ALLEGED ILLEGAL PRACTICES.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the President of the Local Government Board, respecting a public inquiry made in August last at Town Malling, in Kent, into alleged illegal voting and tampering with voting papers by certain influential persons in connection with the election of a Poor Law Guardian, Whether the Local Government Board have arrived at any decision upon the questions involved; and, if so, when it will be communicated to the local authorities concerned?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, that the decision of the Local Government Board in this case had been delayed in consequence of the absence of their legal adviser; but the inquiry had now terminated, and the result had been communicated to the parties.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—EXTENSION OF TIME.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the difficulties which have arisen in the working of the Arrears Act, the Government will pass a Bill this Session extending the time of payment of the year's rent due 1st November, 1881, from November 30th to March 1st next.

MR. PARNELL: Before the Prime Minister answers the Question, perhaps he will permit me to ask him another with regard to the Arrears Act. A large number of settlements under the Arrears Act have been impeded in the case of tenants who can prove their inability to pay antecedent arrears, but who are unable to pay the costs of proceedings in ejectment, or for the recovery of such arrears taken by the landlords; and I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can see his way to recommend the enactment of provisions by which an order may be made for the payment of such costs out of the Church Funds where a tenant proves his inability to pay?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think probably it would be better that the hon. Member should be good enough to give Notice of that Question. The matter he has opened is one of considerable difficulty, on which I would rather speak with an opportunity of considering what I have to say. In answer to my hon. Friend behind (Mr. Dickson), I am bound to say that it would be unsatisfactory to encourage a hope that the Government will be engaged before the termination of the present Session in legislation upon any subject; and it would be extremely difficult, if we were to admit legislation on one subject, to shut out legislation on other subjects. On the other hand, we are perfectly aware how very unhappy and unfortunate it would be if the benevolent and wise intentions of Parliament towards that portion of the people of Ireland who had been involved in arrears were to be frustrated from want of time or any avoidable cause; and we shall, therefore, do our best to prevent such a result. But I am able to say—speaking upon the authority of an Order of the Land Commission, dated only on Monday—that they have hopes, by the employment of a larger number of investigators, of being able to dispose of all the business before them in the course of the present month. On that subject, however, either my right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) or myself will be prepared to give a further and more definite reply in the course of three or four days.

SIR RICHARD GARTH, CHIEF JUSTICE OF BENGAL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, If he has any information as to the authenticity of an official Paper printed in the "Times" of November 13th as published by Sir Richard Garth, Chief Justice of Bengal, in which he plainly denounces the recent legislation of Parliament for Ireland as "confiscation," and "bearing terrible fruit," prays that such a policy may be averted from our Indian possessions, and seeks to "awaken the landlords of Bengal to their own danger" from measures submitted by the Government of India to the Legislature of that Country?

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR asked if the Secretary of State would lay a complete set of Papers on the land in Bengal on the Library Table?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The report of the observations stated to have been made by Sir Richard Garth was contained in a telegram in *The Times* on Monday last. It is obvious, therefore, that it would have been impossible for me to have received any information as to the nature of the Paper said to have been published by Sir Richard Garth. Until we receive it in some official form, it will be impossible to answer any Question upon the subject. In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I need hardly say that the Correspondence is extremely voluminous, and that it is not yet complete; but I will see if any portion of it can be laid upon the Table of the House.

EGYPT—THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Colonel **DAWNAY** asked, What steps had been taken to enable the wives of officers who had served in Egypt to see the forthcoming Review?

Mr. **SHAW LEFEVRE**: I have reserved 800 places for the wives of military officers, who have served in Egypt, and 400 for the wives of naval officers. We have sent the tickets to the War Office and the Admiralty for distribution. We have, in addition, received other applications, and we have been able to comply with them all.

Mr. **TOTTENHAM** asked, If any accommodation would be given to the wives of the non-commissioned officers and men who had taken part in the service?

Mr. **SHAW LEFEVRE**: Yes; the Cambridge Enclosure, which would hold about 4,000 persons, had been appropriated to the wives of non-commissioned officers and of the soldiers and sailors who took part in the Expedition.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. **JOSEPH COWEN**: I wish to ask a Question of the Prime Minister with respect to the imprisonment of my hon. Friend the Member for Carlow. When the Government agreed to appoint a Committee to inquire into this case, the Prime Minister said that when the Committee reported he would consider whether a full opportunity should be given for the discussion of the subject. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman now, Whether that opportunity can be afforded, not at the close, but at the commencement of a Sitting of the House?

Mr. **GLADSTONE**: I am not aware that the Report is yet on the Table. In consequence of a difficulty having arisen with respect to a matter connected with the Report, it is likely to be referred back again to the Committee. The question comes on to-night; but I am bound to say that I cannot hold out any expectation that I could ask the House to interrupt the Business on which it is at present engaged for a full discussion of the subject.

Mr. **JOSEPH COWEN** understood that the question was to obtain precedence of all other subjects after Procedure.

Mr. **GLADSTONE**: I think that time is rather too far advanced to say anything upon it at present.

IRELAND—SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM, DUBLIN.

Mr. **SEXTON** (for Mr. Dawson) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, taking into consideration the great dissatisfaction which exists in Dublin as to the proposed site of, and plans for, the new Science and Art Museum and National Library, and, having in view that the opportunity afforded by the late Government

> "To constitute a separate department of Science and Art for Ireland analogous in its constitution to the existing Science and Art Department in London for the United Kingdom,"

was rejected by the Commission which sat in Dublin in 1868 without any consultation with the Parliamentary or Municipal Representatives of the capital, the present Government, in accordance with the policy of local self-government for Ireland, would issue a fresh Commission, which would include persons acquainted with Irish feeling with regard to the undertaking?

Mr. **COURTNEY**: The present scheme of the Government has nearly reached a conclusion; and it was, in its essential features, published in 1880, and preferred by local public opinion to that which was, for Departmental reasons, the better one. On all grounds, the Government are not prepared to defer any longer a decision on the building question.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—FIRST RULE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Sir **WILLIAM HART DYKE**: May I detain the House for one minute with a personal explanation? I regret extremely that I was unavoidably absent from the House yesterday morning. I wish to state that, upon reading the account of the debate, it appeared to me that, by some remarks that I made on a previous occasion with regard to the communications that passed between myself and the late Chairman of Committees (Mr. Raikes), I must have conveyed to the minds of hon. Members present an impression I had no intention whatever of conveying, and which I here state cannot be supported by facts. By my remarks I intended solely to refer to what might occur between the official Whip of the future and the Chairman of Committees in the future if the powers under the Resolution I was discussing were given to the Chairman of the day.

PARLIAMENT—RULES AND ORDERS—"LEAVE OF THE HOUSE."

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON wished to ask the Speaker, as a matter of Order, whether the expression "the indulgence of the House" was of the same significance as the "leave of the House;" and whether, if it were the wish of the House, expressed by one of its Members, that this indulgence should not be granted, the Speaker might, nevertheless, exercise his discretion and allow a Member to speak a second time, though he might not have risen to explain a material part of his previous speech?

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member and the House that it would be inconvenient to put Questions to the Chair except on points of Order as they arise. I may say, however, that there is a difference in signification between the two expressions "by leave of the House" and "with the indulgence of the House." When a Member addresses the House, as has just now been done by the right hon. Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), he addresses it "with the indulgence of the House," and if it is found by the Chair that the House is not disposed to hear him, the Chair would not call upon him. The expression "the leave of the House" is well understood to be this. When a Member desires to withdraw a Motion or an Amendment he asks leave of the House, and if a single dissentient voice is raised on that occasion, leave is not granted.

NOTICES.

—o—

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

MR. J. R. YORKE: On Monday next I will propose—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon all the circumstances relating to the release of Mr. C. S. Parnell, M.P., Mr. J. Dillon, M.P., and Mr. O'Kelly, M.P., from custody in Kilmainham Prison in May, 1882."

Perhaps I may be allowed to express a hope, inasmuch as this Notice has been submitted to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government and approved by him, that he will use his influence with his Friends on that side of the House, in order that they may abstain from opposing the Resolution, or that he will take care that I may have an opportunity of bringing the matter on before half-past 12 o'clock at night. The right hon. Gentleman will see, of course, that otherwise it will be impossible for me to obtain the opportunity which I desire.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member has referred to the terms of his Notice as having been approved by me. What has been stated on my part is that I shall not offer any opposition to it; but not more than that. I have my own opinion with respect to the terms of the Motion; but I shall not offer any opposition. With respect to the contingent engagement which he asks from me to prevent opposition, on that I must wait to see what happens. So far as I am concerned, or the Government are concerned, there will be no opposition to the passing of the Motion as an unopposed Motion. If opposition be intended by Gentlemen on this side of the House, I have no doubt they will make known their intentions, and then, I think, it will be time enough to give an answer to the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEES.

LORD JOHN MANNERS gave Notice that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would propose to omit from the first Resolution relating to Standing Committees all the words after the word "That," in order to insert the following words:—

> "It is not expedient to consider the subject of the proposed Resolution at this period of the Session."

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THIRD RULE (DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWENTY-THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [15th November], as amended,

"That when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having moved or seconded any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

(3.) *Resolved,* That, when a Motion is made for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion; and no Member, having moved or seconded any such Motion, shall be entitled to move, or second, any similar Motion during the same Debate.

The New Rules of Procedure—Fourth Rule (Divisions).

Mr. GLADSTONE moved—

"That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the 'Ayes' or 'Noes' have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and, if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee."

The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that this Resolution was not so much restrictive as addressed to the general convenience of the House, and likely to work, he thought, for the advantage of all, and for the saving of time, without its being supposed to abridge unduly the rights of private Members.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the 'Ayes' or 'Noes' have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and, if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF moved, in line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except in Committee of Supply." He had always endeavoured to establish that there was a very great difference between the exercise of the functions of legislation and the consideration of questions of finance in Committee, when it very often happened that there were only some 40 or 50 Members present; and he thought that to put the Rule in operation in Committees would simply have the effect of preventing the constituencies from knowing the views of their Members upon questions of National Expenditure. When such questions were under discussion it might be very difficult to get 20 Members to rise in their places to prevent the discussion being closed. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would view his Amendment favourably.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except in Committee of Supply."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the sole question raised by the Amendment was whether a distinction should be drawn between Supply and other Business of the House as to the powers proposed to be given to the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to ask 20 Members to rise in their places. [Sir H. Drummond Wolff: They might not be in the House at the time.] They could not recognize the rights of absent Members in that way. He could not see the ground of any such distinction. This was not a question of freedom of debate, but whether there was to be an abandonment in Committee of Supply of a proceeding which he believed the House in general thought would be for the convenience of all parties. He did not recognize any force in the argument that Members might not be in the House at the time. It would be the business of Members to be in the House. Whatever the value of the hon. Gentleman's argument, it was good for all, and if the Rule was fit to be applied in one case it ought to be applied in all. He could not accept the Amendment.

MR. SCLATER - BOOTH said, he could not see that a distinction should be drawn in this case between Committee of Supply and the Whole House. There were many occasions on which it would be desirable that the Speaker or Chairman should be able to call upon 20 Members to rise in their places. But he would suggest that words might be introduced which would restrict the proceeding to cases where the Speaker or Chairman might be of opinion that a division was challenged for purposes of Obstruction. There might, however, be many cases in which the names ought to be recorded by means of a division.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he thought there was great force in the recommendation of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth.) There were many cases of a minority under 20 in which there should be a record. He would remind the House of a division which took place on a Motion in the Session of 1880, when a minority of 19 Members represented an average of more than 7,000 electors for each Member; the number of electors represented by that minority being nearly one-tenth of the whole electorate of the Kingdom. Such minorities ought to be recorded, and the Resolution would provide for this if amended in some such manner as that suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Hampshire.

MR. DODSON pointed out that the House was getting into an irregular discussion, inasmuch as the suggestion just made was quite distinct from the Amendment before the House, on which he indicated the Government would be ready to make a proposal if the Amendment were withdrawn.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought the best mode of saving time would be for Her Majesty's Government to state, on the earliest opportunity, what course they intended to pursue in regard to the Resolution. Before they could deal properly with the Amendment, they ought to know whether the Government intended to adopt it substantially. It was desirable that, if possible, no distinction should be drawn between the House and the Committee of the Whole House. The same Rule ought to apply all round. He did not think his hon. Friend would press his Amendment if the Government would state their opinion that some substantial modification of the Rule as a whole would be made.

MR. GLADSTONE said, a substantial modification would be made.

MR. HOPWOOD called attention to the circumstance that he had placed on the Paper an Amendment to the effect that if it appeared to the Speaker or the Chairman that his decision was challenged for the purpose of Obstruction he should so inform the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that, as the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government appeared willing to make a concession, he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. MAC IVER moved to amend the Resolution by inserting, in line 1, after the word "That," the words—

> "At any time after midnight such Members as may wish to do so may declare their votes upon any question then under discussion, by means of an instrument in writing, personally delivered to some officer of the House appointed for that purpose: Provided always, That."

MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the subject-matter of the Amendment was not relevant to the Resolution.

MR. MAC IVER said, he thought he should be able to show that the Amendment was perfectly in Order.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to move any other Amendment than that the House may be disposed to hear it; but I am bound to say that he cannot proceed with the Amendment upon the Paper.

MR. MARJORIBANKS said, he rose to move an Amendment which he thought merited the favourable consideration of the Government and of House. It was to insert, after the first word of the Resolution, these words—"Except on a Motion 'That the Question be now put.'" What he wanted to insist on was that a division occurring on account of proceedings arising out of the 1st or Clôture Rule should be excepted from this Rule; and for this reason—that if this Rule was to be applied to the Clôture Rule, the last safeguard of small minorities in a thin House would be, if not absolutely swept away, at least to a great extent diminished. Suppose, in the case of a small House, there were 15 Members on one side, and 50 or 60 on the other; suppose, also, that a subject had been amply discussed, and the evident sense of the House was that the debate should close, the Speaker might then put the Question. Only the 15 Members composing the minority would rise in their places, and thus they would be silenced, without a division, by a majority of 50 or 60.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "except on a Motion 'That the Question be now put.'"—(*Mr Marjoribanks.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, they proposed the Resolution because it was used under Urgency, and without any apparent objection; but, undoubtedly, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther) was quite justified in pointing out that they ought to look all round a subject of this kind, especially when they were constructing a permanent regulation as to the Procedure of the House; and he thought the suggestion he had made was not an unreasonable one—namely, that they should confine the intervention of the Speaker or Chairman for this purpose to cases in which Obstruction was intended. The consideration which led him to that conclusion was not a feeling that any wrong was done, or any question of privilege involved in calling upon Members to rise; but it was the feeling that if they adopted this as a general Rule they would be obliged to recognize the title of those Members to have their votes recorded. That would introduce a novel process of taking the votes of Members. Probably he was the only Member of the House who had seen that done; but he had seen it done. It was, he thought, in 1834, when first of all in the Reformed Parliament a feeling began to prevail that it was the duty of the House itself to have the votes of its Members recorded; and the attempt first was made to record the votes, as was then always the case when the House was in Committee, while the Members sat along the two sides of the House. There were, if he remembered rightly, two recorders—one from each side of the House. He did not, however, recollect who the second person was; but he remembered Mr. Hume was one of them, always forward in good works, and that certain Members very wickedly exchanged spectacles and resorted to other artifices to disguise themselves, in order that Mr. Hume might fail to detect who they were. That attempt was then made; he did not think it could be done now; but still he believed it better they should avoid any novel process for the purpose of recording votes, and both for the sake of getting rid of that question, and of meeting the feeling expressed, he should be willing to introduce the words, after the word "Chairman," "being of opinion that his decision is challenged for the purpose of Obstruction," &c. He thought that would answer the purpose which his hon. Friend had in view, and also meet other Amendments which had been placed on the Paper.

Mr. GORST said, he would suggest, now that the Prime Minister had gone thus far, that the Government should abandon this Resolution altogether, as without it there were plenty of powers against Obstruction.

Earl PERCY said, he trusted the House would not agree with the argument of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), because it was by no means certain that the House would agree to the subsequent Rules. Cases might arise in which the Speaker or the Chairman would be extremely unwilling to go to the extreme length of Naming Members.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he approved of the alteration made by the Prime Minister; the Resolution, so amended, could do no harm and might be of some service.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he rose to protest against the mixing up of Obstruction with this Rule as with those already passed, inasmuch as the Prime Minister had from the first maintained that they were intended to compress ordinary debate. He urged it would be better that the question of Obstruction should be confined to the 9th Rule. It was objectionable that the Chairman of Committees should have the power of saying that certain Members were obstructing at the moment.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the Resolution became valueless if the Amendment were accepted. In his experience as a casual Chairman, he had found that on the second or third time of any decisions being challenged that Members challenging did not rise in their places, thus tacitly admitting that they were challenging the decision for obstructive purposes.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he supposed the reason hon. Members did not rise in their places was because they thought it useless to do so. He objected altogether to the Rule which gave the Chair great power than the Closure Rule, and he hoped the Government would see some way of leaving it out.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he entertained strong objections to altering the Resolution from its present shape to deal with Obstruction. As it stood, it would enable the House to deal with vexatious waste of time. The real difficulty was in regard to the proportion. What might be a fair proportion in a small House might become intolerable in a large House of 300 or 400 Members. He thought the matter might well be left to the discretion of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees.

MR. ARTHUR PEEL said, he did not accept the conclusion that a small minority were necessarily obstructive. However small a minority, they were entitled to have their names recorded. It would be better to leave the Rule as it stood, and to add a Proviso at the end—

> "Provided, That, subject to the decision of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, it shall be competent for any Member so rising to demand that the names of the minority shall be recorded."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought there many cases in which it would be desirable that the names of the minority should be recorded—cases in which the conduct of the minority could have nothing of Obstruction in it, and a majority had always the right to call for a division. The difficulty might be met by restricting the Rule to cases which, although not precisely cases of Obstruction, savoured of Obstruction, like Motions of Adjournment and to report Progress, or that the Chairman leave the Chair. That would leave substantial Questions to be divided on as at present. He thought a minority of the House ought not to be compelled to rise in their places without securing a division, if they had a good case, and thought fit to call for it.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the Question before the House was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks).

MR. HOPWOOD asked if the present Resolution would not come into collision with the two previous Resolutions? In the 2nd Resolution 10 Members were able to force a division; but under the present one, on 20 Members rising, the Speaker could at once declare the sense of the House. He thought, under those circumstances, the Government would find it was necessary to make some exception such as that proposed in the Amendment.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he saw no reason why double as many Members should be required under that Resolution to force a division as were required at Question time.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that it would be unfair and unjust, under this Rule, to deprive hon. Members of the right they had succeeded in obtaining from the Government under Rule 2.

MR. WARTON said, he did not often agree with the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), but he did so on that occasion. The House was likely to get into great confusion unless it exercised great care in seeing that the Resolutions did not clash with each other. This Resolution was clearly contradictory of the 1st and 2nd Resolutions, and some words ought to be introduced to show that it did not affect the Rule of *clôture.* It was absurd to use the words "before a division," when the very Rules required that a division should not take place.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF appealed to the Speaker on a point of Order. The present Resolution practically repealed a portion of a former Resolution. In the latter part of the 2nd Resolution, as amended, the words were—

> "Or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall, on a Division upon Question put forthwith, determine whether such Motion shall be made."

In the Resolution now before the House 20 Members were required to rise in their places, and that was taking away the right given by the 2nd Resolution to 10 Members to call for a division.

MR. SPEAKER: The 2nd Resolution applies only to Motions for the Adjournment of the House before the Orders of the Day are entered upon. The last part of this Resolution applies to a diffferent state of circumstances. It states—

> "That when, before a Division, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the 'Ayes' or 'Noes' have it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and, if they do not exceed twenty, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House or of the Committee."

That is when the matter is challenged.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that under that Resolution the Speaker could deny the right of division.

MR. DODSON pointed out that the latter part of the 2nd Resolution was imperative, the word "shall" being used; whereas the 4th Resolution was permissive.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that made no difference at all.

MR. GORST said, that under the Resolution they were discussing the Speaker or Chairman had a discretion to deprive Members of a right previously conferred on them. Was such a Resolution in Order?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the essence of a division was the ascertainment of the majority or minority. It was not necessary that Members should walk round the Lobby. The Government would be able to provide subsequently for the case contemplated by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks).

MR. MARJORIBANKS said, that if Members standing in their places were equivalent to a division, his Amendment was quite useless.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that the question was not the amount of the minority, but the amount of the majority, and the latter could only be ascertained by a division.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he should object to the Amendment being withdrawn unless the Government distinctly informed the House of their intentions.

MR. BOURKE wished to know whether the Speaker ought to ascertain the numbers on the other side than that on which the Motion was made?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) denied that there was any inconsistency between the 2nd and 4th Resolutions.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the House, having once decided that 10 Members could force a division, it was not competent for the House to go behind it.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that under those circumstances, that was, where 10 Members rose, a reference could be made to the judgment of the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, no doubt that was so; but how was that judgment to be delivered? Under the old Constitutional means it would be by a division. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that that Resolution took away with one hand a concession which had been made with the other. The point of Order, as he understood it, was whether the House, during the present Session, had decided that any 10 Members could insist on a division being taken if they rose in their places in support of the Motion.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, that if 10 Members rose in their places the Speaker would then put the Question whether leave be given to make that Motion for Adjournment. There would be the "Ayes" and the "Noes," so that hon. Members would have the opportunity of expressing their views; and, therefore, there was nothing inconsistent in the operation of that Rule, and that of Rule 2. If upon the Question that leave be given more than 20 Members rose, of course there would be a recorded division; but if less than 20, there would be no division. But there was no inconsistency between the Rules.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF appealed to the Speaker as to whether or not there was any inconsistency.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member had spoken, and had no right to speak again.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he questioned if the Prime Minister had the right to call him to Order.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member had no right to make another speech.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he was not going to do so; but only to put a question to the Speaker. The 2nd Resolution gave a right to 10 Members to call for a Motion for Adjournment, and the 4th gave the Speaker or

Chairman power to take away this right if less than 20 Members rose in their places to support it.

MR. SPEAKER: I am bound to say that the Question appears to me to be not without difficulty. Under Resolution 2, 10 Members can, under certain circumstances, demand a division. I doubt whether the Speaker or Chairman of Committees would be debarred, considering that the Resolution applies to the simple question of Motions for Adjournment of the House, from preventing a division being taken in the ordinary way acting under Resolution No. 4.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked whether the ruling of the Speaker did not necessitate the introduction of words specially excepting the condition contemplated by Resolution 2?

MR. SPEAKER: I am not prepared to say that it would be absolutely necessary to introduce words in order to except the conditions referred to in Resolution 2 from the operation of Resolution 4. At the same time, I think it might be desirable to make some change in the wording for the purpose of making the Resolution clear.

MR. C. S. PARKER suggested that the difficulty would be obviated by the introduction in Rule 4, in line 1, after the word "division," of the words "after the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon."

MR. MACFARLANE asked what the Speaker would do in the event of 19 Members rising, and only 15 being on the other side?

An hon. MEMBER said, that in that case there would be no House.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that in the event of precisely 40 Members being present, the Speaker or Chairman of Committees would not vote, and, therefore, 19 Members would in that case outvote 20. He had an Amendment standing in his name lower down which would deal with this difficulty, and he invited the attention of the Prime Minister to it.

MR. GORST asked if the Speaker had ruled that the Resolution as it stood was inconsistent with Resolution 2? If so, must not the Resolution be withdrawn and a fresh one substituted?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked what would happen in the event of 20 Members not rising, but a much larger number being outside?

MR. SPEAKER said, he presumed it would be in the discretion of the Speaker.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he felt sure that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees would be put in a difficult position under those two Resolutions, and he suggested that the Government should consent to withdraw Resolution No. 4.

MR. C. S. PARKER said, he believed that this Resolution—[*Cries of* "Spoke!"] Well, he would point out the point to the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER reminded the House that the Question before it was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Speaker for a decision on the point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst).

MR. SPEAKER: I have not said that the Resolutions were inconsistent with one another. I did say that it might be desirable to introduce words which would prevent a possible conflict on the construction of the two Resolutions.

MR. MARJORIBANKS said, it might be for the convenience of the House if he withdrew his Amendment. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the Amendment——

MR. MONK said, the right hon. Gentleman had spoken before.

MR. SPEAKER said, he understood the right hon. Member's previous remarks to be confined to the point of Order.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, it was so. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Would the right hon. Gentleman tell him one word he had said on the Amendment? His objection to the Resolution was that it would take away the right of having a recorded division. Yet they all knew that many great measures had begun by being supported by very small minorities. He thought that if the Amendment were to be withdrawn, they ought, in the first place, to ascertain from the Government what they intended to substitute for it.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that, as had been pointed out by the Chair, some difficulty might arise from the Resolution as it stood coming into conflict with part of Resolution 2. The difficulty was entirely owing to the possible conflict or doubtful compatibility with Resolution 2; and it had been suggested by the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker) that it might be met by excluding from the purview of this Resolution everything that could fall within the operation of Resolution 2. That would be done by confining the scope of this Resolution to everything that occurred after the House had entered upon the Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion. If his hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) would withdraw his Amendment, it would be possible to insert in the Resolution the words "after the House had entered upon the Orders of the Day or the Notices of Motion." That would destroy all possibility of conflict. While bowing to the ruling of the Chair, he was bound to say that it differed from what he had formerly thought was the meaning of the Resolution.

Mr. WARTON, on a point of Order, argued that the Resolution not only conflicted with Rule 2, but also with Rule 1.

In reply to an hon. Member,

Mr. SPEAKER said, he apprehended that under Rule 1 there must be a division.

Mr. W. H. SMITH observed that, according to his construction of what the right hon. Gentleman said, a division might be understood to be taken by 20 Members standing up and the rest remaining seated; but in that case there certainly would not be a division in the ordinary way.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: May I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to inform the House what is the meaning of a division?

Mr. SPEAKER: When the decision of the Speaker or the Chairman is challenged, then the divisions are taken in the usual way.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he would suggest that, as there seemed to be great difficulty in understanding the Rule, it should be temporarily withdrawn by the Government, and re-introduced in an intelligible form. If they went on patching it as they were now doing no one would be able to read it, or, if read, no one would be able to understand it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Government had fallen into a mistake which they had never anticipated, owing to the change which had been made in the other Rule. The Rules as originally printed did not present any point of conflict, but in the course of the discussion the Government had made certain concessions in the other Rules—and he doubted very much whether they could have passed them if they had not done so—and this had led to the present difficulty. The matter was one upon which there ought to be not the least doubt, on account of the unfairness of making the Speaker or Chairman have to decide—perhaps in a very heated House—one of the very difficult questions now under discussion. He therefore concurred in the suggestion of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) that the Resolution should be withdrawn, and re-introduced in an amended form. If the Prime Minister, who drew up the Resolution, put one interpretation upon it, and the Speaker put another, it was abundantly clear that the Resolution ought to be remodelled.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) pointed out that Resolution 2 referred only to the period before the Orders of the Day had been entered upon, so that the insertion of the words suggested by the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker), "after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion," would entirely remove the difficulty, and there could be no possible conflict between the two Resolutions.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he desired to point out that there was a distinct conflict between the 1st Resolution and the 4th, for whereas the 1st provided for a division, although there might happen to be less than 20 opposed to the Motion, the 4th Resolution provided that before a division the Speaker might call upon the Members challenging his decision to rise in their places, and if those Members did not exceed 20, the Speaker might forthwith declare the determination of the House or the Committee.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) asked the indulgence of the House to reply to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke). He (the Attorney General) submitted that the division might be taken under the 1st Resolution without reference to the 4th.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK rose to Order. Was it not entirely contrary to the Rules of the House that the hon. and learned Gentleman should make a second speech on the same subject?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) rose to a point of Order, and the Attorney General rose to speak to that point of Order.

SIR HENRY TYLER begged to call attention to the fact that the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth was speaking to the Amendment, and not to a point of Order.

LORD JOHN MANNERS thought the point of Order had been raised many minutes ago by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and had not yet been settled.

MR. SPEAKER: I am quite clear that, under Resolution 1, the Speaker would not be at liberty to call upon Members to rise in their places as in Resolution 4.

MR. MARJORIBANKS again asked leave to withdraw his Amendment. [*Cries of* "No!"]

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he hoped the Government would withdraw the 4th Resolution.

MR. BRYCE pointed out that leave had not yet been given to the hon. Member for Berwickshire to withdraw his Amendment. He said that he desired to show that there was no inconsistency between the 1st and the 4th Resolution, if the point had not been finally disposed of by the ruling of the Chair; but the Speaker stated that this could not be done, as he had already given his ruling.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate as the only way out of the difficulty.

MR. BIGGAR begged to second the Motion, and for the reason that it seemed to him that the House was not in a proper frame of mind to discuss these very complicated matters. There was so much difference of opinion in all parts of the House as to the construction of these Rules that it seemed to him that it would be better that the adjournment should take place, in order that further consideration could be given to the subject, and that Her Majesty's Government might examine into the different interpretations that might be placed upon the several clauses that had already been passed in contrast with the one now before the House. Unless some definite interpretation was now placed on the reading of this Rule in connection with the Rules that had been passed, there might be room for all sorts of difficulties and controversies in Committee when the Speaker was not in his place to decide the matter for the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Arthur O' Connor.*)

MR. GLADSTONE rose to oppose the Motion for the adjournment as useless. There was no conflict between the 4th Resolution and the 1st, and whatever conflict there might have been between the 2nd and the 4th would be removed by the introduction of certain words proposed by the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker). He hoped the Motion would be withdrawn, and the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) would be allowed to withdraw his Amendment, and then the House would be in a position to see whether the insertion of the words proposed by the hon. Member for Perth would be sufficient to remove all doubt as to the meaning of the Resolution.

MR. WARTON said, he supported the Motion for Adjournment on the ground that not a single occupant of the Treasury Bench was in a position to state in what form the Government intended to present the Resolution to the House. He challenged them individually and as a whole to do so. He did not believe that one of them had the slightest idea of what shape it would take if amended as proposed.

MR. LEWIS said, he thought the whole Resolution should be re-drawn by the Government, and placed before the House in a printed form. The House was in no way extricated from its difficulty by the interpretation which Mr. Speaker had given, because that interpretation would not be binding on a future occupant of the Chair.

MR. GIBSON said, that on attentively reading Resolutions 1 and 4, he thought there was a conflict in the construction of them.

MR. BRYCE: I rise to Order. I endeavoured some time ago to submit an argument on this subject, and I was informed that I could not do so, because a ruling on the point had already been given.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question immediately before the House is the adjournment of the debate. The question under consideration was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), and I have repeatedly endeavoured to induce the House to discuss that question.

Mr. GIBSON: I have no doubt that neither you nor any of your successors in the Chair would ever hold that it was right or expedient to apply the 1st Rule without a division.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am bound to observe to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he is not discussing the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON: With great respect, Sir, on my construction of the Amendment, I am on the very point. I am of opinion that there may be a question, and a very serious question, as between Rule 1 and Rule 4, and which may be cured by the adoption of the Amendment.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK: I rise to Order. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has already been ruled out of Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understood, from the last words of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that he was addressing himself to the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON said, that if he was not at liberty on this question of the adjournment of the debate to discuss the question of the conflict between Rules 1 and 4, he would, of course, at once resume his seat; but he conceived from Mr. Speaker's ruling that he was at liberty to do so. He believed that if he was in a position to show that in his view the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire was one that was germane to the question of whether there was a conflict between the 1st and the 4th Resolutions, he should be in Order to discuss it. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Hon. Members opposite were not judges of Order, and he had all through stated that he was ready at once to resume his seat if any intimation fell from the Speaker that he was not in Order. He was of opinion, having read the 1st Resolution and the 4th, that this was a question of construction, and not of administration. [*Cries of* "Order!"] There might be a question, and a serious question, arising out of the Rules as they now stood, and this could be cured by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire.

Mr. SPEAKER said, he understood that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was addressing himself to the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON, in continuation, said, the closing words of Resolution 1 were—"If a division be taken." That rendered extremely appropriate a question which was started by his hon. Friend—namely, what was a division? He found, upon reference to Rule 4, that the application of the Rule was to be before a division, and, therefore, reading the two Rules together, he ventured to think that it was more than questionable how they would be construed, for he thought it would be competent to apply Resolution 1 under Resolution 4.

Mr. DILLWYN rose to Order, and pointed out that the House had that day passed a Resolution declaring

> "That when a Motion was made for the Adjournment of the Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do Report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the Debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion, &c."

The Question before the House was the adjournment of the debate; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman was now discussing an Amendment not before the House. He appealed to the Speaker whether that was not a violation of the Rule passed to-day?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Swansea having called my attention to the Resolution of the House, which has just been passed, I am bound to say that the right hon. and learned Gentleman is obliged to conform to that Resolution, which declares distinctly that when a Motion for adjournment of the debate is made, the subject of that adjournment should be alone discussed.

Mr. GIBSON said, that when a Member who sought to point out both how the House had got into a difficulty and how they might get out of it was precluded from doing so, that showed how admirably these Rules had been framed for facilitating the transaction of Public Business. From the Rule referred to by the hon. Member for Swansea, the Government had expunged the word "strictly." He would submit at once to the Speaker's ruling. He had hoped to assist the course of Public Business by indicating how an adjustment could be arrived at by a reasonable consideration of topics which might induce the withdrawal of the Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. DILLWYN: I rise to Order again, and appeal to you, Sir, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman is not arguing the question which you have ruled out of Order?

Mr. GIBSON said, that, under the circumstances, he had no wish to press the matter. He would take no further part in the discussion, feeling that it was impossible for him at this stage of the proceedings to put before the House the view he honestly desired to present for the furtherance of Public Business.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, no event could have happened that had given him greater pleasure than to find his right hon. and learned Friend called to Order under the Resolution passed to-day.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I rise to Order. I would ask you, Sir, whether the noble Lord is either facilitating Business or speaking to the Motion?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, if his right hon. and learned Friend had voted yesterday in favour of an Amendment which was moved from below the Opposition Gangway, he would not have been stopped in his speech as he had been just now. His right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) had been caught in his own toils. He had never known a Motion made by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) which was so much justified as the present one. The House had been now engaged for two hours and a quarter in trying to get not only at the sense of the Resolution, but at the interpretation which the Government put upon their proposals. The Government had inserted new words at the last moment, and without Notice into each of their Resolutions, and they had landed the House in a complete fog and mystification. If they had been proceeding by Bill, there would have been opportunities for correcting mistakes; but in proceeding by Resolution the case was quite different.

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord is not confining himself to the Question before the House.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that he was arguing for the adjournment of the debate, because it was a matter of the utmost moment that the House should proceed with due deliberation, and should not approve of the way the Government had introduced their Amendments, without even putting them on the Paper like other people. If the Government wished to get on with the Business before them it would be better to withdraw this Resolution and bring it up again in a different form. Lest there should be any silly talk by the organs of the Government about Obstruction on the Conservative Benches, he wished to point out that the whole of the discussion had been originated by a Liberal Member—by a faithful follower of the Government—and continued by the right hon. and learned Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, who differed from one another.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he should support the Motion for the adjournment, because the recommendation of the Prime Minister to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker) would only get them out of one difficulty into another. In the one case a necessary number of 10 would be requisite, and in the other 20, thereby creating a distinction and a different class of offence not intended to be created by the Government.

Mr. SALT said, he wanted to know the real effect of the last Resolution? He was going to vote for the adjournment because he regarded these Resolutions with the greatest anxiety and alarm. He was very much afraid that by relying too much upon the letter and precise meaning of the Resolutions as about to be altered, instead of putting down Obstruction, they would legalize it. His second reason for supporting the Motion was that he believed they would proceed very much faster and better with the Business if plenty of time was taken, so that the Cabinet might make up its mind as to the effect of the words put before the consideration of the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 69; Noes 121: Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 371.)

Mr. MARJORIBANKS begged leave to withdraw his Amendment. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

Mr. GIBSON said, when the hon. Members on the other side of the House had interrupted him he was about to state that there was extrême danger in allowing Resolution 4 to pass in its present shape. He believed, as a question of construction, that the Resolution could be argued most persuasively and with great power, that it would be competent for the Speaker, if he pleased, to apply Resolution No. 4, and that under Resolution No. 1 a division would not be mandatory. Therefore, before they parted with the Amendment, he would like to have it more plain that there would be no possibility of ever applying Resolution No. 4 to Resolution No. 1. He believed that the words of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) would be sufficient for that purpose, because the Motion which would have to be put under Resolution No. 1 were the very words which would be contained in the Amendment of the hon. Member. If the Amendment was to be withdrawn, he thought the Government should give a distinct assurance that some such words should be incorporated in the Resolution. He was of opinion that the Resolution should be amended so as not only to exclude the possible operation of Rule 2, but also that some words should be adoptod which would prevent the possibility of Rule No. 1 being applied.

Mr. GREGORY said, there was a latent ambiguity in the construction of the Resolution as it stood. That ambiguity might be removed by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), which was lower down on the Paper.

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 35; Noes 100: Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 372.)

Mr. C. S. PARKER moved to insert, after the word "That," in line 1, the following words:—"after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion." The Speaker, he said, had ruled that the 2nd Resolution and the 4th conflicted to a certain extent. His Amendment was framed for the purpose of removing that ground of objection. Resolution 2 related only to the time before the consideration of the Orders of the Day; but his proposal would make the Resolution apply only after the House should have entered upon the consideration of the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions."—(*Mr. C. S. Parker.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he considered the Amendment childish and absurd. If it were adopted, they would have one set of Rules before half-past 4 o'clock and another after that hour. That was precisely the argument of the Prime Minister against the proposal a day or two ago of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) with respect to Business after half-past 12. The Prime Minister had also said he only wanted to limit the Resolution to those who were obstructive—[Mr. Gladstone: No!]—and, in order to do that, had accepted the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth; but that Amendment would allow Members to obstruct in as factious and improper a manner as could possibly be conceived, because it would be possible for five, or four, or three Members to force the House to divide on every clause of any private Bill which came on before half-past 12. That was the sort of Amendment which the hon. Member for Perth, inspired by the Prime Minister, or the Prime Minister, inspired by the hon. Member for Perth, supported. He would certainly take a division against it.

Mr. WARTON suggested that the difficulty would be avoided by introducing such limiting words as "save and except as provided by Rules 1 and 2."

Mr. GREGORY said, it was quite clear that the Amendment before the House did not meet the objections which had been made against the Rule. He was of opinion that the best course would be that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker) should be withdrawn, and that of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) accepted.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the Prime Minister had appeared to dissent from the statement which had been made, to the effect that he had intended to make the Rule apply solely to cases of Obstruction. It had certainly also been understood that the right hon. Gentleman had intended, at the proper stage, to admit into the Resolution words which would confine its application to cases which, in the opinion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, would be one of Obstruction. Assuming that the right hon. Gentleman adhered to that undertaking, he (Mr. J. Lowther) would point out that the Amendment under discussion in no shape or form dealt with the supposed conflict between the Resolution and Resolution No. 1. There had been a good deal of confusion upon that subject, and it appeared to exist chiefly in the minds of the learned occupants of the Treasury Bench. He thought it would effect a great saving of time if the House were informed how the Government proposed the Rule should eventually read. It was impossible for the House to give proper consideration to the Resolution, to which some scores of Amendments had been suggested, until they knew what the intentions of the Government were.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that, according to the right hon. Gentleman, it was the duty of the Government, at the beginning of a discussion, to declare what their intentions were. That would mean that they would listen to no arguments and make no concession. The right hon. Gentleman had challenged him upon the indication he had given with regard to the object of the Rule. The Government were certainly willing to have the introduction of limiting words. On consideration, he was inclined to believe that the limiting words of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) were better words than those suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth). If the words of the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker) were introduced, they would put out of the question altogether everything that related to conflict between Resolution 2 and this.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was satisfied with the declaration of the Prime Minister. He had no objection to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth, save that which had been suggested by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill). He would, however, accept the words of the hon. Member for Perth, as he understood that the Government would also embody in the Resolution the words which were to be moved by the hon. Member for Edinburgh. He hoped, in that case, the House would be allowed to go on with the debate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Edinburgh were accepted, it would not meet the objections which had been put forward by his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill). If the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth were carried without guard or supplement, the whole field of Private Business would be left open to obstructive action. Various authorities of the House had, from time to time, pointed out the danger which existed at time of Private Business, and the opportunity which it gave to Members for the purpose of obstructively lengthening debates. The Rules would not be successful if a loophole were left which could be taken advantage of by obstructive Members. He hoped, therefore, the Government, if they accepted the words of the hon. Member for Perth, would give a pledge that they meant to guard the House against Obstruction at the time of Private Business.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he hoped the Government would not press upon the House the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth, which, if the Government meant to adopt that of the hon. Member for Edinburgh also, would be pure mischief. Supposing it were agreed that the Speaker ought to have the power which the Rule would confer, would it not be wise to leave it unfettered in the way proposed by the Amendment?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, that, if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Edinburgh were accepted, then, in order to avoid the conflict they were implored to avoid, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth would be absolutely necessary.

MR. GORST said, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perth might be necessary to prevent a conflict; but there might be a better way of doing it by adding a Proviso to the Rule.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 85; Noes 15: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 373.)

Mr. GORST moved, in Resolution 4, line 1, to leave out the words "before a division," and to insert the words "after the House has been cleared for a division." There were other Amendments to the same effect on the Paper, moved by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd). In Committee, no doubt, it was fair that only those should have an opportunity of voting who had actually been present at the discussion. He, however, contended that when the Government had the power to summon their supporters from the Lobby or the Library to take part in a division, it would be only justice to the Opposition that they should be allowed time to summon their forces before they were called on to stand up in their places to demand a division. As things were, the Government always had an advantage, as the Speaker or Chairman invariably decided the "Ayes" or "Noes" in favour of the Government.

Mr. HICKS seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "before a Division," and insert the words "after the House has been cleared for a Division,"—(*Mr. Gorst*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'before a Division' stand part of the Question."

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, he did not think the Amendment was altogether clear. He understood the Amendments of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd), which raised the question much more distinctly. The House was cleared much too rapidly to effect the purpose aimed at by the Amendment, which he perfectly understood, though he did not understand the means by which that end was sought. The Government, however, could not agree to the Amendment. After the concessions already made by the Government the Resolution was confined to Motions of a dilatory character, and would not apply to any Motion raising a substantive question for the decision of the House. There was no reason for summoning Members into the House if there were not 20 Members present to support a Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. PARNELL said, he could not agree with the Solicitor General that there was any ambiguity in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham. The Speaker would be precluded by the custom of the House from putting the Question until three minutes were up by the sand-glass. But, passing from that, he thought the Government would do well to reconsider the Resolution as a whole. It was one of a most offensive character to a minority, as they were compelled to stand up if they sought a division and expose themselves to the ridicule of the majority. He had repeatedly to do so himself, when he and the other Members of the Irish Party, assisted by a few stray English Members, challenged divisions when the Urgency Rules were in force last Session. There was nothing more calculated to excite feelings of indignation and irritation in the breast of hon. Gentlemen than the application of a Rule as it was applied in those days, and as the Government sought to have it applied by their refusal to agree to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). He thought it was not a very great boon to ask that hon. Members who were about the House should be informed that a division was to take place before this Rule was to be put in force. It appeared to him that if the House went on in the way it was now going the House would more and more come to be a mere machine. Such a Rule as the present, and by providing that it was not necessary that the Division Bell should be rung, distinctly held out to Members an inducement to absent themselves from the House. They knew that evil had already attained to a considerable magnitude. They knew that hundreds of Members handed themselves over bodily to the Whips without knowing anything about the merits of the question on which they were dividing.

Colonel STANLEY said, he was sorry the Government did not see their way to accept the Amendment, which he agreed with the hon. Member for the

City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was straightforward and reasonable. The Rule now proposed was recommended many years ago by the Committee which sat on the question; but it must be remembered that all was totally altered now by the passing of the 1st Resolution. They ought to reconsider this Resolution because, under certain circumstances, it might lead to this absurdity—that while there might be a great number of Members outside who were willing to vote if summoned, yet the number of Members who stood up to challenge a division might be so small, and the other Members present so few, that the House would be counted out on an important question. It appeared to him to be little short of an injustice to require that a division might be taken without hon. Members who were outside having an opportunity of knowing what was going on. If the hon. and learned Member for Chatham went to a division he should certainly support him.

MR. WARTON wished to point out that the word "a" in the Resolution occurred synonymous with "any," and therefore the Rule could be applied to any division, and not only to those cases to which the Solicitor General had alluded. He wished to call attention to the absurdity of retaining the words "before a division," inasmuch as the very object of the Rule was to prevent a division being taken. In order to make the Amendment clearer he begged to move as an Amendment to it to add the words "and after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass."

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is that the words "before a Division" stand part of the Resolution. In the event of that proposition being negatived, the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) will be put, and the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) will follow.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that the absurdity of the Rule was made apparent by the state of the House at that very moment. Supposing the Speaker required those who demanded a division to stand up, there would not be the sufficient number on the Opposition side, although on the Front Opposition Bench were sitting no less than five ex-Cabinet Ministers. Therefore, unless the Amendment were adopted, great injustice might be committed.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham was demanded by the equity of the case, unless they intended to make a complete sweep of all the old Forms of the House. It was a principle of the House that the Speaker never saw how many Members were present unless his attention was called to it. In most Foreign Legislatures various inducements were offered to Members to remain in the Chamber; but in that House all the allurements were outside. Abroad there were desks; there were means of writing; newspapers could be read in the House. With us there were only barely comfortable benches. The Division Bell was rang for the purpose of bringing in those Members who were in the building, but not in the House, but whose right to vote was thereby admitted. It was a great violation of the ancient law and practice of Parliament only to call upon Members to vote who happpened to be in the House at the time of putting the Question. If it were impossible to prove such a system illegal, yet it was undoubtedly contrary to the spirit of the Constitutional Parliamentary system. Motions for the adjournment were usually made either because the House was tired of the matter, or it was of too trivial a character to be further discussed. So the emptiness of the House when such a Motion was made should be an argument in favour of its opportuneness and of the adjournment being granted. He trusted that the Government would not refuse to accept this small Amendment.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he could not conceive on what principle of fairness the Government could refuse to accept this Amendment. It was conceivable that in the future a Chairman of Committees might defer putting the Question until he saw that the Opposition was so thin that it could not divide. There was an obvious way of meeting this Rule which, no doubt, would be resorted to if the Amendment was not accepted. As soon as hon. Members saw that the Speaker or Chairman was about to put the Question, they would move that the House be counted. That would cause the Division Bell to ring, and the House to become filled.

Mr. HICKS said, the Government, having passed a Resolution depriving hon. Members of freedom of speech, were now, by the present Resolution, going to introduce in effect the ballot, and prevent the electors from knowing how their Representatives voted. On a former occasion Her Majesty's Government refused to allow one particular vote to be taken by ballot, when the Opposition thought such a proceeding would protect the independence of Members. He had not supported that proposal because he objected to the ballot altogether; and he still hoped to see the day when we should again have honest open voting. But the Government, having opposed that modified proposal, now wished the House to adopt the ballot in all small divisions. He would draw the serious attention of the House to what the effect would be; the Resolution would have frequent operation, for he found, looking at the last Session of the last Parliament, there were as many as 46 divisions in which the minority did not reach 20, and, during one-third of the Session, the minorities were under 30. Surely constituencies ought to know who voted on these numerous divisions. Generally speaking, very few Members were in the House when a division was first called. This was an attack upon the rights of the minorities. He objected to the Resolution because the constituencies would be prevented from learning how their Members voted. Further, he would draw the attention of the House, and particularly of hon. Members opposite sitting below the Gangway, to facts which he ventured to think must be of interest to them. The minorities in former times on many important questions had been small, and yet it had been a matter of interest to see of whom those minorities consisted. For instance, the first minority for admission of Jews, in 1833, was only 52; Repeal of the Corn Laws, in 1813-14, only 42. Surely hon. Members opposite would not have wished these votes to have passed by unnoticed. Then, again, in 1830, Mr. O'Connell's proposal for Universal Suffrage received the support of only 13 votes. Then, again, on the great question of Reform, the minority in the first division in 1810 was only 15—a minority proud of being the forerunners of the great Reform Act. How would these measures even have attracted public attention if the debates had been cut short and the Division Lists suppressed? In order, therefore, that the interests of these small minorities might be preserved, he should vote for the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he hoped the House would understand the reasons of the Government for not accepting the Amendment. When they came to consider the occasions on which the Chairman of Committees should exercise this power, they were not unwilling to consider whether these occasions should be limited to what were aptly called "obstructive" or dilatory Motions. What they contended was that the House ought not to admit an Amendment which would cause an unnecessary waste of two minutes on every division. During a single evening half-an-hour might be wasted.

Mr. WARTON: Never!

Mr. GLADSTONE: Never! The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke as if he had sat in the House since the time of Adam. The hon. and learned Gentleman was a Parliamentary babe. He was not aware that 20 divisions of this kind had been frequently taken in the course of a night. He (Mr. Gladstone), however, was aware of it, for he had voted in the divisions, and so had other hon. Members, and he begged the hon. and learned Member not to exercise the *clôture* on the responsibility of a private individual happening to occupy a seat in this House. His (Mr. Gladstone's) contention was distinct, that in the case of dilatory Motions that waste of two minutes ought not to be permitted. The right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) had pleaded Parliamentary tradition; but these rights had grown up gradually; they were not existing when he (Mr. Gladstone) first came into Parliament. He thought that the proposal now before the House was meaningless and absurd.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, the Amendment dealt with a matter so inconceivably small that he was astonished the Prime Minister should refuse to accept it. The allowance of two minutes, so far from wasting the time of the House, would prevent a great deal of irritation and confusion. Members who happened to be outside the precincts of the House would be irritated to find that they were not to have the privilege of taking part in a division simply because some Member had moved a dilatory Motion. He therefore intreated the Government not to resist the Motion. One word as to the form of the Amendment. He understood the Speaker to say that the Question would be that the words "before a Division" stand part of the Resolution. These words, he thought, were meaningless, and therefore he suggested that they should be omitted.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL wished there was some method by which they could get the Prime Minister into the same frame of mind he was in on the previous day, when he had made some fairly valuable concessions. To-night, however, he did not seem in a humour to give any consideration to any Amendments whatever, no matter whether they came from one side of the House or the other. Something evidently had gone wrong. The Resolution now before them would be easily evaded, for whenever the Chairman called on Members to rise in their places, it would be easy for any hon. Member to question whether a quorum was present, and to necessitate the ringing of the Division Bell. [An hon. MEMBER: No!] He challenged the hon. Member to cite any case in which the Speaker had decided there was a quorum without ringing the bell. Why the Government should obstinately oppose that Amendment, which was intended to prevent an illegitimate artifice, he could not understand. In Committee, especially, that Rule would work very unfairly, and the Chairman might be expected to take advantage of it when the House was very thin. As an example of the thinness of the House at certain times, he mentioned that when his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) moved his Amendment during the dinner time, no other Conservative Member happened to be present, and when the Speaker asked who seconded the Amendment, an Irish Member undertook to do so. But for this, they would have had no opportunity of discussing this important point. It would be extremely hard on Members conducting the opposition to a Bill to find that owing to their brief absence from the House important questions had been decided without their having an opportunity of recording their votes. The Prime Minister said the Resolution was to be confined to dilatory Motions; but there were no Motions for Adjournment which were not dilatory. The supporters of the Amendment had justice and right on their side, and if, unfortunately, the Goverment persisted in refusing to accept reasonable Amendments, the means might be found of compelling them to give way.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was surprised that the Prime Minister should resist that Amendment. He should have thought that the Government would have agreed to it as a matter of course, instead of quarrelling over a trumpery two minutes, and refusing to allow the Division Bell to be rung. To insist on a division being taken at a moment's notice, without giving Members time to come from the adjoining rooms, was a thing which he should have thought would never have entered the mind of anyone.

MR. SEXTON said, he thought the zeal for economizing public time must have reached an amazing pitch when the saving of two minutes was urged as an argument against the right of hon. Members to have their opinions recorded on a division. A large part of the Business of the House was usually transacted at a certain period of the evening, with fewer than 40, and sometimes with 15 or a dozen Members present; and under such circumstances it would be an absurdity to say that there should be no division unless 20 Members rose in their places.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, that they had now been discussing that question for 100 minutes, thus occupying more time than was likely to be consumed in three years by the operation of that Amendment. The objections to the Resolution had never been answered.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, the course pursued by the Government in refusing such proposals as this looked as if they intended to render it impossible to pass these Resolutions. It might happen that if they persisted in the same line of action they would find, when they had forced their own will upon the House on all the Amendments arising on this subject, that they would be met by a resolute resistance to the Resolutions as a whole. If the Resolution before the House was not modified, a state of things would be produced which would be an absolute scandal to the House of Commons. The idea of a single division being "snapped" by some sincere but humble follower of the Government, at an hour when many Members were away in the Dining Room or the Smoking Room, would be a fruitful cause of irritation; and the recriminatory and angry debates which would follow would far more than swallow up the small space of time which the Prime Minister was so anxious to save. If the time which the Government desired to save was that occupied by a division, he could understand the action of the Government. The House would remember one occasion on which the whole time of the House was threatened by certain Members with dilatory Motions; and had they not caught 27 of them in one capacious net, and prevented the carrying out of their original proposal, the House would have been engaged from half-past 7 till 2 o'clock in the morning in taking divisions. The idea of two minutes being a valuable saving of time, when they remembered the length to which the speeches of hon. Members and right hon. Members ran, was a reason of no validity. It was most unreasonable to impose a burden upon hon. Members so severe as to compel them always to keep within the House —not even the Government with all their authority were always able to do that. It was a great pity that the House should be forced by the actions of the Government into a position of antagonism to them.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was surprised that the reference of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) to the amount of time already wasted in that discussion had had no weight with the Government. Besides, the House must know that, if necessary, a speaker would always continue to address the House until he had collected the necessary number of Friends around him, and thus no saving of time would be effected, but rather the contrary. The Prime Minister had fallen into an unfortunate mistake of not fully explaining at the outset to what cases the Resolution did or did not apply; but he hoped the Government would still see their way out of the difficulty, since there could be no question that endless irritation would be caused if all concession was refused.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he wished to point out that in not a few divisions taking during the last Session, the numbers dividing were within the limits now proposed. In the Payment of Wages in Public-houses Bill, the division was 33 to 4; in another Bill 12 to 11; in the Irish Constabulary Bill, 25 to 0. They were not now engaged upon such Rules as the Urgency Rules; they were discussing Rules which might last for generations. The very wording of the Rule was an indication that the Government trusted nobody. They were seeking to bind the House by hard-and-fast Rules, the effect of which would be to produce extreme irritation. They were framing them in such a way that there was great danger of inducing Members to work against instead of in support of them. The result would be that instead of diminishing they would increase Obstruction.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he regretted very much that he had not been in the House during the whole of the discussion; but the House must be aware that it was impossible for every Member always to be in his place. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had already stated that he was willing to limit the proposed procedure to cases of dilatory Motions, thinking it to be an unnecessary waste of the time of the House that the two minutes' interval should be permitted in those cases. But the debate had shown that there was very considerable difference of opinion upon that subject on both sides of the House, and that there was a general indisposition to allow the Question to be put in such a way as to exclude Members from the division. The Government would, therefore, be prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and part of the Amendment put on the Paper by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), omitting the concluding words of that Amendment, because it was clear to the Government that the procedure would be entirely covered by the first words of the Amendment. But in order to still further simplify the intention of the Government, they would also accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). The Resolution would then run as follows:—

"That when, after the House has been cleared for Division, upon a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any debate, or that the Chairman of Committee do Report Progress or do leave the Chair, the decision of Mr. Speaker or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the "Ayes or "Noes" have it is challenged, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, after the lapse of two minutes, as indicated by the sand-glass, call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places; and if they do not exceed twenty he may forthwith declare the determination of the House, or of the Committee."

He conceived that that would fully meet the fears of hon. Members; and although the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister thought the Amendment unnecessary, and did not regard it as one of importance, yet he was willing to defer to the wishes of hon. Members.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had made his case very clear, and was of opinion that it would be well to accept the Amendment he had suggested. The Government had apparently realized the strong feeling which the House had shown, that while there should be no unnecessary obstruction of its proceedings, there should not be any limitation of the freedom of debate.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *inserted.*

Amendments made, by adding, at the end of the foregoing Amendments, the words—

"Upon a Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of the Committee do report Progress, or do leave the Chair."

And also in line 3, by inserting after the word "may," the words "after the lapse of two minutes, as indicated by the sand glass."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. GORST, in moving, as an Amendment, in line 4, to leave out "twenty," in order to insert "ten," said, he was sorry to have the appearance of being ungracious and exacting in doing so, as he had not the least wish to be so, more especially after the cordial and candid manner in which the Prime Minister had met the objection to the Resolution by accepting his (Mr. Gorst's) Amendment; but he could not refrain from asking whether the right hon. Gentleman did not think 20 Members too large a number? It seemed strange that 10 Members should be able to force a division in a full House on the Motion for Adjournment, when such adjournment might be attended with great inconvenience, and a much larger number should be required when very few Members might be present. He begged to move to leave out "twenty," in order to insert "ten."

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "ten."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought that the words "if they be not less than twenty," would meet an objection entertained on the other side; but he was opposed to going down to 10. When the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gorst) said that 10 Members would have the power to force a division on the Motion for Adjournment, it should be remembered that such division would not be of a substantive character, but would be one as to opening the door to discussion.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, in line 4, by leaving out the words "do not exceed," and inserting the words "be less than."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he still thought that words such as those suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) ought to be inserted in the Resolution—namely, that if it appeared to either of the authorities in question that their decision was challenged for the purpose of Obstruction, they should so inform the House or Committee, as the case might be. He also thought that the Prime Minister ought to adhere to the view he had put forward, that the action of the Speaker or the Chairman should be restrained by requiring that those authorities should convince themselves that a Motion had been made for the purposes of Obstruction.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was pressing the Government rather too hard. The Government had foregone an advantage, although they risked the giving of facilities for Obstruction in consideration of the fact that, without involving themselves in doubtful phraseology, they were enabled to indicate by the Amendment as proposed by his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) the class of Motions which were commonly used for the purposes of Obstruction.

Mr. SCLATER - BOOTH said, he would not press the matter.

Mr. WARTON said, he would move an Amendment providing that the Resolution should take effect only when 40 Members were in the House.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "twenty," to insert the words "in a House of forty Members."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought the Amendment unnecessary, as the House could be counted; but he would agree to accept it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment made, by inserting, at the end of the foregoing Amendment, the words "or upwards."—(*Mr. Reginald Yorke.*)

Main Question, as amended, put.

(4.) *Resolved,* That, after the House has entered upon the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, when, after the House has been cleared for a Division, upon a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the Ayes or Noes have it is challenged, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman may, after the lapse of two minutes, as indicated by the sand glass, call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places, and, if they be less than twenty in a House of forty Members or upwards, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House or of the Committee.

The New Rules of Procedure—Fifth Rule (Irrelevance or Repetition).

Mr. GLADSTONE, in rising to move the 5th Resolution, said, that it was the revival of an ancient law of Parliament which many people believed to be now in existence; but it was one which, from its nature, the Speaker or the Chairman would be slow to put in force except in very clear cases. He thought it wise that the Rule should be inserted in the Code of New Regulations.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his Speech."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Mr. SPEAKER said, he was bound to inform hon. Members that the Amendment to the Resolution, which stood in the name of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) and also that of the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), could not be put, as they were in the nature of substantive Motions, and not of Amendments relating to the Resolution before the House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that, in the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), he begged to move an Amendment which stood in his name. The Amendment was not contrary to the spirit of the Resolution, but merely proposed to put certain limitations on the use to be made of it by the Speaker or Chairman. The general effect of the Amendment was, that the rights of the individual Member would be hedged round with precisely the same provisions as the rights of the minority. As the Government had already sanctioned the principle in the one case, they might, perhaps, accede to it in the other. The chief objection that might be urged was, that the House might come to a conclusion different from the Speaker, and so undermine his authority; but if that argument were valid at all, it was valid against the Rule itself. He would conclude by moving the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "when it shall appear that the Member addressing the House or the Committee is using expressions which are offensive to the general sense of the House, or is speaking with continued irrelevance or tedious repetition, or for the purpose of obstruction, or that it is the evident sense of the House or of the Committee that he should discontinue his Speech, Mr. Speaker may so inform the House or the Committee, and, if a Motion is made, 'That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do direct the Member to discontinue his Speech,' Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall forthwith put that Question, and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall direct the Member accordingly: Provided, That such Motion shall not be carried in the affirmative if a Quorum of the House be opposed to it."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Mr. Speaker' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had said that he considered everything at stake in these Rules, and yet such was his opinion of his own Amendment that he was not in his place to support it. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), however, had discovered the foundling, and had performed the parental office in a manner which did him the highest credit. If there was a disposition on the part of the House to accept the Amendment, it would be better to give the quietus to the Resolution at once. What was to constitute continued irrelevance or repetition that was to be deemed as requiring interruption? Was the speaker to go on until they were clear as the sun at noonday? By that time he would have got through the greater portion of his material, having only a few remaining shots in his locker; and the 15 or 20 minutes that would be cut off the tail-end of his speech, and would suffice to conclude it, was to be spent in taking a division on the question whether it was relevant or not. Then if 40 Members voted against the Motion the whole process would be completely thrown away, and the speech would be resumed in circumstances which would justify the Member, for the sake of clearness, in giving a *résumé* of all that he had said before.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he would submit that the Rule itself was irrelevant, because the Speaker had, and was to retain, the power of dealing with irrelevancy. The Rules against Obstruction gave him additional power.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (for Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF) rose to move the omission from the Rule of the words "or the Chairman of a Committee." He said the Amendment was the continuation of the protest against the Chairman of Committees being invested with the same power as the Speaker; but the necessity for the protest might disappear if the status of the Chairman were to be altered, and he were to be made an officer elected by the House. The public had been impressed by the minute investigation that had been made with these discussions as to the position of the Chairman of Committees. His (Lord Randolph Churchill's) attention had been turned to the subject by an unfair attempt made by the present Chairman (Mr. Lyon Playfair), in the first Session of this Parliament, to silence the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver). The attempt was objected to by the House at the time, and primarily because it was unfair, and was not called for. The Prime Minister came in afterwards and naturally supported the Chairman; but the feeling of the House was strong, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Walpole) expressed a strong opinion against the Chairman of Committees. If the Chairman could so act before this Rule was passed, what would he do under it? He (Lord Randolph Churchill) wished the Prime Minister could hold out an idea that the Office of Chairman was open to reconsideration, and would say whether the new Rules did not render it almost imperative that the Chairman should be an officer of the House, elected by both sides of the House in a *bonâ fide* manner, so as to possess its confidence. He had heard many opinions expressed that such a change would be desirable. If the prospect of such a change were held out, he would not press the Amendment he now moved.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the words "or the Chairman of a Committee."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not find any fault with the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) for renewing his protest against the Chairman having the same power as the Speaker; but he understood him to do so on this occasion with the view of eliciting an opinion as to the position of the Chairman. Well, on that point, he (Mr. Gladstone) was ready to indicate to the noble Lord what he thought was an important fact in connection with this Parliamentary Procedure, and likewise to make to the noble Lord an admission. The fact was this—that the Office of Chairman of Committees had, within the last 10 or 15 years, undergone great changes, all leading to elevate it. So long ago as the time of the Ministry of Sir Robert Peel, fresh duties were imposed upon him by the placing of certain Billls in his charge; but the most important change took place when he was made Deputy Speaker; and at present the House was in this position, that he was liable to be called upon to take the place of the Speaker in the event of the Speaker's illness. He was not sure, however, whether the present Speaker had ever fallen back upon that assistance, except on the occurrence of All-night Sittings. Since that important change took place, there had been a further change, as the salary of the Chairman had been considerably increased. The admission he was disposed to make to the noble Lord was this—the mode in which the Chairman of Committees was at present appointed was, perhaps, hardly worthy of the dignity which the Office now possessed. It was true, indeed, that the Chairman was elected by the House; but he was elected in an off-hand way, without Notice; and he was informed, not that he had been elected Chairman of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker, but simply that he was to take the Chair, and the announcement sounded as if he were only to take it on that particular occasion. He was, therefore, rather disposed to admit to the noble Lord, although the Government had not yet considered this matter very particularly, that a more formal and regular appointment should be made. It would be a very suitable sequel to the changes which had been thus far made. The House had shrunk from the serious innovation of placing the Chairman of Committees, when the House was in Committee, upon a level of greater weakness than the Speaker in the House. He would not discuss that question now, as the House had already discussed it; but he trusted the noble Lord would be content with the expression of this general view that the mode of appointment should be more substantive and particular, and that the Government would endeavour to comply with it on a future occasion. In view of that declaration, he hoped the Amendment would not be pressed.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was glad the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had elicited from the Prime Minister this statement about the election of the Chairman of Ways and Means. No doubt, that official was elected by the House, though the question was never in practice put to the vote, and did not appear on the Votes. He had looked carefully into the Proceedings of the House, and he found that of late years the record had simply been that the Chairman (Mr. Lyon Playfair) reported on such and such a Bill. The Motion that he should take the Chair was not entered on the votes at all. There was no doubt, however, that he was elected, and there had, in recent times, been divisions taken as to who should take the Chair. [Mr. Gladstone: Oh, certainly.] There was, nevertheless, no doubt that, of late years, the question was put from the Chair without any Notice to the House, and that the nomination was practically in the hands of the Prime Minister. Looking at the dignity and responsibility involved in the Office, the matter deserved serious consideration, and the Chairman ought certainly to be elected in a more formal manner than he was under the existing system.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, this was really an Amendment of his own which his noble Friend had brought forward in his absence. He quite agreed with the Prime Minister as to the election of the Chairman of Committees; but he thought it ought to be an understood thing that the Chairman of Committees should not take part in a division; and that, while he held the Office, he should keep himself as much aloof from Party politics as the Speaker.

Mr. GORST said, he had heard with the greatest pleasure the statement of the Prime Minister, but considered that a mere alteration in the mode of election would not attain the end desired by the House. The Chairman of Committees ought to have the same kind of official permanence as the Speaker, and his position ought not to be dependent on a mere Party vote.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that, with regard to what had fallen from the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), he wished to say how entirely he felt that the Chairman of Committees had wished honestly to do his duty on the occasion to which allusion had been made. He (Mr. Mac Iver) had no personal cause of complaint. What arose was simply a consequence of the false position in which, under the present system, the Chairman found himself placed; for while presiding over the deliberations of the Committee, he was, at the same time, a *quasi*-Member of the Government. The practical question was not whether the present Chairman of Committees intended to be impartial, but whether his position was one in which absolute impartiality was possible. Accidental circumstances, the chance overhearing of a remark in the Lobby, had placed him (Mr. Mac Iver) in possession of the right hon. Gentleman's own view of the subject; for he (Mr. Mac Iver) had caught words to the effect that the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had, on the occasion to which the noble Lord referred, been out of Order, but that the Chairman of Committees could not very well stop a man in his position. It appeared to him (Mr. Mac Iver) that the Chairman of Committees took a perfectly reasonable course on that occasion, considering his own position as a *quasi*-Member of the Government. Not only the personal support of the hon. Member for Berkshire, but the support of *The Times* newspaper, was very valuable to the Government. For that reason the Chairman of Committees, while, no doubt, wishing to be impartial, had his duty to his Party to consider as well as his duty to the House. He was glad to hear that the Prime Minister accepted the principle of the noble Lord's (Lord Randolph Churchill's) Amendment; and he hoped that the Chairman of Committees would in future be placed in a position of absolute and unqualified and unquestioned impartiality.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said he felt bound to protest against the very unfair attack which the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) had made upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair) in his absence. He ought not to have done such a thing without Notice. If the hon. Member for Birkenhead had any charge to bring against the Chairman of Ways and Means, he ought to have brought it forward as a substantive Motion and taken the judgment of the House upon it.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that he had no desire to make any personal attack upon anyone.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, that the Resolution before the House was the most penal of all, except, perhaps, the 1st Resolution. As the Resolution stood, the Speaker or any Chairman of a Committee would be able, without the judgment of the House, to exercise the function of stopping a Member from continuing his speech, who might, as he imagined, be guilty of continued irrelevance or tedious repetition. He would move that instead of the words "Chairman of a Committee" the words "Chairman of Ways and Means" be inserted.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the words "a Committee," and insert the words "Ways and Means," instead thereof.—(*Mr. J. G. Talbot.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked leave to withdraw his Amendment in favour of the one proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. J. G. Talbot).

Mr. SHEIL said, it seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman who was their Chairman of Ways and Means for some years now (Mr. Lyon Playfair) should not be thrown overboard, but that he should be given an opportunity of denying the accuracy of the charge just made, if it was untrue; and if it was true, he (Mr. Sheil) thought it should be followed up, and that it was the duty of the Prime Minister to test it. He thought the House ought to remember that the same right hon. Gentleman who occupied the Chair on the occasion referred to suspended 15 or 16 Irish Members, some of whom were not present during the night. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; hon. Members might groan if they pleased; but it seemed to him (Mr. Sheil) that the charge which was then attempted to be brought—they were not allowed to make it—was now made by the accusation made by the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver). And that charge having been brought, it seemed clearly to him to be the duty of the Prime Minister to ascertain what truth there was in the charge; and if that charge was true, to call upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means to resign his position.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, that the power of stopping Members who spoke irrelevantly was one which was inherent in the Chair, and had long ago been emphatically affirmed.

Amendment (*Lord Randolph Churchill*), by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment (*J. G. Talbot*) *agreed to.*

Words *inserted* accordingly.

Mr. GORST (for Lord Randolph Churchill) moved an Amendment to provide that the irrelevance of speaking should be wilful and persistent, instead of continued, as mentioned in the Resolution. He thought the Rule as it stood would operate against Members who, from inexperience, and quite innocently, were speaking irrelevantly.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, to leave out the word "continued," in order to insert the words "wilful and persistent."—(*Mr. Gorst,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'continued' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gorst) hardly understood the meaning of the Rule. The words in the Resolution were words having prescription and authority attaching to them; and, as he (Mr. Gladstone) interpreted the Resolution, it contemplated two things which the Speaker or Chairman of Committees might do. He might call the attention of the House or of the Committee to continued irrelevance or to tedious repetition, and he might direct the Member to discontinue his speech; but that might be a separate and ulterior proceeding on the part of the Speaker or Chairman, whose duty it would be to judge whether the irrelevancy or repetition was of such a character as to cause him to discharge both functions at once, or be content, in the first place, to deal with the minor interruption, and to reserve the second for the persistent, wilful, and disobedient repetition of the offence. The hon. and learned Member seemed to think that the action of the Speaker in all cases must be one and the same, and that the first warning must be the last. He (Mr. Gladstone), however, thought the matter was one which might well be left to the discretion of the Speaker, and he should not like to bind the Speaker to stop the speech of a Member when he called attention to its irrelevance.

Mr. J. LOWTHER considered that words embodying the Prime Minister's interpretation of the spirit of the Rule ought to be introduced into the Rule itself. If that were done it would remove difficulties. In that case, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), which was lower down on the Paper—namely, to insert the words "if the warning be unheeded." That would meet the view both of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) and of the Government.

Mr. DODSON said, the insertion of those words would not be consistent with the interpretation which the Prime Minister had placed on the Rule, and which the Government attached to it. The Resolution as it stood was optional; but by inserting the proposed words the presiding officer would have no option; he would be required to call on the Member to discontinue his remarks.

Mr. J. R. YORKE said, he could not admit that the construction placed upon the Resolution by the Prime Minister was a correct one.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK supported the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 143; Noes 68: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 374.)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he wished to make one more effort. He would propose to omit from the Resolution the words "tedious repetition." He had not much hope of persuading the House to consent to the omission of those words; but he did not think they were necessary in order to give the Speaker or Chairman of Ways and Means the powers that were essential to stop an obstructive speech. He fancied that the object of the Prime Minister was to provide that speaking might, to some extent, be checked, and that speeches of an obstructive nature should not be allowed to be carried on, as a rule, for the purpose of Obstruction. But he thought it would be very dangerous to allow the Chairman of Committees to be the judge whether a speaker were guilty of tedious repetition or not. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) had often heard speakers deliver speeches which appeared to him to enter into a very great deal of detail indeed, and such speeches were not at all confined to private Members. Both of the Front Benches were equally guilty; but the Prime Minister would remember that Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees hardly ever considered it his duty to check the speech of a Minister delivered from the Front Bench. Generally speaking, the occupants of those Benches were allowed an enormous amount of latitude in regard to their speeches, which was not the case with regard to a private Member. He, therefore, thought it would be better not to retain these words, "tedious repetition." An hon. Member might be perfectly honest and *boná fide* in repeating the same thing once or twice over, because he desired to impress it more clearly upon the attention of the House, and without the slightest wish to obstruct the progress of Business. He hoped the Government would consent to modify the Resolution in the way he suggested, though even then it would remain a pretty strong one. He begged to move the omission of the words he had referred to.

MR. SPEAKER asked if the noble Lord proposed to leave out the words which followed "continued irrelevance?"

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he moved to leave out the words "or tedious repetition."

Amendment proposed, in line 2, to leave out the words "or tedious repetition."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government were of opinion that the progress of Business in the House was delayed at the present moment not only by continued irrelevance, but by tedious repetition; and he could not see why the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) took one offence out of the category and not the other, or why the offence of continued irrelevance should be treated with greater favour than that of tedious repetition. His (Mr. Gladstone's) own opinion was, that continued irrelevance might sometimes be much more difficult to discern in the line which marked Obstruction than tedious repetition. The power of deciding whether these offences were being committed might be safely left in the hands of the presiding Officers of the House; and he saw no reason whatever for making a distinction between them by omitting one of them from the Resolution in regard to the exercise of the power by the Chairman of Ways and Means. He had no doubt that such men would always be chosen who would know how to exercise the power with proper discretion.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) wanted to strike out these words for the same reason that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had moved the last Amendment. If the House had inserted the words which the hon. and learned Member wished to insert in the last Amendment, there would only have been one offence, which could easily have been dealt with, and one in regard to which there would have been no difficulty, no matter who might be acting as Speaker or Chairman of Committees. It was quite true, as the Prime Minister had stated, that tedious repetition was one of those offences which the House had always dealt with, and, perhaps, not with too strong a hand. If a Member spoke with tediousness, the Speaker was fully entitled to remind him; and although it might be a difficult matter to decide what constituted continued irrelevance, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) apprehended that the Speaker or the Chairman would have very little difficulty in satisfying the House as to the tediousness of an argument; but as there had already been one division on this matter, and there was a great probability that the result would be exactly the same if they went to another division, he hoped the noble Lord would be satisfied with his protest, and would not put the House to the trouble of deciding it again.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. GORST moved, as an Amendment, in line 3, to amend the Resolution by leaving out from the word "Member" to the end of the Resolution, in order to add the words—

> "And, if a Motion be made that such Member do discontinue his speech, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Motion; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Member shall discontinue his speech accordingly."

The effect of his Amendment would be to make the Resolution as a penal Resolution analogous to the Procedure with which the House was now familiar in the case of Obstruction. The right hon. Member for South - West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said that the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees already possessed the power of stopping a tedious speech. That might be an old usage of the House, but it was not one which had been much practised in modern times. The principle upon which the Government had acted had been to give the Speaker or Chairman the power of punishing a Member of the House; but the Speaker or Chairman was not to act until the Member guilty of the offence had first been Named to the House or Committee, when it was left to the House or Committee itself to impose the punishment of stopping the speech. No doubt, in the present temper of the House, the decision of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees would be universally, as a matter of course, supported by the House. That had always hitherto been the case when a Member had been Named. The House, by a large majority, had invariably supported the authority of the Chair. But still the Speaker or Chairman had to appeal to the House for its ratification of his decision; and that, to a certain extent, rendered him more cautious in coming to a hasty conclusion. If a Speaker or Chairman was empowered to stop the speech of an hon. Member by his own motion, the result might be, in the case of a reckless Chairman of Committees, that he would be less cautious in the exercise of that power than if he had to appeal to the House to ratify his action by its vote. As the House well knew, it did not require many arguments to induce the House to support the Speaker in Naming any hon. Member who was guilty of an offence; but if they did not allow the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to Name a Member, without calling on the House for its sanction, why should they allow him to require a Member to discontinue his speech, without also requiring the sanction of the House? He wished to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, with one alteration. By some act of inadvertence it now read—

"And, if a Motion be made that such Member do discontinue his speech, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Motion; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, by a majority of not less than fifty, the Member shall discontinue his speech accordingly."

The words "by a majority of not less than fifty" had crept in through inadvertence. All that he desired was that the decision in support of the action of the Speaker or Chairman should be affirmed by a majority of the House.

Amendment proposed,

In line 3, to leave out from the word "Member" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "and, if a Motion be made that such Member do discontinue his speech, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Motion; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Member shall discontinue his speech accordingly."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) might have told the House that when his hon. Friend who sat near him, the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), moved the Amendment which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), he used all the arguments which had been employed by the hon. and learned Member now.

Mr. GORST said, that he was not present when his hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour) moved that Amendment.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that fact showed the inconvenience of the method of relays which appeared to have been adopted by hon. Gentlemen sitting upon that opposite Bench, seeing that, in this particular instance, it had kept the hon. and learned Gentleman out of the House at a very interesting moment. Consequently, he had simply repeated, as nearly as possible, although, perhaps, not in the same words, the speech of the hon. Member for Hertford in support of a Motion which, although differing in form, was substantially the same. He (Mr. Gladstone) would not, however, imitate the example of the hon. and learned Member, and repeat the speech he had made on the previous occasion. He did not think it would be fair to the House if he did; and he hoped the House would pardon him if he left the hon. and learned Member without a detailed answer, and simply said that the House had already decided the question by declining to entertain the former Motion. The House had already arrived at the conclusion that the matter was one which ought to be left in the hands of the Speaker and Chairman of Committees, and it would only be a waste of time to divide the House again.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that in this, and in several other of the Resolutions, it was difficult to know how to vote without knowing what the mind of the Government was in regard to other Amendments on the Paper, because such a knowledge might materially modify the view hon. Members entertained. He should certainly vote against the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), if he thought that Her Majesty's Government would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), and still more that of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). This was a repetition of an old law of the House, and he did not think that the power of punishment should be included in it. If an hon. Member resisted the authority of the Chair and disputed the warning given him, the House would have brought before them presently, by the 9th Resolution, the mode in which that Member should be punished and what was to happen to him. It seemed to him (Mr. Sclater-Booth) to be a mistake to import punishment into the 5th Resolution; and if he thought the Government would favourably consider the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), he should not be inclined to support the proposal now made by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). He certainly thought that one Resolution on the subject of punishment by the Chairman was enough.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government had stated, somewhat inadvertently no doubt, that this was the same Motion as that which had been moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour); but the right hon. Gentleman forgot to notice the fact that the Motion of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), which his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford undertook to move, imported into this Resolution the action of one of the new mental quorums. Now, such a quorum of the House involved a new principle, and there was no such principle in the Amendment now submitted by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). In fact, it was nearly identical in scope with the Amendment which stood in his (Mr. Beresford Hope's) name lower down on the Notice Paper; and in supporting the present Amendment he was, therefore, really supporting his own proposal. He submitted that the proposition made by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and by himself, followed on all-fours with the famous Resolution which they had hammered out after so many weeks' labour. Indeed, he had picked and chosen the phraseology of his Amendment from that Resolution. The Resolution left the closing of a debate to the decision of the House; and he did not see why, if the *clôture* of a debate was ultimately to be thrown upon the House, the *clôture* of a private Member should not take the same course. In the latter case, the offence would be a very trifling one. It might be simply that of falling into irrelevant argument, or having a rambling way of talking, which might not be the poor Gentleman's fault, because he might have been born with it. Why, for such an offence, should the Member be exposed to the extremely penal infliction of being ordered to sit down like a naughty boy in a board school? With all the additional powers which were to be given to the Speaker and the Chairman in future, why should they give them this one in addition? If a Member was really flagrantly irrelevant, and it was considered desirable to stop his speech, the Question ought to be put to the House. The Prime Minister had dwelt very much upon the question of loss of time; but he (Mr. Beresford Hope) would point out that in the case of flagrant irrelevance, probably the first mention of the matter would be quite sufficient to impose a check on the offender. The Member would be hardly courageous enough to challenge a division in his own behalf if the "Ayes" sounded loud enough. There would, therefore, be very little loss of time; but that loss of time would take away the idea of oppression, and the House should not forget that the Member who was silenced, however righteously, would before the end of the Session take out his punishment tenfold from the House.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he thought that, at that hour of the night, it was a great pity that Her Majesty's Government did not tell the House what they intended to do with regard to the Resolution. By their halting and wavering, they had already spoilt the dinners of many hon. Members with the other Resolutions; and now the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government refused to answer the question, which had repeatedly been put to him, as to what the alterations were which he intended to propose in the last paragraph of the Resolutions. It was quite impossible for hon. Members who sat below the Gangway on the other side of the House—the Paladins of the liberties of the House—such as the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), to ever think of leaving it in the power of the Chairman of Committees, at any time, to order a Member to discontinue his speech. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had no wish to address any argument to the House upon that subject. [*Cheers from the Liberal Benches.*] Hon. Members opposite cheered that sentiment; but he should like to see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), who was now sitting among them as what had been called by the late Lord Beaconsfield "an extinct volcano," rise in his place, and tell the House what he thought of the power proposed to be conferred by this Resolution upon the Chairmen of Committees. He should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman approved of it or not? He was quite sure that the remarks he was now making would receive the assent of hon. Members who belonged to the Radical Party. Her Majesty's Government had already been requested by his hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke), and also by his right hon. Friend below him (Mr. Sclater-Booth), to state what the intentions of the Government really were; and he thought that a clear explanation of those intentions would save the time of the House, and be a great convenience to hon. Members. All of them wished to get rid of this Autumn Session as soon as they could, and they would be able to do that more easily if the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government would make up his mind and tell the House what it was he wished to do.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: One thing, Sir, has struck me very forcibly during the course of the discussion upon these numerous Amendments. It seems to me that hon. Members have generally proceeded on an extreme and, I think, altogether unjustifiable and absurd suspicion of the conduct of the Speaker. [An hon. Member: Or the Chairman.] Well, or the Chairman. The basis of all their arguments, as far as I can learn, or of nearly all of them, is that the Speaker will do something foolish, or that the Chairman of Committees will do something foolish. Now, you had a Gentleman who was Chairman of Committees for many years, and who has just now left the House (Mr. Raikes), simply for a short time, some people hope, but for a much longer time others hope; and I think no one ever made a complaint of the conduct of our proceedings when he was Chairman of Committees. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver), in the improper statements which he has made in the House to-night, did not dare to charge the Chairman of Committees with intentional impartiality or injustice. I do not mean to say that the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker is absolutely infallible; but if there is one thing more certain than another, and which we can rely upon more firmly than anything else, it is the absolute impartiality of the Speaker of the House of Commons, and also of the Chairman of Committees. I have here a volume of *Hatsell's Precedents*, and I find here, under the date 1604, a passage which I will read to the House. I am not always in favour of things that are very old, because they are old; but here is a Resolution upon the conduct and office of Speaker, and his duty of keeping order in the House. In the second paragraph, under the date April 17th, 1604, it is laid down as a general rule that—

> "If any superfluous or tedious speech be offered in the House, the party is to be directed and ordered by Mr. Speaker."

[An hon. Member: Ordered to do what?] There was apparently no appeal. It was fairly understood what the order meant, and the Speaker would have little difficulty in knowing what to do. If we are to lay down a Rule now in regard to the Speaker, we should clearly lay down what it is his duty to do. What the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) proposes is, that the Speaker having come to a certain conclusion with regard to a particular speech—namely, that it was irrelevant, and consisted of tedious repetition, all he is to do is to call the attention of the House to the fact; and if, for instance, the hon. and learned Member for Chathan (Mr. Gorst) was called to Order as the offender, no doubt the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) would immediately rise and move an appeal to the House. The Speaker's decision might thus be set aside, and there would be a division. Nothing would be more easy then to promote delay in that way all the night through, because the hon. Member who was so disorderly as to be called to Order would be almost certain to have someone sitting at his elbow who would be ready to ask the House to decide the question. It therefore seems to me that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman is one that will destroy the value and efficiency of the Rule altogether; and I can only deplore that these repeated Amendments are made in pursuance of the course which these Rules are intended in future to condemn and prevent. That is my feeling in regard to the matter. I am as much in favour of freedom of speech as anyone, and also that everybody shall say what it is proper to say in this House; but I am persuaded that if the course recommended by the hon. and learned Gentleman and his Friends is agreed to, we may as well sweep these Resolutions away altogether and allow things to go on just as they have gone on, and have been condemned. I hope my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government will not consent to the proposition of the hon. and learned Member, which would make all our proceedings with regard to the matter a complete absurdity and an absolute farce.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Bright) had thought fit to introduce an illustration into his speech which he must have known would be offensive. Whatever might be thought of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), no one could accuse him of being guilty of repetition. ["Oh, oh!"] He dared say that his hon. and learned Friend often made remarks which hon. Gentlemen opposite did not like; but he was never guilty of repetition. The right hon. Gentleman had further, and in the most direct manner, accused Members on his side of the House of putting down Amendments for the purpose of Obstruction; and the right hon. Gentleman had thought fit to instance, as one of them, the Amendment they were now discussing. Now, he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) desired to point out two things to the right hon. Gentleman. In the first place, he would point out that many Amendments proposed from his side of the House had been accepted by the Government, and great and beneficial had been the modifications of the Rules which had resulted from the action of Members on his side of the House. In the second place, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman, in regard to this Amendment, that it had been put down upon the Paper, in substance, by three hon. Members—by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Beresford Hope), and by the hon. Gentleman behind him the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate)—three Members of the House of great experience, and who were emphatically more entitled to be heard on all questions connected with Procedure than many hon. Members who voted with the Government for these Rules, as having been in the House and taken part in its debates for a very much longer period. He desired, further, to remark to the right hon. Gentleman that, while he quite admitted the force of the argument used by the Prime Minister when he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was moving the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), that it would have the effect of prolonging their debates, he did not admit that there was any force in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), that the House was to place implicit reliance on the discretion of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, whoever they might be. The Government had already themselves established a contrary precedent, by deliberately fencing round the *clôture* by providing that the Speaker should not act solely upon his own authority, but that he must support that authority by a deliberate declaration of the will of the House.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he wished to reply to an observation which had fallen from the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who had mentioned his name in connection with the Amendment placed upon the Paper on this subject. All he wished to say was, that his proposition was identical with the provision of the 1st Resolution adopted by the House, in regard to the *clôture,* which neither of the other Amendments was. In regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), he had only one word to say. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have changed his position, and, from having hitherto attached exaggerated importance to the doctrine of self-government, he had now become the advocate of a mere Party. The quotation which the right hon. Gentleman had read to the House from *Hatsell's Precedents* had no application to the present state of things, because at that period, 1604, in which the Order was made, the House of Commons was accused of being blindly submissive to the Crown; and the consequence was that in 1640 a state of things, which he did not wish to see recur, was brought about in a very opposite sense.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. GIBSON moved, as an Amendment, in line 3, after the word "and," to insert the words "if the warning be unheeded." He wished to explain that this Amendment stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the City of Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), who was now absent. The present structure of the Resolution had been before the House for a considerable time, and it was, he thought, open to considerable criticism. It proposed that the Speaker or Chairman might call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member, and might direct such Member to discontinue his speech. It did that without indicating to the House that the House had any function whatever in relation to the matter. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) had borne that fact in mind, he would have seen that it was entirely in point to put an Amendment on the Paper, suggesting that the House should have some function, because the earlier part of the Rule expressly pointed out that the attention of the House was to be called to the matter. If the attention of the House was to be called to the matter, he assumed that the object was to call the attention of all the Members to the way in which the time of the House was being wasted, and also to call their attention to what, as a matter of fact, ought to be their function in such a case. What he proposed to do was to treat that calling of the attention of the House as a distinct and public warning to the Member that if he did not mind himself and mend his courses he would expose himself to the penalty inflicted by the latter part of the Resolution, which gave the Speaker the power of proceeding to a further development by directing the offending Member to discontinue his speech. But, from the special way in which the Resolution was drafted, the Speaker or Chairman of Committees might get up in the middle of a debate and announce to a Member who had not been much on the alert in guarding against irrelevancy or tedious repetition that he was guilty of irrelevancy or repetition, and that he must at once discontinue his speech. He did not think that it would be fair or in accordance with our English methods to take so extreme a course without having given some warning in the first instance. The right hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "and," to insert the words "if the warning be unheeded."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the Government could not agree to the Amendment. They had already stated their view of the Resolution, which was this—that in certain cases repetition or irrelevancy would have reached a certain point before it could be well interfered with by the Chair, and when it was interfered with, the matter would be fully ripe for effective action. The interference ought to be decisive and take effect at once.

There would be very little use in the Resolution; indeed, it would be completely emasculated by any Amendment of this character. There might be other cases in which it would be right for the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to give a preliminary warning; but the Speaker or Chairman of Committees would always be in the Chair, watching the course of the debate, and would be in a position to judge whether the freedom of debate required to be treated in a more severe or in a more lenient manner. In any case, it was not likely that there would be interference except where the irrelevancy or the repetition had been very serious; and it would be very safe to leave the matter to the judgment of the Speaker or the Chairman. The Amendment proposed to give a Member one more life, which he might well afford to throw away.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the right hon. Gentleman was so anxious to avoid laying himself open to a charge of tedious repetition that he had abstained from taking notice of the very strong arguments which he himself had used an hour or two ago in favour of the very proposal just made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had pointed out, in opposition to the previous Amendment, that it must not be assumed that the Presiding Officer of the House for the time being would determine the Resolution in the strictest sense. [Mr. Gladstone: He would not do that always.] He would not always determine the Resolution in a strict sense? In saying that the right hon. Gentleman was assuming that the interpretation which he placed upon the Resolution would be always that which would be placed upon it by the Presiding Officer of the House. But already that afternoon they had had a direct exemplification of the fact that the interpretation placed by the right hon. Gentleman on words of his own composition was not always identical with that placed on them by the Presiding Officer of the House of Commons. It must also be remembered that they were now dealing with the Presiding Officer of the future, who would not even have had the advantage of hearing the right hon. Gentleman expound his views of the proper interpretation to be placed upon his own words. Under those circumstances, it was not unreasonable for the House to ask that there should be inserted in the body of the Resolution some definite expression of opinion on the part of the House as to what the Resolution meant. He imagined that the right hon. Gentleman meant the same that hon. Members on that side of the House meant, and that there was no difference in substance between them. [Mr. Gladstone: I am afraid there is.] He was in hopes that there was not, for the right hon. Gentleman had distinctly said the probability was that the Presiding Officer would interpret the Rule in the same sense which hon. Members on that side of the House suggested. [Mr. Gladstone: In the best sense.] The right hon. Gentleman most distinctly added an expression of his own opinion that the probability was the Presiding Officer would not interpret the Resolution in a strict sense. That was certainly the impression left on the mind of the House by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman; and he (Mr. J. Lowther) hoped, under those circumstances, seeing the danger or probability that there might be from time to time an interpretation placed upon the Rule by the Presiding Officer which was not entirely in accordance with that of the right hon. Gentleman himself, neither the Government nor the House would object to the introduction of the words which had been proposed by his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson).

Sir. R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he wished to point out that, in this matter, it had been the invariable practice, under the Rule by which a Member might be suspended, for the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to give warning. That had hitherto been the invariable practice, and the result was that an hon. Member was not taken by surprise; but he was warned that, if he persisted in the course he was pursuing, he would suffer the punishment which had been provided. The particular Rule to which he referred was very much of the same character as the Rule now proposed, seeing that it prevented the Member who was suspended from taking any further part in the debate; and the proposed Rule would be equivalent to the suspension of a Member from sitting in the House, or taking part in its proceedings, until the time came for him to record his vote. He was bound to say that he could not see why that invariable practice of the Speaker and Chairman of Committees should not be put into this Rule, by saying that it was only after due warning the punishment would be inflicted. Therefore, if his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) went to a division upon the Amendment, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) should certainly support him, because it was only putting into the Rule that which had been the invariable practice of the House hitherto.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he could not but think that the proposed Rule was either surplusage, or mere offensiveness. It was surplusage, because already the presiding authority had got power to call a speaker to the question who was not speaking to the question; and, as far as that was concerned, there was really no necessity whatever for strengthening the hands of the presiding authority. If a Member, when addressing the House, declined to pay attention to the remonstrances of the presiding authority, he would justly lay himself open to a charge of disregarding the authority of the Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees. But, besides the objection of surplusage, it was decidedly open to the objection of offensiveness and partiality. It was a Rule that would only be brought to bear against the younger Members of the House, who might very often be struggling against mere natural embarrassment in their endeavours to express their arguments. He also wished to point out that by making this entirely depend upon the opinion of the presiding authority, he was afraid it became open to this objection. A Member of the House who might know the subject upon which he was speaking thoroughly well, and might be thoroughly well acquainted with all the bearings of his argument, might easily be misapprehended by the presiding authority; and there was no guarantee that the presiding authority would always be perfectly calm, perfectly unflurried, and perfectly impartial. The presiding authority might mean to act justly; but, not knowing what was in the Member's mind any more than anybody else would be supposed to know, he might deal with an argument which, in the Member's mind, was a most relevant one, as altogether irrelevant; and the Member, through awkwardness, or density of conviction, might desire to argue the matter out; whereupon he would be met at once by being required by the presiding authority to discontinue his speech. What was it that had occurred to himself personally? Although he believed that on every occasion the presiding authority meant to act justly towards him, he was perfectly satisfied that on three or four occasions, in the heat of past debates, the presiding authority, from natural ignorance of what was passing in his (Mr. O'Donnell's) mind, had told him that he was irrelevant in his arguments, and that they had no bearing upon the question; whereas he was perfectly aware that if he could have had time to express those arguments, the presiding authority would have recognised their perfect relevancy. Under the Rules, as they stood at present, there was no serious harm or injustice done to him, or to any other Member in his position, because he was liable to the punishment of being called upon to discontinue his speech merely because the presiding authority misinterpreted him; but, if this Rule passed, the mistake of the presiding authority would be followed by conseqences which could not be recalled; and, therefore, this Rule was a double trap—a trap for the feet of the Member, and a trap for the feet of the presiding authority. The presiding authority might be led on in a well-meaning manner to use this Rule, and might then find that he had committed a serious mistake; there would, however, be no power of remedying the mistake. He would recall to the memory of the House that, on a former occasion, the presiding authority not only considered that he (Mr. O'Donnell) was guilty of continued irrelevance, but that he was actually wilfully refusing to obey the authority of the Chair. The circumstance occurred in Committee of the Whole House; and on that occasion he was not merely told to discontinue his speech, but he was actually suspended; and yet, a few weeks afterwards, the House had, practically, to withdraw that suspension. He contended that there was no necessity whatever for this Rule. If a Member was really refusing to obey the authority of the Chair, he could be punished; he could be warned and then suspended; but this childish way of dealing with a full-grown man, and offensively ordering him to discontinue his speech, was a sort of punishment that was unworthy of the House. A Member addressing the House was supposed, in every Constitutional respect, to be equal to the presiding authority, as far as his knowledge of the relevancy of his argument was concerned, and his knowledge of his duty to his constituents; and as long as the presiding authority was not able to say that a Member was wilfully disobeying the authority of the Chair, in which case a distinct offence would arise, it was altogether too much for any Member of the House, or any of their hon. Colleagues, or the presiding authority, ten times over, to tell a full-grown man, who was the free-elected Representative of a constituency, that he was next door to an idiot, and must discontinue his speech. He looked upon the Rule as not only offensive and ridiculous, but also dangerous. Probably, if it were passed, it would remain a dead letter. If it were ever brought into force, he would lay the odds of 100 to 1 that it would be exercised at the wrong time.

Mr. WADDY said, it appeared to him that the arguments he had heard from various Members on the other side of the House were based on this—the Speaker was supposed to be lying in ambush, prepared on the first opportunity to stop some unfortunate Member, who might have wandered unwittingly into some slight irrelevancy. Hon. Members who entertained that view seemed to have forgotten that there were two or three words in the Resolution which would prevent that, because the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees was to call the attention of the House or of the Committee to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of that Member. It was therefore provided that the irrelevancy should be continued, and that the repetition should be tedious. It was evident that it was not a first offence that was contemplated; and where there was continued irrelevance and tedious repetition, he thought the Speaker would be amply justified in directing the offending Member to discontinue his speech. He desired to say that, in another respect, the Rule was not strong enough. If it could prevent some hon. Members from speaking for more than 25 times a night, it would effect an advantageous and desirable change. At any rate, it might provide that out of the 25 times an hon. Member thought fit to address the House, he should, at all events, on one occasion, say something.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought the greatest fallacy came from the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Waddy) himself. If the irrelevancy was continued, and the repetition tedious, why did the Government object to introduce so obvious an Amendment as that of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson)? Why did they refuse to the offending Member the right of having a warning from the Speaker or Chairman that he was transgressing? The Resolution conferred upon the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees very dangerous power, and there ought to be some limitation imposed upon it, to prevent its being used in an arbitrary and unjust manner. The Chairman of Committees might act as a partizan, and might be desirous of closing an awkward speech, and under this Rule he would have the power of doing so absolutely. That, as the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had pointed out, was a dangerous and an offensive power. What valid grounds could the Government allege for objecting to the insertion in the Resolution of a clause which, whilst it would not impair the real efficacy of that Resolution, would insure that an hon. Member who was anxious to keep himself in Order should have fair warning before being told to discontinue his speech? The Government could give no such grounds; and he, therefore, appealed to the Prime Minister to adopt the Amendment.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had disputed the Prime Minister's statement as to the probability of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees giving warning before putting this Rule in force. But they had some experience to go on. When the Rule was in force in 1881, it was used four times; three times in Committee, and once by Mr. Speaker. On each occasion warning was given.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he did not dispute the fact that it had been the practice of Mr. Speaker and Chairmen of Committees to give warning before putting the Rule in operation, or the probability that it would be in the time to come. But why should they not put it on record that warning must be given? The hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), who was a man of culture, research, and learning, knew that it was not the custom of deliberative Assemblies to trust to declarations by Ministers, but that it was their practice to put on record what they desired to be the law of the land, and of the Houses in which they sat. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] He believed, in spite of the Prime Minister's negative, that that was the practice of Parliament—to take care to embody in Acts of Parliament that which it wished to be done, without trusting to the declaration of Ministers. However much they might value the ability of independent Members, they should put in the words of the Rule what they desired to be done. He appealed to the Government, if they were really honest in this matter, and desirous that the Rule should be administered in accordance with their declarations, to embody words in the Rule, providing for the manner of its administration.

MR. BRODRICK hoped the House would have some explanation from the Government of the reason which had induced them to keep up what seemed to him to be an altogether unnecessary debate, on a point on which all Parties were agreed. Hon. Members were only proposing a form of words with which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister perfectly agreed. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] He had certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to agree that the practice should be such as was provided in the Amendment. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Oh, dear, no!] In that case, then, it was necessary that the House should argue the matter out. If an hon. Member who rose to address the House, from some aberration of intellect, wandered away into paths he should have avoided, surely it was desirable that he should receive some warning before the supreme step was taken. He (Mr. Brodrick) felt very strongly on this point, because he was in entire sympathy with the Government upon it. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), a short time ago, appeared to be on the point of rising to reply to the arguments of hon. Members in support of the Amendment; but since then he had abandoned the intention, and that fact itself spoke volumes for the reliability of the contention put forward by hon. Members. It seemed to him (Mr. Brodrick) impossible for anyone who had occupied the Chair in the House not to feel the absolute necessity for the putting in force of some such restriction as that proposed, even if it were not stated in the Rule. Bearing in mind what had been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot)—namely, that it was the custom of the House to settle what should be the law by distinct enactment, and not by the declarations of Ministers —he sincerely hoped his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) would go to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 52; Noes 120: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 375.)

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he wished to move to leave out, in line 3, all after "on the part of a Member," and insert "and may put the Question to the House that such Member be not further heard; which Question shall be decided without Debate, Amendment, or Adjournment." He had a very strong feeling that the House, in rendering its Rules more absolute than they were, and substituting these absolute Rules for the action of the wholesome public opinion which used to prevail in the House of Commons and govern its Members, was stamping itself of a lower type than the Houses which had preceded it. He had another feeling. They had heard how freely the conduct of the Chairman of Committees had been canvassed in debate. He thought some injustice had been done to the right hon. Gentleman. Mr. Speaker's name had been coupled in this Resolution with that of the Chairman of Committees; and although experience had taught him (Mr. Newdegate) to place implicit confidence in Mr. Speaker's impartiality and right feeling, and though he had scarcely ever known that right hon. Gentleman to err, he could not undertake to place the same confidence in those who might succeed the right hon. Gentleman. With one exception, he would not have placed the same confidence in the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessors. Well, he asked, how could their labours to reorganize the Business of the House be advanced by their Rules if there was a loss of confidence in the Chair, and in the administration of the Chair? So strong was the feeling and apprehension of the House of this danger, that when the majority passed the *clôture* it insisted that the decision of Mr. Speaker should be supported by a majority of the House. Had the Members of that House fallen so low that they were to be silenced, like school-boys, by the Chair, in order to restore their self-respect, which he feared they had somewhat lost? He feared that, far from this silencing of Members tending to restore their self-respect, it would have an opposite tendency—that it would tend to a still greater loss of self-respect, and to the loss of the first element of order, an element far more powerful than any authority that they could introduce. He, therefore, moved that Mr. Speaker's authority should always be supported by a majority of the House. Everything which separated the right hon. Gentleman from the House weakened the authority of his position—any suspicion that he was not one of them would weaken his position. It would destroy the principle of self-government, of which that House should be the type, and the House would lose the power of a popular Assembly, however they extended the suffrage. They had an example of that in the United States. There they had extended the suffrage, until they had collected such an anomalous Assembly that they were from year to year placing greater and greater power in the hands of extraneous authorities. That was an example of the present day. He was unwilling at this hour of the night to detain the House.

MR. SPEAKER: On examining the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), which was lately negatived by the House, I am bound to say that it is substantially the same as that which the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) now proposes; and, in that view, I shall have to rule that the Amendment now being moved cannot be put.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he bowed to Mr. Speaker's opinion. If he had known he would be out of Order, he would not have given the right hon. Gentleman the opportunity of correcting him.

MR. GIBSON rose to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) has placed an Amendment in my hands; but he is not in the House.

MR. WARTON: I should be happy to move it, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: I was about to observe to the hon. Member for Evesham, if he had been in his place, that his Amendment was really substantially the same as that of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), which the House has just now negatived; therefore I must call on the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin.

MR. GIBSON said, the Amendment he wished to bring under the notice of the House was a very short one. If the Government passed the Resolution as it stood, it would give Mr. Speaker the final power of directing the hon. Member in possession of the House to discontinue his speech. Bearing in mind that this was a Resolution aimed at continued and possibly unintentional irrelevance, and tedious but probably not obstructive repetition, it was, he thought, too severe a punishment to say that Mr. Speaker might, without a caution against such a course of conduct, direct the hon. Member to discontinue his speech. It seemed to him that the reasonable course would be to give Mr. Speaker the power of directing a Member to discontinue the conduct that had brought him under the notice of the House, and called for the right hon. Gentleman's intervention. That would be not only reasonable, but sufficient; because, if a Member had had brought to his notice that he was offending, and had been distinctly ordered by Mr. Speaker to discontinue repetition and irrelevance, if he was then guilty of similar conduct, he could be at once Named as violating the orders of Mr. Speaker. The disciplinary power would be ample, bearing in mind that the Member would be erring more from constitutional infirmity or weakness of mind than anything else. That result he (Mr. Gibson) thought would be found to be quite sufficient.

Amendment proposed, in line 4, to leave out the words "his Speech," in order to insert the words "such irrelevance or repetition."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'his Speech' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman stated that his Amendment was a very short one. That was true; but there was a shorter one still, to the same effect, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman might have moved or uttered; and that was an Amendment which would have been signified by saying "No" to the Resolution. That word "No" was the whole meaning of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment. The Amendment, if adopted, would make the Rule, in his (Mr. Gladstone's) judgment, not worth the paper it was written on. In all the less grave cases, Mr. Speaker would give warning before bringing the Rule into operation; but the Amendment would make the House suffer before the warning and after the warning; and, as a climax, the offending Member could only be directed to discontinue his tedious and irrelevant observations.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the speech just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was a very good example of the sort of argument to which the House was constantly treated on these Resolutions. The right hon. Gentleman, who, over and over again, had refused to listen to the appeal to allow a clause, providing for a warning to be inserted in the Rule, now made the fact that a warning might be given the ground for refusing the Amendment. It should be distinctly understood that not only had the power of *clôture* been imposed on a bare majority, but, in addition to that, power was being conferred on the Presiding Officer of the House absolutely to close the speech of an hon. Member. That might be agreeable to some hon. Members who were able to express themselves consecutively and clearly in the House; but, however it might be viewed by those hon. Members, it was a most grave and serious, and a most novel power to confer. It was a power which had never been known in Parliament before. If the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was accepted, it would enable Mr. Speaker to put down that which he ought to put down—namely, irrelevance and tedious repetition; but the Rule, as it stood, would allow the Presiding Officer of the House, without warning, to compel an hon. Member to cut short his speech. In whatever light hon. Members might regard the remarks he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was addressing to the House, it was certain that what the Government proposed to give was a very great and serious power to the Presiding Officer of the House.

Mr. GIBSON asked the indulgence of the House to say that the proper course would be not to put the House to the trouble of a division. He should have preferred the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson); and, under the circumstances, he felt bound to accept the last division as practically governing this. He should indicate his opinion when Mr. Speaker put the Question, but would not trouble the House to divide.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

(5.) *Resolved,* That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Ways and Means, may call the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition on the part of a Member; and may direct the Member to discontinue his Speech.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *Tomorrow.*

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17*th November,* 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17*th November*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Matthew Joseph Kenny, esquire, *for* Ennis Borough.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST UNION — MR. ROBERT HUMPHREY.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the Belfast Board of Guardians granted a pension of £52 per year to a rate collector and rent agent named Robert Humphrey, whose resignation to the Board was made to prevent dismissal; whether the law prohibits the grant of superannuation allowances to union officers, unless they devote their whole time to the service of the union; and, whether the Guardians had knowledge that Humphrey had been, and still is, a rent agent in extensive business prior to the said grant being made, and if the usual list of queries have been forwarded, with Humphrey's signature attached, to the Local Government Board for their approval; and, if so, was the fact disclosed on the said list of queries whether or not Humphrey had devoted his time and services exclusively to the Belfast Union?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Guardians of Belfast Union desire to grant a superannuation allowance of £52 a-year to Mr. Humphrey; but the Local Government Board have not yet sanctioned this allowance, and are still in communication with the Guardians on the subject. According to the law, the Local Government Board cannot sanction the grant unless Mr. Humphrey's whole time has been devoted to the service of the Union, and they have called the Guardians' attention to this fact.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS OF GUARDIANS.

MR. SALT asked the President of the Local Government Board, What number of Boards of Guardians have expressed a desire for the adoption of triennial elections; whether, under the existing Law, the process of changing the system of election is not needlessly expensive and inconvenient; and, whether he will introduce a Bill early next Session, or support a Bill to the effect that, in Unions where the triennial election may be desired by the Guardians, it may be adopted by a vote of a majority of the Guardians, after due notice given to the ratepayers, immediately before an election of Guardians (in such manner as may be approved by the Local Government Board), that such a proposal will be brought forward for decision?

MR. DODSON: Sir, in 41 Unions orders have been, or shortly will be, issued by the Local Government Board, authorizing a poll of owners and ratepayers as to whether there should be a triennial election of the Guardians. The orders are issued in consequence of applications received from the Guardians; and several other Boards of Guardians have made representations in favour of a triennial system. The process of changing the mode of election under the existing law no doubt involves some expense; but it has the advantage of affording the owners and ratepayers full opportunity of showing their wishes on the subject, and I may state that, in some instances, they have refused to consent to the change proposed. I will consider the suggestion made by the hon. Member; but I could not undertake to promise to introduce a Bill to give effect to it, or to support such a Bill if introduced.

THAMES RIVER BILL, 1881—LEGISLATION.

MR. M'LAREN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he intends, next Session, to introduce again the Thames River Bill of 1881, or any part of it as a separate measure?

MR. J. HOLMS (for Mr. CHAMBERLAIN): Notices have been given of the intention of the Board of Trade to introduce a Bill next Session for the purpose of carrying out a part of what was proposed by the Thames River Bill, 1881; and I understand that notices have been issued by the Thames Conservators that they intend to bring in a Bill dealing with the other objects proposed by that measure. Among the other objects alluded to is the one in which my hon. Friend is so much interested.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—RESTORATION OF CETEWAYO.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a statement respecting Cetewayo, quoted in Monday's "Times" from a Cape paper; whether, as appears from that statement, Cetewayo is still detained a prisoner at Oude Molen; how long Cetewayo's detention there has lasted; and, whether he can hold out any hope that his promised restoration to Zululand will speedily take place?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Cetewayo is not a prisoner at Oude Molen. He has been there since the 25th of September on an understanding that he is to wait till the arrangements for his return to Zululand are completed. I can only repeat the answer which I gave a short time ago, that, after Sir Henry Bulwer's proposals have been received, I hope that Cetewayo may be restored by the end of the year.

ENGLAND AND PERU—THE PERUVIAN BONDHOLDERS—CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, all the Correspondence which has taken place between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Peru, between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Chili, and that between Her Majesty's Government and the different Committees of the holders of Peruvian Bonds since the Correspondence last laid before both Houses of Parliament in 1877?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There will be no objection to lay on the Table any portions of the Correspondence with Her Majesty's Representatives in Peru and Chili and with the Peruvian and Chilian Representatives in London that may be of public interest; but with regard to the Correspondence with the Committee of Bondholders, as it contains much matter privately printed, and its contents are already known to the persons interested, Her Majesty's Government would not be disposed to incur the expense of its publication.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—TORY ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE.

Mr. LEA asked the President of the Board of Trade, What progress has been made in lighting Tory Island Lighthouse with gas, in accordance with the promise given on July 27th, 1882; and, whether any of the people on the island, now alleged to be suffering from famine, could be employed on the works?

Mr. J. HOLMS (for Mr. Chamberlain): I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the amended estimates for the works in contemplation at Tory Island have been completed, and, after being submitted to the Commissioners, will be forwarded to the Board of Trade. I can express no opinion as to the possibility of employing the inhabitants of the Island, as the works will, in all probability, be carried out by a contractor—not by the Commissioners themselves—but, under any circumstances, it is a matter which rests with the Commissioners, not with the Board of Trade.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked if the hon. Gentleman would undertake that the Irish Office should be communicated with on the subject of employing the people of the Island?

Mr. J. HOLMS was understood to reply in the affirmative.

METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE (DUBLIN)—EXTRA PAY.

Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Gray) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the three month's pay for extra duty, promised by Lord Spencer to the Dublin Police Force has not been paid to them; and, when the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the grievances of the Police will be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No promise of three months' pay was ever made by Lord Spencer. All that he promised was that applications and complaints of the Dublin Metropolitan Police should be referred to a Committee of Inquiry. That Committee, which has been very carefully composed, is still sitting, and will probably report early in December.

CRIMINAL LAW—INFLICTION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON ADULTS UNDER THE VAGRANT ACTS — SUBSTITUTION OF BIRCHING FOR FLOGGING.

MR. HOPWOOD asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, in recently commenting on the three consolidated Criminal Acts as justifying the view that a sentence of "whipping" might be altered into "strokes of the birch rod," he had overlooked the fact that the "whipping" in those Acts only applied to male offenders under sixteen years of age; and, whether there is any other Statute which authorises the change from whipping to "strokes with the birch rod?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): My hon. and learned Friend is somewhat pertinacious in showing that he differs from the opinion that I have already twice expressed in answer to Questions he has put to me in this House. His view is that whenever the punishment of whipping is directed to be inflicted the instrument to be used must be a cat-o'-nine-tails or scourge, and cannot be a birch rod. I do not think so. No doubt, in practice, the cat-o'-nine-tails formerly was used, but in more recent times humanity has caused a departure from the old practice; and I think, where there is no provision to the contrary in the Statute regulating the punishment, the Court may specify the instrument to be used. In answer to the second portion of my hon. and learned Friend's Question I would refer him to the 26 & 27 *Vict.* c. 44, which is an Act under which garrotters are punished, and he will find that where the whipping is inflicted on offenders under 16 the birch rod must be used. But as to adults the Court must specify the instrument with which the punishment is to be inflicted. As my hon. and learned Friend has not accepted my view on previous occasions, I would refer him to the opinion of Sir James Stephen in a note to Article 12 of his *Criminal Digest*, in which he says that the only limitation as to the instrument with which a whipping can be inflicted is to be found in the declaration of the Bill of Rights against illegal and cruel punishments. I am anxious to remind my hon. and learned Friend that no modern Statute permits a man to be whipped more than three times; and as this is the third time he has returned to the attack, I hope he will in mercy relieve me from further castigation.

CRIMINAL LAW—SEIZURE OF "THE FREIHEIT"—RESTORATION OF MATERIAL SEIZED.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is a fact that, after the arrest of Herr Most on March 30th 1881, the police seized the following articles, the property of Herr Most, at his publishing office in Great Titchfield Street, viz.: three pages of the "Freiheit" (set up type), 20,000 handbills, 1,000 copies of an 80 paged book "Tactic contra Freiheit," 100 photographs (portraits of private friends), and sundry manuscripts; and, if it is a fact that these articles are still retained by the police, notwithstanding that Herr Most, now released, has formally and repeatedly demanded their return both at Scotland Yard and at the Home Office; and, if so, will he state to the House the Law under which he retains possession of these articles?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the practice in such cases was, that upon the arrest of any person, any property found in his possession which it was supposed might be required at the trial, was taken possession of by the police and detained; and that, when such person was released on the expiration of his sentence, the property was returned to him, unless there was some valid reason to the contrary. That would be done in the case referred to, and, accordingly, the greater part, but not all, of the articles mentioned would be returned.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) — STATE OF LODGING-HOUSES IN LONDONDERRY.

MR. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Local Government Board received the last Report from their Inspector as to the state of the lodging-houses in Londonderry, particularly those frequented by emigrants; and, whether these Reports are of a satisfactory character or not?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board have have had no correspondence, nor have they received any Report, on the state of lodging-houses in Londonderry; but in consequence of what the hon. Member sent to me along with his Question, I will make inquiry.

EGYPT (EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the great amount of extra labour which was entailed upon the employés of Woolwich Arsenal during the late War in Egypt, and the admirable manner in which their work was executed, contributing in no small degree to the rapid success of the Campaign, he will grant them a holiday, without loss of pay, on Saturday next, in order that they may have the opportunity of witnessing the Review?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; I am very glad to have this opportunity of recognizing the zeal with which the men in the Manufacturing Departments exerted themselves during the recent preparations for war, and I have authorized to-morrow being a whole holiday for those Departments.

STATE OF IRELAND—IMPENDING FAMINE—DISTRESS IN CARRICK.

Mr. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has investigated the reports of extreme distress prevailing in the neighbourhood of Carrick; and, if he proposes to adopt any measure of relief?

Mr. TREVELYAN: One of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board was sent specially to the Carrick district to report on the alleged impending famine in that district, and I have received his Report, which is dated the 28th ultimo, and is of a re-assuring character. An Inspector of the Board is at present on the spot making further inquiries, and I expect to have his Report in a few days. No exceptional measures of relief are at present proposed; but we are closely watching this, and the other districts, where exceptional distress is said to exist, or to be anticipated.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that in the autumn of 1879 nearly all the Inspectors of the Poor Law Board gave reports of a re-assuring character?

Mr. TREVELYAN assured the noble Lord that the Government had been, and were, quite aware that it was always much safer to be on the hopeful side in the early days of what might prove to to a serious matter.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—CESSION OF A PORT ON THE RED SEA TO ABYSSINIA.

Mr. SUMMERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether in the course of the arrangements to be made for the settlement of Egypt, Her Majesty's Government will use its influence to secure for Abyssinia a free port on the Red Sea?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In reply to this Question, I should say that I am not convinced that it would be well to mix up the two questions of securing for Abyssinia a free port on the Red Sea and the arrangements now to be made for the settlement of Egypt. The object is one, however, which we regard with sympathy, and we shall do what we can to promote the attainment of it.

CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN—OFFICES OF FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Mr. CALLAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is intended in the future that the dual office of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer shall be represented in the person of one Member of the Cabinet; and, if so, whether the Government are prepared to make any suggestion by which a more economical arrangement than the present may be effected?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, there is no intention that the Offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer shall in future be represented in the person of one Member of the Cabinet. The hon. Gentleman then asks me whether the Government are prepared to make any suggestion by which a more economical arrangement than the present may be effected? Evidently the hon. Member is under some misapprehension. He knows probably the Rule on which the salary of the First Lord of the Treasury is regulated when he is Chancellor of the Exchequer. The present arrangement is not an arrangement which causes an increase, but a decrease of expenditure. In 1872, the salaries of the Board of Treasury and the Private Secretaries were £13,000; in 1877 they were £14,300; and in 1882 they are £10,400. So that the hon. Member is under a misapprehension, as I have said, on the point of economy. But I am very far from saying that the present arrangement is a good one, because I doubt whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought not to be the most vigilant man in the Cabinet or the Government; and I do not consider that his duties are performed at the present moment in a perfectly satisfactory manner by me. I do not think I am able to search out and make work for myself. Work that comes to me I hope to do; but I do not consider that I am able to search out and make work for myself in the same degree as I think a thoroughly good Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to do. I may say I have endeavoured to do my best; but I hope that no very long time will elapse before a change in the present arrangement is made, although that change will be more costly than the present arrangement.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE EXPENSES—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

MR. SALT gave Notice that on Thursday he would ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Vote of Credit of £2,300,000, taken for the cost of the operations of the Army and Navy in Egypt, had been exceeded, and, if so, to what extent; also, from what source such excess was provided; whether all the the expenditure incurred in Egypt had been made in accordance with the provisions of the Appropriation Act; and, whether it was intended to move a further Vote of Credit in the present Session; and, if so, what would be its amount?

MR. CHILDERS: I think I had better say at once that as my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has stated that in a few days he will give the whole of the information asked for by the hon. Gentleman, it will be quite unnecessary that I should be asked this Question before he makes that statement.

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

MR. J. R. YORKE wished to ask the Prime Minister another Question on the same subject as that on which he had put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman yesterday—namely, in reference to the Notice of Motion he had given for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the circumstances under which three Members of the House were released from Kilmainham Prison in May last. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman, in the first place, whether he would endeavour to prevent any of those Gentlemen with whom he had influence from putting down a Notice of opposition to his Motion; or, if he were unable to do that, and one of those Gentlemen put down a Notice of opposition, whether the right hon. Gentleman would give any of those facilities at his disposal for bringing on that Motion at a proper time? Yesterday, the right hon. Gentleman declined to contemplate the contingency of the Motion being opposed by any of his supporters; but since then a Notice of opposition had been placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), a strong supporter of the Government. He now wished, therefore, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was his intention to give him a night for the discussion of his Motion? If the Prime Minister was not able to adopt that course, he would like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would place at his disposal any of those facilities of which he had spoken, and which he was able to extend to any Member having any important question to bring before the House?

MR. LABOUCHERE asked whether the Prime Minister contemplated granting any facilities for the discussion of that Motion; and, if so, whether the right hon. Gentleman would remember that he had also a Motion with reference to Mr. Bradlaugh; and he would ask whether the Prime Minister would give facilities for the discussion of his Motion before that of the wretched rhetorical—he did not know what to call it—absurdity of the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire?

MR. CALLAN remarked, that he had blocked the hon. Member's (Mr. Labouchere's) Motion, and he should not withdraw that block unless the hon. Member for Northampton also removed the blocking Notice which he had given in regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. Yorke).

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member for East Gloucestershire put to me a very simple Question, and I informed him that it was impossible for me to interrupt the regular course of Business by breaking in upon our discussions upon Procedure; and in regard to that matter I believe I have followed one uniform course. A great number of subjects have been suggested for discussion, which would involve an interruption of the debates on Procedure; and one rule has been applied to them all by the Government. I presume the hon. Gentleman now repeats his Question of yesterday—namely, whether an arrangement will be made to break off the discussion before half-past 12 o'clock, to enable him to make his Motion? I hope he will not expect me to take any part in the debate on that Motion, because I have one fair day's business to do before I get to the House, and also a fair day's business to do in the House between half-past 4 and midnight; and I cannot undertake to join in the debate on the hon. Member's Motion after half-past 12; but I certainly will endeavour, on the first day on which it can be done without great inconvenience, to suspend the discussion on Procedure before half-past 12, so that he may have the opportunity of bringing forward his Motion.

Mr. J. R. YORKE hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would kindly give sufficient previous Notice of the day on which he proposed to suspend the discussion on Procedure, otherwise it might be impossible for Members desirous of taking part in the debate on his Motion to be present to do so.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The discussion on Procedure on a particular night may not be in a condition to be conveniently suspended before half-past 12. Suppose a Motion to have been made at a quarter-past 12, any hon. Member may speak beyond half-past 12. I could not undertake to suspend the debate on Procedure, for instance, while there might be in issue a question of importance that could not be interrupted without much inconvenience. All I can say is, that upon the first evening when, without such public inconvenience, it can be interrupted, I should be prepared to move the adjournment of the debate for the accommodation of the hon. Gentleman. I do not see what more it is in my power to do.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Might I ask the Prime Minister, with respect to the Motion of the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire, whether he will take the usual steps to make it known among his followers that the Government would support the Motion?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that I have a Motion which takes precedence of that of the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire—a Motion in regard to Mr. Bradlaugh? And if any arrangement is made to suspend the proceedings, I am prepared to bring forward the Motion.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I request an answer from the right hon. Gentleman to the Question I have put, for it is very inconvenient for hon. Members to be kept waiting day after day in expectation of the Motion being made.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have given all the answer that it is in my power to give. I cannot undertake, whatever be the state of the debate on Procedure, to move that it be cut short for the purpose of bringing on a Motion of this nature.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I did not ask that. My question was, whether the Prime Minister will take the usual steps to cause it to be understood among his Friends that the Motion is supported by the Government?

Mr. GLADSTONE was understood to say that he must decline to answer a Question which was of such an unusual character.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: I should like to ask the Prime Minister, at the same time, whether he recollects what took place the other day? He then challenged my hon. Friend to make the inquiry, which, in general terms, he promised to grant. [Mr. Gladstone: Were those my words?] I do not say those were the very words; but I ask him whether I do not correctly represent the substance of what passed then? It was understood that the right hon. Gentleman would facilitate the granting of such an inquiry; and I want to know whether, under the circumstances—my hon. Friend having accepted the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, and given public Notice of the Motion of Inquiry which he intimated he would be prepared, if not to approve, at least not to disapprove, and Notice having been given of opposition to the Motion

—he will take the usual steps, which are very well known to the House, to inform hon. Members opposite that he is pledged to facilitate the granting of an inquiry; and, further, having regard to the fact that the Committee can only sit during the present Session of Parliament, whether he will give as early an opportunity as possible for the Motion?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the first part of the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have already stated that, on the first convenient opportunity that the Business relating to Procedure can be broken off before half-past 12, I will move the adjournment for the hon. Gentleman's accommodation. With regard to the last Question of the right hon. Gentleman, which is a repetition of that of the noble Lord, which I just now declined to answer, I do not think it is proper that I should answer a Question repeated in that way.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I only desire to place on record the fact.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether, on Monday, the Prime Minister would be able to make some statement analogous to that which he had made with reference to the Motion on the subject of Mr. Gray's imprisonment?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made exactly the same statement with regard to both cases. It is a conditional engagement to suspend proceedings with a view of allowing the Motion with reference to Mr. Gray to be disposed of if it can be done without great public inconvenience in arresting some important discussion.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Will the right hon. Gentleman fix Monday, subject to the same conditions, for the Motion of my hon. Friend?

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.)—THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

SIR JOHN HAY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any proposal is to be made for appointing the Committee on Privilege, and what arrangement he proposes to make on the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: We must endeavour, if possible, to adjourn to-night before half-past 12 to dispose of the matter. There may be some topic of importance before the House; but I hope we shall be able to do so.

EGYPT AND TUNIS—SLAVERY.

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt have been or will be instructed to press upon the Khedive of Egypt the fulfilment of the Convention of 1877 between the British and Egyptian Governments for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and to endeavour to obtain the abolition of slavery in Egypt; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence which resulted in the abolition of slavery in Tunis, at the recommendation of Her Majesty's Government, and a Copy of the Convention to that effect between the Governments of Great Britain and Tunis?

MR. GLADSTONE: As to this Question generally, I have to assure my right hon. Friend that with its purport Her Majesty's Government entirely sympathize; and I would refer him to the State Papers that were laid on the Table, volume 35, pages 639 and 643. I have also to say that, with regard to Tunis, by the declaration of 1846, the Government of Tunis undertook to abolish slavery; but no Convention with Great Britain was entered into on the subject until 1875, when, under a Convention, His Highness the Bey engaged to cause the declaration to be obeyed. That Convention was laid before Parliament in 1876. I do not know that I have anything more to add. I have stated briefly our sympathy with my right hon. Friend, and I believe we shall be found working in his direction.

MR. W. E. FORSTER reminded the Prime Minister that he had not answered the first part of his Question—namely, whether Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt had been instructed to press upon the Khedive the abolition of slavery in Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a matter as to which the reply will be found in the State Papers to which I have referred my right hon. Friend. If he finds that reply to be insufficient, perhaps he will repeat his Question on Monday.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The quotation from the State Papers is not with regard to Tunis, but with regard to Egypt. Perhaps I may repeat the Question on Monday.

EGYPT—THE DUAL CONTROL.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Dual Control was abolished by the Khedive under the advice of the British Government; whether any substitute for the Control has been agreed to by the British Government and the Government of Egypt; and, whether he can state what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take in order to secure the predominance of British influence in Egypt and over the Suez Canal?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Dual Control has not, at the moment at which I am speaking, been abolished; but the Egyptian Government has expressed its desire that it should be abolished. That desire was not expressed under the advice of the British Government, but was a spontaneous expression. That answers, I think, the two first parts of the Question.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Were Her Majesty's Government consulted?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Consulted! The expression of the desire was consulting in itself. With regard to the last part of the Question, I cannot make any addition at the present time to what has been already stated; but when Her Majesty's Government are prepared with the arrangements they will make them known to Parliament.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the great cost of living at Cairo and throughout Egypt, it is proposed to make an extra allowance of pay to Her Majesty's Forces quartered in that country?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that the non-commissioned officers and men in Egypt, so far from being put to extra expense, are better off than at home, as they receive a full field ration gratis. As to officers, I am in communication with the Treasury on the subject of the proper allowance they should receive to cover the extra expense of living.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can inform the House as to whether or not Russian troops are now at Merv?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; we have no reason to suppose that there are any Russian troops at Merv.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the hon. Baronet telegraph? ["No, no!"] I beg pardon; I am asking a reasonable Question. I have had information which leads me to suppose that they are; and I ask the hon. Baronet, whether he will give the country satisfaction by sending a special telegram to Teheran and Meshed to know whether there is any truth in the statement?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We have an official Representative at Meshed, with whom we are in constant communication whenever there is anything to report. We have received no such information from him.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GRAVES OF THE SLAIN AT TEL-EL-KEBIR.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER (for Mr. Edward Clarke) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government have already caused, or will cause, steps to be taken for inclosing, and marking with some permanent record which can be identified hereafter, the graves of those officers and soldiers who have been interred at Ismailia, Kassassin, and Tel-el-Kebir, so that they may not simply be lost in the sand?

Mr. CHILDERS: This is a Question for the Foreign Office rather than for me, and my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has already answered, on the 6th instant, a somewhat similar inquiry. I may, however, say that I am satisfied, from what has already passed with the Egyptian Government, that proper steps will be taken in the matter.

EGYPT (EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Mr. SCHREIBER inquired, Whether a good top dressing of gravel would be given to the wood pavement in Piccadilly on the occasion of the Review—a precaution which would probably prevent many accidents both to men and horses?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that the roads were not under his control.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — THE EXPENSES — THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

MR. SALT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can give the House some idea upon what day he proposes either to move a Vote of Credit or to make some explanation with regard to the cost of the Egyptian Expedition?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have never given an absolute reply to the House on the subject of a Vote of Credit; but I have repeatedly referred to the subject, and it has always been to the effect of saying that I had no reason to expect that any Vote of Credit would be proposed during the present Session. I repeat that now with rather increased confidence; but I hope I shall be able, in the course of next week, to make a statement of a more definite character as to the probable excess over the Vote already granted by Parliament.

THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, having regard to the fact that the money for the erection of the new Law Courts is voted by the House of Commons, and to the fact that the Great Hall of the new Courts is calculated to hold some two thousand persons, he could not see his way to allot more than one hundred and fifty places at the opening ceremony to Members of the House of Commons?

MR. GIBSON wished to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman's statement that Members were expected to come in levée dress meant that if they did not wear such dress they would not be let in?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I only said that Members would be expected to appear in levée dress, not that they would be required to do so. I think that accommodation for 150 persons is about the proportion that should be devoted to the House of Commons. The Hall will only accommodate about 1,800 persons, and it must be remembered that it will be necessary to give precedence to the Superior Judges, the Queen's Counsel, the Junior Bar, and the representatives of the Incorporated Law Society. When all that is done the remaining space will be extremely limited.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — SIXTH RULE (POSTPONEMENT OF PREAMBLE).

[TWENTY-FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure.

MR. GLADSTONE moved the 6th Resolution, as follows:—

> "That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put."

The right hon. Gentleman said this Resolution, and the one which followed, involved matters of smaller moment than those which had already been under consideration. So far as his experience went it was the rarest instance, when there was a discussion on the postponement of the Preamble, that it was of an obstructive nature. Preambles in former times did contain much important matter; but Preambles now were almost invariably, if not invariably, purely formal, and the postponement of a Motion of that kind was evidently a proposal that ought not to give the power of debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. GORST moved to add to the Resolution the words "except by leave of the Committee." He argued that it might sometimes be convenient that there should be a discussion on the Preamble of a Bill before the consideration of the clauses. If the Preamble were always to be postponed without Question put, the Government might find it difficult to announce the changes which were sometimes introduced into a Bill after the second reading. As an example of the measure which had undergone great changes at the hands of its framers after that stage he instanced the Boundary Bill of 1868.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words "except by leave of the Committee."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE doubted if the Amendment would serve any purpose. He did not deny that there might be occasions when it would be convenient at the stage of Committee to make a statement with regard to changes introduced into a Bill. But an opportunity of making an explanation of that kind could be obtained by a Motion for Adjournment. The case would be exactly one of those in which a Motion for Adjournment could be legitimately proposed.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought the course suggested by his hon. and learned Friend would be more convenient than that which the Prime Minister contemplated.

Mr. GORST said, after the statement of the Prime Minister he would not press his Amendment.

Mr. WARTON argued that if the Resolution were passed without alteration it would be in the power of a Minister to introduce most important matter into the Preamble of a Bill. Several cases had occurred of late in which principles which were objected to by many people had been laid down in Preambles. For instance, in a recent measure dealing with corruption, it was asserted in the Preamble that in certain cases boroughs ought to be punished by a suspension of Writs. In like manner in the Bill for closing public-houses on Sunday an assertion was made in the Preamble which he should feel bound to deny. In short, there was a great danger that absurd statements would be introduced into Preambles; and if the basis of a Bill was absurd, what must the superstructure be? He would like to know from the Speaker whether the "leave of the Committee" was the same as the "leave of the House?" and if it were he would move to omit the word "do," in order to insert "may, by leave of the Committee."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the word "do," and insert the words "may, by leave of the Committee," — (*Mr. Warton,*) — instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'do' stand part of the Question."

Mr. SPEAKER said, he was at a loss to see how, under the circumstances, the "leave of the Committee" was to be ascertained.

Mr. WARTON said, that the Chairman was to ask whether it was the wish of the Committee that the Preamble be postponed.

Mr. GLADSTONE remarked, that if any Member disputed that the Preamble be postponed it was in the power of the majority not to postpone it; but by the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, one Member would be able to prevent its postponement.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved to add, at the end of the Rule, "unless on the application of the Member in charge of the Bill the Committee should otherwise order."

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "unless on the application of the Member in charge of the Bill the Committee should otherwise order."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE pointed out that the Amendment might produce effects not contemplated by the noble Lord.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put.

(6.) *Resolved*, That, in Committee on a Bill, the Preamble do stand postponed until after the consideration of the Clauses, without Question put.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—SEVENTH RULE (CHAIRMAN TO LEAVE THE CHAIR WITHOUT QUESTION).

Mr. GLADSTONE moved—

"That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put."

The object of the Rule, the right hon. Gentleman explained, was that the Chairman, on progress made upon a Bill or Resolution, should be allowed to leave the Chair without putting the preliminary Question, "That I do now leave the Chair?"

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. SALT observed that the right hon. Gentleman having moved the Resolution with very little, if any, comment, it would seem that he did not think it could give rise to any legitimate discussion. The practice of the House was that when a Bill passed through Committee the Chairman put the Motion that "I report this Bill as amended, or without Amendment," as the case might be, "to the House." That Motion having been agreed to, the next Question put by the Chairman was "That I now leave the Chair?" As he understood the Resolution, its effect would be to render this latter Motion unnecessary. He wished to know whether that supposition was correct?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the Chairman of a Committee was invariably ordered to report something; Progress, whether progress had been made or not; a Resolution; or a Bill, as the case might be. The contention of the Government was that the work of a Committee ended with the Report, and that it was a purely idle form to put the Question, "That I now leave the Chair?"

MR. SALT said, he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. The case being as he supposed, he wished to call attention to the Standing Order of July 19, 1854, which ran as follows:—

"Bills which may be fixed for consideration in Committee on the same day, whether in progress or otherwise, may be referred together to a Committee of the Whole House, which may consider, on the same day, all the Bills so referred to it, without the Chairman leaving the Chair on each separate Bill: Provided, that, with respect to any Bill not in progress, if any Member shall object to its consideration together with other Bills, the Order of Day for the Committee on such Bill is to be postponed."

The comment on that Order in the work of Sir Erskine May was—

"This course is now frequently adopted with much convenience and saving of time."

The object of the Order was, of course, that towards the end of the Session Bills about which no great controversy arose might be referred to the same Committee, in order to avoid the necessity of bringing back the Speaker many times over for the Report of each separate Bill. Now, he wished to know how that convenient custom could be made to fall in with this Resolution, according to which it was necessary for the Chairman to leave the Chair at the end of the Committee on every Bill? He moved to negative the Resolution.

MR. DODSON said, he was not sure that it was necessary, when several Bills were referred to the same Committee, that the Order for reporting should be made till the Committee had determined whether it would go through all or any of the Bills; but even when a Committee ordered the Chairman to report a Bill, it would be perfectly allowable first to conclude the consideration of the other Bills.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 137; Noes 69: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 376.)

(7.) *Resolved,* That, when the Chairman of a Committee has been ordered to make a Report to the House, he shall leave the Chair, without Question put.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—EIGHTH RULE (HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE).

MR. GLADSTONE, in introducing the Resolution, said, he was afraid that the gleam of light and hope which had been cast on their troubled course by the rapid progress through the 6th and 7th Resolutions was destined to suffer what he hoped would only be a partial and short eclipse; but he did not expect to get through the famous Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule as quickly as those Resolutions which just been disposed of. His formal duty was simply to introduce the subject by moving that the Standing Order be read. He avoided purposely discussing the Standing Order on its merits, because there were, undoubtedly, hopeless differences of opinion upon that question. It would, indeed, be more easy to bring the mind of the House upon almost any subject into a state of unanimity than upon the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. Yet, undoubtedly, the predominant sentiment of the House was in favour of maintaining the Rule in some shape, and the question was whether it should be relaxed, and how much should it be relaxed? The Government were inclined to think that its operation was too severe. In the first place, the proposal they should make to amend the Standing Order would, he was sure, receive great favour from hon. Gentlemen opposite, because it was entirely in favour of freedom of speech. They proposed to restore freedom of speech in regard to certain stages—that was to say, the stage of the introduction of Bills, and the stages subsequent to Committee, their contention being, as to the first, that it was not desirable that a Bill should be stopped by the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule from coming under the notice and discussion of the House; and as to the second, that when the House had given its sanction to the principle of a Bill, and had taken the trouble of going through its details, it was not desirable that a Bill should be stopped from further progress by this Rule. This was a change entirely in favour of private Members. It was of exceedingly little importance to the Government, whose Business could be arranged so as to be but little affected by the Rule; but it was of very great importance to private Members, and unquestionably this relaxation, if adopted, would considerably increase the prospects of Private Bill legislation. He had first of all to move that the Standing Orders of the 18th of February, 1879, and of the 9th of May, 1882, be read, in order that any Amendments might be moved upon it.

Standing Order 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, read as followeth:—

> "That, except for a Money Bill, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion be taken after half-past Twelve of the clock at night, with respect to which Order or Notice of Motion a Notice of Opposition or Amendment shall have been printed on the Notice Paper, or if such Notice of Motion shall only have been given the next previous day of sitting, and objection shall be taken when such Notice is called.
>
> "That Motions for the appointment or nomination of Standing Committees and Proceedings made in accordance with the provisions of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order be excepted from the operation of this Order."

Sir JOHN HAY rose to move that the Standing Order of the 18th of February, 1879, be repealed, explaining that the repeal would involve that of May, 1882, which was merely a rider. He had for many years opposed it, both when it was first proposed and since. Business proceeded more freely before the Rule was made, because it was continued as long as the good sense of the House permitted; and blocking had followed the passing of the Rule. One reason given for it when it was passed as a temporary Order was that the occupants of the Reporters' Gallery could not conveniently furnish their respective newspapers with the reports of the proceedings after that hour. Another was that the Rule enabled many Members to reach their homes by the last train on the Metropolitan District Railway, which was run specially for their convenience. A third was that Members of the Government, fatigued by their exertions during the day, were not present when legislation by private Members was introduced at that hour, and the consideration of such measures was left to other Members. There was this difference between the Wednesday Rule and the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, which had been said to be an extension of the former: By the Wednesday Rule a Member who opposed a Bill at a quarter to 6 must be in his place; but by the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule a Member who might be at Cairo, or Paris, or Vienna, or among his constituents, might, by telegraphing, place a Notice of objection on the Paper, and prevent legislation which might be very much desired. He hoped he might, without egotism, instance two cases in which he was himself personally interested. There were two Acts of Parliament which he had been instrumental in passing. One related to Navy prize, and the other to explosive substances. Neither of those measures could have been passed if the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule had then been in existence. The Committee of 1878 on Public Business received most valuable evidence on this subject. Sir Erskine May, for example, speaking of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, said—

> "I do not approve of it personally, but that is not of the least importance."

Moreover, the Speaker touched on all the points in his evidence. He said with regard to the Rule—

> "I do not recommend it. I am not myself favourably disposed to the Rule itself; but I am aware it is generally approved of as convenient to Members."

Again, the Speaker said—

> "The Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule has the effect of excluding a great deal of private Members' business from discussion . . . . I am not prepared to say that the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule has the effect of shortening the Sittings of the House. These were, in effect, shorter before the Rule was established than they are now."

In answer to other Questions, the Speaker said—

> "It has promoted the convenience of Members, no doubt; but I think it has produced bad results in several ways . . . . It is true that a great many Government Bills which used formerly to be considered after half-past Twelve o'clock are shunted in the earlier part of the Session, and are only taken up when the Morning Sittings begin."

He (Sir John Hay) thought Members ought to consider whether they were doing their duty to their constituents in debarring Members from bringing forward measures which might be beneficial to their constituents, and from occasionally applying the early hours of the morning to legislation, when it was shown that although they might occasionally have to sit a little longer, yet, under ordinary conditions, the Business of the House would be shortened by the abrogation of this Rule. Sir Graham Montgomery, who was a Member of the Committee of 1878, recently told him that he felt it was impossible to get Scotch Business considered in the House as long as the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule was in operation. Speaking as a Scottish Member and as a naval officer, he (Sir John Hay) could say that matters of business connected with Scotland and with the Navy which could be considered by Scottish Members and naval officers and those interested was shut out entirely by this Rule, and he trusted the Scottish Members would join with him in urging upon the Prime Minister—the most distinguished of Scottish Representatives—that the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, which did so much injury to Scottish Business, should be removed from the Order Book, and that they should have an opportunity of considering those matters which during the first 10 or 11 years he had been in the House they had always had a full opportunity of discussing, but which since 1871 had been entirely excluded from the notice of the House.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the said Standing Order be repealed,"—(*Admiral Sir John Hay,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'except for a Money Bill' stand part of the said Standing Order."

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, that if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman pressed the Amendment to a division he should support him. He had a complaint against that Standing Order. The late Government had passed a Bill for the reform of the Universities, and vested the power of framing statutes for the different Colleges in certain Commissioners. The statutes so framed were to lie on the Table of the House in the usual way, without any special notice being given to Members. He gave Notice of Motion for the rejection of one of those statutes. The Notice was blocked first by one of the Commissioners, and then by one of the Members for the University of Oxford. Thus the statute was passed without the House having an opportunity of discussing it. It was true that an alteration was made at the instance of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock); but the mischief was done. Certain Members got a reputation for zeal and energy, which was little deserved, by blocking all sorts of Bills, and thus an insignificant Member was able to prevent important and beneficial legislation.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he thought it was not quite fair that the whole burden of defending the Rule should be thrown upon the Prime Minister. He contended that the main reason why in former times legislation was more easy, even without the Rule, was because there was greater respect for the dignity of the House and the convenience of Members. But in 1865 and later there was a great change; so that the state of things in the House became intolerable. A Committee was appointed in 1871 which dealt with the question in an exhaustive way, and the only question then was whether the hour should not be fixed at 12 instead of 12.30. The Rule was drafted by the Prime Minister. The object of the Rule was not, as his right hon. and gallant Friend had imaginatively stated, to prevent, but to promote legislation. The Rule was adopted unanimously by the House in 1871 as a Sessional Order. It was unanimously renewed in the Session of 1872. In 1873 the House again confirmed the Rule after a division. In 1877, there was again a division, in which 185 supported, and only 23 opposed the renewal of the Rule. At last, in 1879, the Rule was made a Standing Order of the House with universal approval. The question now was whether the House should abolish a Standing Order thus repeatedly confirmed by large majorities of the House? His right hon. and gallant Friend had referred to the discussion of 1878, and to the evidence given against the Rule. But the House in 1879, with all that evidence before it—and on such a question high authorities might differ—made the Rule into a Standing Order. His right hon. and gallant Friend had refered to Naval and Scotch Business. But Naval Business was discussed when the House was considering the Estimates in Committee of Supply, and it was desirable on so important a question to have as many Members present as possible; and Members objected to the Estimates being dealt with at a late hour. As to Scotch Business, he remembered congratulating Mr. Dunlop, formerly Member for Greenock, upon getting through more Bills than anybody else did. Mr. Dunlop replied that the secret of his success was that he never got up in the House to introduce his Bill after 12 o'clock, and that he thus kept the House in good humour. His hon. Friend the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had given his experience; but his hon. Friend was not quite accurate. There was one occasion on which his hon. Friend might have brought forward his Motion before 12 o'clock at night—but good Homer was found sleeping. He hoped that the House would give a steady support to the Rule as it stood.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS wished to correct his right hon. Friend. On the occasion referred to he could not have brought on his Motion. His Motion on that occasion referred to Jesus College, and he was unable to bring it on because it was after a division taken on the Previous Question on going into Committee of Supply.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, that had nothing to do with the Half-past twelve Rule. The question was not a Party one, but one whether or not the legislation should be carried on in a dignified manner, and in a manner likely to conduce to the interests of the nation. He hoped the House would support the Rule as it stood.

Mr. DILLWYN said, he thought the Government Amendment a good one. He entirely disliked this Rule, and agreed with what had been said by his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wigtown (Sir John Hay). The effect of the Rule was, he believed, almost entirely to block private Members' Business and to interefere with the Business of the Government. The Rule gave rise to Obstruction because hon. Members talked against the time on one measure in order to bring one that was to follow under the operation of the Rule. He was glad the Government intended to relax its stringency; but he hoped they would be able to see their way to the entire abrogation of the Rule, which had done, in his opinion, more than anything else to impede legislation.

Colonel STANLEY said, that undoubtedly there had been frequent cases in which long and protracted discussions had taken place, not with a view to the settlement of the subjects immediately under consideration, but with reference to other questions which were to come on afterwards. But he would point out that the Obstruction to which the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr Dillwyn) had referred could be dealt with by the 1st Resolution. A great deal was to be said in favour of the Rule. He believed there was no comparison between the dignity of the proceedings early in the Sitting and late at night. He was sure the Half-past Twelve Rule could be fairly applied, and, therefore, he desired that it should be retained.

Mr. MONK said, that the only objection he entertained to the proposal of the Prime Minister, which was merely a reproduction of the Resolution which he (Mr. Monk) moved last Session, and which would then have been adopted by the House if an unfortunate misunderstanding had not arisen on the part of the Government "Whip," was that it did not go far enough. There could be no doubt the intention of the Rule was good, but its operation had been most unfortunate He asked the Government, however, to consent to the entire abrogation of the Rule. Hon. Members talked of the 1st Resolution of the Government being a gagging Rule. Why, this was the most gagging Rule ever invented. He really did not think the ingenuity of man could have invented any Rule which would be a greater preventive of legislation. For these reasons he should support the Motion of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay).

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he was willing to admit that a great evil existed under the present system; but, in his opinion, they could not abrogate this Rule without producing a great amount of discontent. He remembered having on one occasion carried a Bill through the House at 3 o'clock with the assistance of the Scottish Members, which he could not have done if the Half-past Twelve Rule had been in operation. But he had also been an opponent of Bills, and had to sit up night after night, not knowing when they would come on. That was one of the things that had led to the adoption of the Rule. With regard to Government Bills, they had an understanding always in the beginning of the evening as to what would be taken; but a private Member in charge of a Bill might not be in the House, and they might not be able to find out what he was going to do, so that those interested in a measure had to wait about, not knowing, perhaps, even where the Member in charge of it was. He thought that state of things would be found intolerable if re-introduced as it had been in past times. And he was sure the House would never submit to the inconvenience to which it formerly was subjected. If the Rule could be so framed that if a Member were not present to support his Bill it should be discharged or postponed till another day, the difficulty might be met; but he did not think they could consent to the total abrogation of the Rule.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT supported the maintenance of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. It had been well said that this was not a Party question, and he was exceedingly glad to hear the remarks of the Prime Minister, because he had placed the Rule very fairly before the House. He thought that anyone—and he was glad to see that there was a prospect of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) rising to support its continuance—who had any lengthened experience of Parliamentary duties, would agree with him in saying what an intolerable nuisance it had been to sit there hour after hour, and night after night, not knowing when a Bill might come forward, and when it might not. Any hon. Member having a Bill down, knew that if he liked he could keep Members in the House; and sometimes a Member would pertinaciously put it down, simply in order to detain Members in the House who were excessively anxious to go home and get to bed. So far as he had seen the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule had nothing to do with retarding the progress of a Bill brought forward. It was from other causes that the progress of legislation was impeded; and when he saw that even his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War was obliged to bring in his Estimates at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, what might it have been if they had not had this Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule? They might have had, perhaps, after the consideration of the Estimates were over, to sit considering a Bill until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. It was, he thought, a most salutary Rule, and one which they ought to continue to carry out. Everyone ought to go home at half-past 12 o'clock, and might do so if the Business of the House was judiciously arranged and properly carried out. He recollected an amiable Member of the House who was excessively fond of speaking. He alluded to Mr. Forsyth, the late Member for Marylebone. Well, when Mr. Forsyth was in the House he had a little Bill — the Baths and Washhouses Bill he thought it was called. Mr. Forsyth came to him and asked what he was to do, as he was most anxious to get it through. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) replied—"I will undertake that it passes if you follow my advice." He asked what was that; and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelott) told him—"Never open your mouth; but simply take off your hat at every stage of the Bill." That Bill became law. Now, if hon. Members would simply state what was the purport of their Bills, and not go into any lengthened harangue about them, they would be very much more likely to pass. Believing, as he did, that the Rule had worked essentially in the interests of the House, he should certainly vote for its continuance.

MR. DODSON said, he felt as strongly as ever the objections that might be made to the Rule; but it had now been a Standing Order of the House for many years, and the House had become so accustomed to it that he did not think it would be prepared to part with it. If, in a moment of zeal and energy, the Rule were to be repealed, he was not at all sure that, before long, the House would not be invited to re-enact it, and that that proposition would not, in its turn, be supported by a majority. The Government wished, with regard to this matter, to proceed as much as possible in accordance with the feeling of the House. So far as he could venture to guage the feeling of the House, it was in favour of the Rule being substantially retained; and he also hoped that the feeling of the House would be in favour of making some amendment in it which would tend, without taking away its substantial advantages in regard to the comfort and convenience of Members—he had almost said to the prolongation of their lives —to prevent its acting so restrictively as it had done on the progress of legislation. They proposed, therefore, to move such Amendments as would, he trusted, remove the opportunities of abuse to which it was liable. In inviting the House not to agree to the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) for the repeal of the Rule, he would ask hon. Members to bear in mind that, by the Resolutions already passed, and those about to be proposed, some opportunities for delay and obstruction would be cut off, so that this Rule was not likely to be so severe in its operation in the future as it had been in the past.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that some hon. Members would recollect the time when the Half-past Twelve Rule was only a Sessional and not a Standing Order of the House. Before its re-enactment at the beginning of a Session the actual distress brought on by being kept in the House till untimely hours was such as those who had suffered would not easily forget. A great many Private Bills were put down on Government nights, and hon. Members interested in them kept the House sitting till 3, 4, or 5 o'clock in the morning day after day. He maintained that practice had shown that the Rule was absolutely required, and he was convinced that if it were taken off the Order Book there would, in a short time, arise a great outcry for replacing it, which would force itself upon the attention of the House.

Mr. RYLANDS said, that he had always taken great interest in this Rule from the time of its being first passed. Before its enactment a great number of private legislative projects of more or less mischievous tendency were pressed on in the early hours of the morning The only way of opposing such projects was to do as he did, and sit in the House night after night watching these Bills. This was only done at great physical cost. The outside public were surprised that legislation should be attempted by the House at untimely hours with a small attendance, and when those present were half asleep. If the Rule were that no Business should be taken after half-past 12, it would be of great advantage to the country and also to the interests of those who conducted the Business of the Government. The result of legislation being carried on at the late hours with a House half asleep was that Bills were passed full of defects, which had to be rectified by Amending Bills. He hoped the House would not entertain the proposal of his right hon. and gallant Friend, and that he would think fit not to press his Motion.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he was in favour of the Half-past Twelve Rule, and, supported by Mr. Bouverie, he had brought it forward when the Select Committee dealt with the question in 1868. In his opinion, the health of the Speaker, the Members, and the officers of the House ought to be considered; and, therefore, he should vote against the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Baronet. He would, however, be willing to agree to the substitution of 1 o'clock for half-past 12, but believed the total abrogation of the Rule would most seriously injure the Business of the House.

Mr. BRYCE said, he had been struck with the failure of the arguments against the right hon. and gallant Baronet's Motion for the abolition of the Half-past Twelve Rule. It was a fact that the House had sat later since the introduction of the Rule than before. The argument of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) amounted to this—that because legislation after half-past 12 had been bad, therefore legislation by private

Members should be stopped altogether. The application of the Rule had frequently resulted in the total blocking of Bills which, in reality, had the support of a majority of the House. The small change the Government proposed to make was not sufficient. He hoped the right hon. and gallant Baronet would go to a division, so that those who agreed with him might show that the Rule was radically wrong. He thought the proposal of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) a useful one, and that a Committee should be appointed for the arrangement of Business, so that Bills might be fixed for certain days. Thus, private Members might have restored to them that power of legislation which, under the existing Rule, they had lost.

COLONEL MAKINS said, that those private Members who promoted Bills were generally strong men, and rather preferred late hours. For instance, the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) seemed to delight in bringing on Bills at a late hour. But the majority of Members did not bring in Bills, and did not care about sitting up till 3 or 4 in the morning. He was afraid that if the Amendment were carried the scandal of All-night Sittings would become the rule, and not the exception. Therefore, in the interest of many, it was desirable that the Half-past Twelve Rule should not be relaxed.

MR. ACLAND said, he should support the Amendment. The time of the House was constantly being wasted by Members continuing to discuss questions which had been already fully discussed, simply in order to prevent the discussion of other measures. Blocking a Bill ought to be rendered impossible, for surely it was not consulting the progress of Business or the dignity of the House that a Member should be able to stop a measure by putting a "block" on the Paper, and going to bed himself.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, that the hon. and gallant Member for Essex (Colonel Makins) assumed that the Rule shortened the Sittings, whereas it had been conclusively shown that the effect of the Rule was to prolong discussions, by inducing the House to debate Business which no one wished to be carried, in order to defeat some measure in which a number of Members had an interest. The Rule also tended injuriously to affect legislation, because Members often offered to withdraw a block provided a certain concession was made; and this led to arrangements by no means for the public interest. At present, and even under the amended Rule, though a Bill might have the approval of the great majority, and have been examined by a Select Committee upstairs, still it might be blocked by a single Member. He hoped the Government would extend their Amendments to Bills that had been referred to a Select Committee.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the Government proposed to maintain the rigour of the Rule against private Members, and to amend it in their own favour. Although the change proposed by the Government appeared to be equal all round, it was not so in reality, and it would operate unfairly towards private Members. Private Members' Bills, as regarded their second reading and going into Committee, would always be in danger of the Half-past Twelve Rule; whereas the Government, having the power to choose the time for the second reading and the Committee on their Bills, would not be affected by it at all. He should prefer the entire abolition of the Rule to the proposal of the Government, though he thought the Rule should be passed in a form that would really operate fairly all round.

MR. PARNELL also held that, as the Government proposed the Rule, it would work very much in their own favour and against private Members. As the Rule stood now, the second readings of private Members' Bills taken on a Wednesday were entirely thrown away, and much time was lost, because it was impossible for such Bills to advance any further if any Member chose to put a block upon them. Surely nobody would seriously contend that if a private Member's Bill passed a second reading it ought not to have a chance of going through Committee. In the last Parliament a Bill introduced by the late Mr. Butt to extend certain municipal privileges of Irish Corporations was obstructed Session after Session by the operation of the Half-past Twelve Rule, although almost everybody was in favour of the measure. Finally, by an accident, it succeeded in passing through all its stages before half-past 12, and was sent up to the House of Lords, where it was thrown out.

Mr. MACFARLANE complained that it was in the power of one Member to block any Bill which might be desired by nine-tenths of the House. That system was an intolerable nuisance, and he would suggest that it should require at least six Members to block a Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 129; Noes 26: Majority 103. — (Div. List, No. 377.)

Mr. MONK, in moving, in line 1, after "Money Bill," to insert "or for a Bill which has passed the second reading," said, he thought private Members had a right to complain that one solitary Member should have the power to effectually debar a willing House from considering their measures. He put it to the House, whether it was reasonable that the House, after having approved of the principle of a Bill on the second reading, should be prevented by a single Member, out of a love of Obstruction, or from motives which it was not easy to fathom, from considering it in Committee? He should take the sense of the House on this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the words "Money Bill," to insert the words "or for a Bill which has passed the Second Reading."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, he admired the gallantry of his hon. Friend, who, after the division that had just taken place, came forward with a proposal which would, in reality, amount to a nullification of the Rule. He was afraid that about his hon. Friend's conduct there was something of the *spretæ injuria formæ*—slighted churchwardens haunted his night visions—so he hoped that the House would receive the proposal of the hon. Member in the way in which it generally received his legislation. He (Mr. Beresford Hope) thought it was unreasonable to demand that Members should be compelled to remain in the House till the small hours of the morning, after a long and important debate, while an hon. Member aired his peculiar views on an important subject which he had no particular call to take up. Hon. Gentlemen should not endeavour to pass their Bills to the injury of health and strength of the majority of the House, and they had no right to ask for assistance towards the attempt.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he considered this was an Amendment of the very worst description, inasmuch as it minimized the operation of the Rule to a very great extent. It was one thing to adopt the principle of the second reading of a Bill, and quite another to allow it to pass the Committee stage without full debate. In order that the details of Bills might be intelligently discussed in Committee, the faculties of Members ought to be at their best, and it was extremely difficult after 12.30 to maintain the wakefulness requisite for such discussion.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT contended that if there were no Half-past Twelve Rule Bills of great importance would be passed hurriedly through empty Houses. Bills were far more likely to be thoroughly considered in a full House before 12 o'clock, than in a sleepy Assembly after 12. Besides, much of the Government cry for more legislation was factitious, and had no root in public feeling. They had too much rather than too little legislation already.

Mr. LABOUCHERE complained that, at present, although a private Member's Bill should have passed the stage of second reading, it was in the power of one single Member to prevent the measure from becoming law,

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wigtown (Sir John Hay) had said that the House of Commons had sat for a larger number of hours after midnight since the introduction of the Half-past Twelve Rule than before it. At first sight that appeared to be a condemnation of the Rule; but it was not so really, for the late Sittings since the adoption of the Rule had been caused solely by the limitations of it that had unfortunately been agreed to. A weary and jaded House, after discussing a question of National importance for 10 hours, was called on to enter into the details of a Bill in the Committee stage when, as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had very truly observed, the faculties of hon. Members had need to be the keenest. Instead of adopting the proposal of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), the House ought to consider whether important measures in the stage of progress in Committee ought ever to be brought before them at an unreasonably late hour. He had known Bills containing 100 clauses brought forward for consideration in Committee long after the hour designated by the House as the hour after which contentious Business must not be proceeded with. In 1871 a Select Committee resolved "that no fresh opposed Business be taken after 12.30 a.m.," and this was due to the scandalous state of things that had previously prevailed, when continuous Motions for Adjournment were the constant weapons employed to prevent measures being forced through at a time when they could not be fairly discussed. He trusted the Government would stick to the Rule. If the House determined that no Business whatever of a contentious character should be taken after a certain hour it would be so much the better. It was desirable also that the mind of the country should proceed *pari passu* with the progress of measures through the House; but it was perfectly notorious that the speeches on Bills taken after half-past 12 o'clock were never reported at all. It was really legislation *in camerâ* that was going on after that hour. He hoped the Prime Minister, who had approached the question in a thoroughly impartial spirit, would see whether he could not introduce further restriction upon legislation after that hour.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL did not agree with hon. Members opposite that there was too much legislation. He thought there was too little; and he believed that the Resolutions which they had passed and were engaged in passing, by curtailing the abuses of speeches and eccentricities of Procedure, would enable the House to carry on the important legislation that was required in a decent and orderly manner, and that thus a fair opportunity would be given for dealing, not only with Government measures, but with the Bills of private Members, at reasonable hours. It was unfair to ask hon. Members whose health or disposition would not allow them to do so, to stay in the House during the small hours of the morning. At present there were far too many stages in Bills; and he would be glad to see abolished the stage of moving "That the Speaker do leave the Chair," so that there should be no more second-reading speeches at that time.

SIR JOHN HAY said, that his right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Lowther) did not appear to recognize the effect of the Return which had been referred to, or of the evidence of the right hon. the Speaker that since the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule the Business of the House had been prolonged very considerably. Nor did his right hon. Friend seem to be aware of the immense amount of time of which the House was deprived for the consideration of its Business. In the five working days of the week there were only 38 hours devoted to the work of the House; but in the old times there were 20 hours more. At this moment, owing to the Questions being very much prolonged, there were only about six hours, instead of 12, each day devoted to the conduct of Public Business. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] At the time of Lord Palmerston, the most eloquent speech ever delivered—a speech of the late Lord Chief Justice on the Don Pacifico quarrel with Greece—was made at an hour in the morning when no speech was now made at all. The country was deprived of 20 hours a week by the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, the fact was that they sat later at present than before the Half-past Twelve Rule came into operation; and it was, therefore, desirable that the Rule should be modified. The arguments of the right hon, Gentleman (Mr. Beresford Hope) were really all in favour of the Amendment. The Bills that were blocked were the very Bills which the House desired to pass. It was unnecessary to block a Bill which would be defeated on a division. The Prime Minister thought it a monstrous thing that a single Member should be allowed to block a Bill which had passed through a Committee of the Whole House. But that argument applied also to Bills which were sent upstairs to a Committee to be examined, and when they came back were not allowed to proceed. It was clear that time was wasted by the present practice. Bills approved by the House were brought in year after year; the House lost a great deal of time in discussing them; they were read a second time, went through Committee, and were then dropped, and the whole matter had to be gone over again. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would accept the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 21; Noes 76: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 378.)

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, in rising to propose the first of two Amendments to provide that the Rule should come into operation at midnight, and that the House should adjourn at half-past 12, said, the matter was one of primary importance as affecting the health of Members and of the officers of the House. It was ridiculous that they should separate without making some attempt to remedy the great scandal of the inordinate length of their Sittings. He could understand the difficulty of the Government initiating any proposal, because by the alterations made in the Rules their Business would be expedited. If Members supported his first proposition—that no opposed Business should begin after midnight—that would not commit them to the second proposition for adjournment half-an-hour later; but if his first proposal were rejected the second could not be submitted. Owing to the absence at that moment of all the Members of the Government he felt some difficulty in stating his arguments, as someone else would have to repeat them when Members of the Government returned from dinner. If it were admitted that the alterations already made would expedite the more important Business of the Government and of the House, it was reasonable to ask why Members should continue to sit up so late as they had done to transact Business of secondary importance. That the country did not care about the Business transacted in the early hours of the morning was proved by the fact that the newspapers, both Metropolitan and Provincial, did not report the discussions; whereas, on rare occasions, great speeches had been reported when they were delivered between 2 and 3 in the morning. If the country cared about these debates there would be some daily record of them in the public Press, and the fact that no such record existed proved that they were not of absorbing interest. A Return which had been published respecting other Legislative Assemblies showed that the average time of sitting was, in the Cape, from five to six hours; in South Australia, fours hours and a-half; in Tasmania, four hours and a-half; in Victoria, six hours and 51 minutes; and in the latter Parliament no fresh Business of any kind was allowed after 11 o'clock. In the Continental Assemblies the hours of sitting were still shorter. The average was in Austria, four hours; in Denmark, from four to five hours; in France, four hours; in Germany, five hours; in Italy, five hours; in the Netherlands, from four to five hours; in Portugal, five hours; in Spain, four hours; in Sweden, three hours; and in Switzerland, five hours. In the United States the average duration of a Sitting was four hours and a-half, and, if necessary, the Members sometimes met for two hours longer. A Return had been published which purported to give the exact duration of the Sittings of the House of Commons, but included the Wednesday Sittings, which could not extend beyond six hours. According to the Return, the average duration of a Sitting last Session was nine hours and five minutes; but if the Wednesdays were eliminated, it would be found that the average was 10 hours and 10 minutes. In other words, a Sitting of the House of Commons was double the average length of the Sitting of any Continental Assembly. Allowing for the necessary time to get down to the House and home again, Members spent nearly 12 hours out of the 24 in attendance on the House. In addition to that, the Select Committees required a further attendance of four hours a-day twice a-week. In order to diminish the duration of the Sittings, he ventured to bring forward the Amendment that was now before the House. He knew he should be met with the objection that if the Sittings were limited there would not be sufficient time for the transaction of necessary Business; but his own strong impression was that the existing system wasted time, and that the longer that they sat after 12 o'clock, the worse would be the attendance before 12 o'clock. He had understood that formerly great debates were carried on steadily throughout the whole of the evening, and that Members did not go away simultaneously in great numbers to dine. But now, during the dinner hour, almost everybody went away, and the greater part of the evening was wasted, because there was so small an attendance of Members in the House. He believed one of the chief causes of the Prime Minister's Parliamentary success was his extraordinary physical vigour. If the right hon. Gentleman had not had an almost iron constitution he would hardly have achieved what he had done in that House. If, then, the right hon. Gentleman was an exception, it was one of the duties of those who represented him in his absence so to amend the Rules that it might be possible for others to do justice to the abilities they possessed without having to attend twice as long as they ought to do the Sittings of the House. His suggestion was that they should put back to 12 o'clock the period after which no new Business should be taken. If the Amendment which he proposed did not answer its purpose the House could refuse to renew it. The hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had said that the Half-past Twelve Rule had failed because the House sat longer than it used to do. But how much longer would it have sat if that Rule had never been passed? The late hours to which that House sat were destructive alike of the quality of its work and of the health of its Members.

Amendment proposed, in line 2, to leave out the words "half past."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half past' stand part of the said Standing Order."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he entertained a sneaking sympathy for the Amendment of the noble Lord; but there were overwhelming reasons why it could not be accepted. The hours during which the conscientious Member sat were long; but he could come and go as he chose. But the hours of the unconscientious Minister of the Crown, who had always to be in his place, were six or seven hours longer. He always estimated his own day's work at 19 hours. In fact, no one could bear up against it except a man like the Prime Minister, whose physical power exceeded even his intellectual capacity. Foreign Assemblies did not sit so long. But the reason was that hon. Members of that House talked ten times as much as was necessary. But if any curtailment of that talking were suggested, the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) denounced the suggestion as interfering with freedom of debate. The noble Lord had referred to the emptiness of the House between 8.30 and 10. For his part, he preferred to speak in the quiet of those hours rather than when the House was fuller, and he wished that the occupants of the two Front Benches had always to speak during that interval. In the French Assembly the most important questions were settled in two days' debate. He had asked a French Deputy how they got through their Business so quickly, and the answer was that only four or five Members ever thought of speaking in a debate. In the House of Commons a debate was carried on day after day—each day of 12 hours long—which might easily be compressed into two days; and many days were thus consumed, not only about the details of Bills, but also on the principle of the Bills themselves. The Amendment of the noble Lord would be a premium upon obstruction of Business of all kinds which would be perfectly irresistible. They all knew how a Wednesday's debate was organized. If there was an unpopular measure third or fourth on the Paper, the opponents of the measure always talked until it was too late to bring it on. The Amendment would introduce the same practice on all nights. The evil rested, not in the Rules of the House, but in the habits of Members. The Amendment would not remedy but rather increase the existing evil.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he thought the best mode of checking the tediousness of their proceedings was to limit the length of the speeches. If there were any sincerity in the minds of those who brought forward these Rules, a Rule would have been devised to economise their time by limiting their speeches. Every speech after midnight must be tedious, because it was delivered to tired listeners. Discussion of details with any approach to impartiality was impossible at 1 o'clock in the morning. The nervous irritation produced by late hours seriously affected not only the health but the temper of Members. For the sake, moreover, of the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, and the servants of the House, he desired to see some limit put upon the duration of the Sittings of the House. He should support the Amendment, and hoped the Government would see their way to accept it.

Mr. THOMASSON said, that the Prime Minister had admitted that the long hours during which the House sat were likely to prove destructive to health, if not to life. He would, therefore, appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to support the Amendment under consideration. He (Mr. Thomasson) believed that the effect would be to prolong the Parliamentary life of the right hon. Gentleman. The health of the Leader of the Opposition had broken down under the severe strain upon his time and energies. There were many occasions on which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had objected to Supply being taken in the small hours of the morning; and yet, when in Office, the right hon. Gentleman had been compelled to consider that subject during those hours. In his opinion, the Representatives of the people ought to exercise their right, and say that Supply should not be taken except at a reasonable hour. It had been said that if the Amendment were carried, there would not be sufficient time to transact their Business. If that were so, he would suggest that they should meet at 12 or 2 o'clock.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he considered the very interesting and comprehensive speech of the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. Thomasson) a sufficient answer to any statements from the Treasury Bench, and certainly to the speech of the Home Secretary. The fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had confessed to a sneaking sympathy with the proposal of the noble Lord was a proof that it must be a very good one, for the Home Secretary's sympathies could not be considered wide. There were three prominent arguments in favour of the proposal of the noble Lord. In the first place, it would shorten the hours of the House and insure their deliberations being carried on at more reasonable times than at present. It was highly desirable that all important questions should be debated in as full a House as possible, and not hurried through at a late hour of the morning. There ought to be full and complete discussion in a lively and attentive House, which could never be the case when such late hours were kept. Secondly, as the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. Thomasson) had pointed out, the health of hon. Members and of the Speaker was injured, and the continued presence of the Prime Minister in their midst was threatened. A third argument in favour of shortening the hours was that the country was really suffering, not from too little, but from over-legislation. Anything to check the stream of crude, useless, and ill-considered legislation with which the Statute Book constantly became encumbered would be of benefit to the country. He need only refer to two recent Acts—the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881—both of which were to be final, but neither of which had been so. They had also the Arrears Act, a specimen of reckless and futile legislation of the kind so dear to the Liberal Party. There was too much tendency to govern this great Empire upon the principles of a manufactory and a counting-house; and the time of Parliament was absorbed by the details of casual and temporary legislation, while great and Imperial questions were left untouched. He hoped that the Amendment of the noble Lord would be accepted by the Government, and that the Prime Minister would throw over the Home Secretary, as he had done on several former occasions.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, he must confess that he was unable to discover in the arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department any special reasons why the House should prefer half-past 12 to 12 o'clock as being the best hour at which to limit opposed Business. He did not not see that any case had been made out for retaining half-past 12 in the Rule. He could not support the Amendment of the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton), because it peremptorily closed debate at midnight; but he was under the conviction that if debates could not be commenced after 12 o'clock, it would enable hon. Members to go to bed earlier, and would thus relieve them from much of the ill-feeling and irritation which late hours produced.

Colonel STANLEY said, he thought that the support which the Amendment of his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had received in all quarters of the House sufficiently justified him in introducing it. This Amendment and another of the noble Lord, to the effect that the House should ordinarily adjourn at half-past 12, hung together; but those who supported the one now before the House were not necessarily committed to the second. But he (Colonel Stanley) read the two together, and with that view supported his noble Friend. The arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department on this question had pointed one way and his inference another. They had gone very strongly in favour of the Amendment, although the conclusion had been averse to it. He (Colonel Stanley) would once more impress on the House one of the great points his noble Friend made—namely, that legislation had been conducted in recent years during such late and prolonged hours, under circumstances of great difficulty, producing such a degree of tension and irritation in the nervous system as to be injurious to those who laboured under it. The inevitable result of that was, the Business of the country had not been conducted so well as it would have been if earlier and more reasonable hours had been kept. He would give an instance reported in a daily paper in July, 1879. On that occasion he and his Colleagues were kept on the Treasury Bench, listening to every word that was said in the House, 20 out of 36 consecutive hours. The result of this was to throw a strain upon Members of the House which could not tend to sound legislation. Everybody had not the cast-iron physique of the present Prime Minister, which enabled him, however long the Sitting might be, to address himself to any subject before the House with an astonishing freshness; and he, for one, would express a hope that the right hon. Gentleman would long preserve such energy and vigour. It was well known that Judges frequently complained of the manner in which Acts of Parliament were framed. That arose from the practice of hurrying them through in the early hours of the morning. He thought his noble Friend had made out a strong case for asking the House, while considering the subject of Procedure, to fix a more reasonable time for conducting Business than existed at present. The restriction of the hours of debate would lead to a diminution in the habit of wasting time that had now sprung up, and to that compression of debate which the Prime Minister said was the object of these Resolutions. The Government ought to make some concession to the opinions expressed on both sides of the House in favour of the Amendment. At all events, the experiment might be tried. No doubt, the indirect blocking of Bills would, to a great extent, be prevented by the Resolutions which had been discussed. Considering that Business could not be properly transacted at the present late hours, he thought there was much to be said in favour of the proposal of the noble Lord; and he should, therefore, vote for the Amendment. He thought it might be embodied in the form of a Sessional Order; and, if the experiment did not prove successful, it would always be open to the House to rescind the Resolution.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, that, while admitting that adjournment at an earlier hour than at present would be a great convenience to hon. Members personally, he thought that the Amendment of the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) would do more to obstruct Business and lead to a waste of time than anything that could be proposed. He also very much doubted whether, if the Amendment were adopted, there would be, during the dinner-hour, any greater attendance of hon. Members than there was at present. Neither could he admit that the legislation carried on after half-past 12 was bad legislation; on the contrary, he believed that the unopposed legislation taken after that hour was very often the most useful work done by the House. He had known many instances in which Bills would not have passed into law at all had it not been for the existence of the Rule. If debate was to be closed at 12 o'clock, they would have what they now had on Wednesdays—talking against time. On those grounds, he thought the Amendment ought not to be accepted.

COLONEL MAKINS said, that, although one of the strongest supporters of the Half-past Twelve Rule, he had never been able to understand why half-an-hour should be taken out of the next day and added on to the previous Sitting. Twelve o'clock was, he thought, the natural time after which opposed Business should not be taken; and if they had a division on the first part of that Amendment, he would certainly vote for it, on the simple principle that "sufficient for the day was the evil thereof."

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he had often noticed that the House was usually far more empty during the dinner hour than it was late at night. It had been urged that Business should be discontinued at 12, in order to let them go home to bed, otherwise they would all die; but the Prime Minister, though he had undergone many years of late hours in the House, appeared to be in an exceedingly good state of health. The cases of the late Lord Palmerston and the late Lord Russell also showed that late hours were not unfavourable to health and longevity; and he (Mr. Labouchere) believed it was a statistical fact that those who wished to live long ought to sit up late. The hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) asked what there was in half-past 12 that they should fix upon that hour? He answered by asking why they should take 12 o'clock? [An hon. Member: It is the end of the day.] It was not the end of a great many people's day. The practical effect of substituting 12 for half-past 12 would simply be that hon. Members who were anxious that some particular Business should not come on would commence obstructing half-an-hour earlier.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) might wish to sit up all night in preference to working by daylight; but the ground upon which he (Mr. W. H. Smith) desired to support substantially the proposal of his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) was that, as everyone must admit, the hours which the House of Commons had devoted to public work, during the last few years, had been too long to allow of that work being done well and thoroughly. The question really was whether, in the re-arrangement of the mode of doing Public Business, they could not arrive at some understanding by which they might, in some degree, lessen those excessive hours. It might not be possible to adopt the precise limit which his noble Friend desired; but they had been of late progressing, year after year, in lengthened Sittings to an extent which rendered it practically impossible for a Member of Parliament, and especially an official Member, who desired thoroughly to discharge his duties on all the questions which came before the House, to do so with proper regard to his own self and to the interests of his constituents. Members of the Government generally could not satisfactorily and efficiently perform both their official and their Parliamentary duties if the Sittings of the House continued to be unduly protracted. They must either shirk some of their work in the one capacity or the other; or, if they strove to perform it all, their health must in time break down. As regarded the remark of the hon. Member for Northampton, a man possessing the iron constitution and great power of the present Prime Minister might, perhaps, support the strain which his official and Parliamentary work placed upon him; but he (Mr. W. H. Smith) ventured to say that there were few who could long efficiently discharge those duties under the present conditions of public life. He believed it would be conducive to the public interests that they should be able to bring a coolness of intellect and a freshness of power to the consideration of the questions that were brought before them. But if they were kept there from 4 in the afternoon until 3 or 4 on the following morning, their work could not be done as it ought to be done; and, therefore, they should endeavour to find their way out of a difficulty which was not creditable to that great Assembly.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, that the cases that had been quoted by his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) as to Leaders and prominent Members of that House, who had lived long and sat up late, were the exceptions that went to prove the Rule. If that was not so, all physiology must be entirely erroneous. A vitiated atmosphere, long hours, and constant attention, there could be no doubt, were seriously injurious to the health of many hon. Members; and it was obvious that they could not do their work as well as they would do if their hours were shorter. The case had been so ably put by the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) that it scarcely admitted of any further argument. It was, indeed, unanswerable. One of the noble Lord's points was that, in consequence of these long hours, when Members got home they were unable to sleep, or, at any rate, to sleep soundly, so that when they came down to the House the next day at 4 o'clock they came in an irritated condition. That was perfectly true. It was after an almost sleepless night that they came down to Business in a more or less heated condition; and those very angry and acrimonious discussions which distinguished the passing of coercive legislation had been the result of such a course. He was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would say that he would shorten the hours of discussion, the tempers of hon. Members would be considerably sweetened, and the course of Public Business greatly smoothened. A French philosopher had said that most of the miseries of the world were caused by a bad state of the stomach; and he thought there was much force in the observation. Overwork was not conducive to a good state of the stomach. His hon. Friend the Member for Bolton (Mr. Thomasson) made a very correct observation when he said that if they had the Speaker or Chairman of Committees in the Chair for eight or ten or twelve hours of discussion, and that the Speaker or the Chairman was suddenly called upon to give a decision at the end of that period, which might largely influence their future proceedings, that decision would not be as likely to be satisfactory as if he had not had to occupy his position for so many hours. It would be unreasonable to expect that any human being could, under those circumstances, exercise the most sound judgment in the matter. He (Mr. Cowen) was quite sure that some of the decisions that had been given during the discussions on the Coercion Bill, which had failed to give as much general satisfaction as was to be desired, were largely attributable to the long hours they had sat. The House was not consistent. Much credit had been claimed for this Government's legislation, on the ground that it had restricted the hours of employment for children and workpeople in mines, workshops, and factories—[The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Not for adults.] True; but everyone who knew anything about the practical working of mining operations was quite aware that the effect of reducing the hours of labour for youths was to reduce it also for men. It was true that those hours had been shortened; but, at the same time, the hours which the Honse of Commons sat had been gradually lengthened. He had simply further to say that the proposal of the noble Lord was to take off half-an-hour at the end of the day; and, surely, there would be no difficulty in adding that half-hour to the commencement of the Sitting, so that, instead of commencing Business at a quarter to 4, they should begin at a quarter past 3 o'clock, or even 3. What they wanted to do was to get home at a more natural hour, and that would contribute, not only to the health of hon. Members, but would facilitate the Business of the House.

MR. HOPWOOD said, he, for one, would not object to the length of the hours spent there, if only they were usefully employed in the interests of the public; but it was well known that they were not. Between 12 and 4, all the great concerns of this vast Empire might be easily disposed of if the House really set itself to the performance of its duties. In the best interests of hon. Members and Ministers, both present and future, he would support the Amendment.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he did not quite understand the view hon. Members took on the question. Looking at the matter from an outside standpoint, he did not think it of much consequence even if their numbers were thinned by protracted debates. There were always plenty to rush in from without to fill up the gap. In the alarming influx of middle-aged mediocrity with which they were threatened, it was well that the news should go abroad throughout the country that it required men of stamina, men with whom life was worth living, and that those only were the men who ought to come there. Then, perhaps, they might see some of those vigorous and energetic natures, some hon. Members, perhaps, like the Prime Minister, to whose principles he was so much opposed, but whose genius he so much admired.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 101; Noes 58: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 379.)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS moved, as an Amendment, to insert in line 4, after "or Amendment," the words "signed in the House by 20 Members at least." The number 20 was half the number of Members required to form a quorum; and before any Bill or Motion brought before the House could be excluded from debate, it ought to be objected to by that number at least. The present practice, by which a single individual was able to block a particular Bill, was the result of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. It practically placed it in the power of any Member to arrest the Business of the House, and gave rise to what was a most offensive and irrational form of Obstruction. Before such a power could be used, it ought certainly to be necessary that there should be a plurality of objection to the opposed proceeding.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "Amendment," to insert the words "signed in the House by twenty Members at the least."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he could not but express his regret that the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had thought fit to move this Amendment now. It was very inconvenient that Amendments not down on the Paper should be moved out of Order, when Amendments of the same kind, though differing in some detail, stood on the Notice Paper to be moved at a later period. That was the more inconvenient in the present case, as his (Sir Henry Holland's) Amendment contained two important changes, to one of which only the Amendment of the hon. Member for Southwark was directed. His only course now would be, after a very few observations, to move, as an Amendment to the Amendment, that the word "six" be substituted for the word "twenty." He would not detain the House with re-stating the abuses that had arisen in connection with the Half-past Twelve Rule; but the principal objection which he felt to the present working of that Rule was that it enabled one Member to stop not only the passing, but even the discussion, of any measure. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) had, in the debate in 1881, in a few very clear and weighty words, pointed out the unfairness and injustice of this proceeding; and, indeed, it hardly needed more than a bare statement of the case to convince hon. Members on both sides of the House that for one Member to have that power was unjust and unreasonable. It had been said that already they had too much of private-Member legislation. Well, that, if true, was a good reason for not allowing private Members' Bills to pass into law; but it was not a good reason for not allowing a discussion upon them, so that the House might know what they were about, and be able to separate the good from the bad measures. The object of his Amendment was to lessen this abuse; to prevent a single Member, whether influenced by a desire to get to bed, or because some measure or Motion of his own had been blocked, or because he had a personal dislike to some hon. Member, being able to stop the discussion of a measure. He would make it necessary that six Members should block, and continue the block. He might add that he attached great importance to the second branch of his own Amendment, to which he would venture to refer, though it was not now before the House. This provided that a Notice of opposition should lapse, unless renewed on a certain day in the week after the Notice was put down. Cases had been mentioned in which a Member who had blocked a Bill had gone abroad, and could not be reached, so that, although the promoter of the Bill had accepted Amendments and thus removed all real opposition to the measure, the block could not be removed. This part of his own Amendment he would bring forward at the proper time, whatever came of the Amendment now under consideration of the House, the further Amendment of which he now moved.

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "twenty," in order to insert the word "six,"—(*Sir Henry Holland,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. PARNELL said, he would move that "ten" be inserted, if he should be in order in moving that Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER said, that if the House thought proper to negative "twenty," the Question would be that "six" be inserted, and if that were negatived, the hon. Member could move that "ten" be inserted.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, "That 'six' be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL said, he should move that "ten" be substituted for "six." It was not unreasonable to require that where a Member desired to block a Bill, he should show his idea of the importance of his action by obtaining the signatures of at least 10 Members. All sections and Parties in the House had suffered from these blocks, and the House ought not to allow a smaller number than 10 Members to obstruct its Business after half-past 12.

Amendment proposed to said Amendment to Amendment, to leave out the word "six" in order to substitute the word "ten."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

MR. DILLWYN said, suppose six or 10 Members were required to block a Bill, would as many be necessary to take off the block?

COLONEL MAKINS said, he should prefer six to 10. The point raised by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) was important, because, in the beginning of the evening, it might be easy to get six or 10 Members together to put down a Notice of opposition; and, at a later period, when Amendments were accepted, it might not be so easy to get them together again to take the block off.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he should much prefer three to six. The second Amendment of the hon. Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) would meet the difficulty suggested by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), because the opposition would lapse unless it were renewed on the Friday following.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he hoped the Amendment of the hon. Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) would be accepted. There was no difficulty in the point raised by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn); for, if one of the Members waived his objection, then there would not be left the full number required to block the Bill.

MR. DODSON said, that the more the discussion was prolonged, the greater the difficulty and confusion seemed to be. The proposal of 10, 20, or 6 to make a block was open to the objection that Members would be induced to combine, one saying to another—"If you assist me in blocking such a Bill, I will assist you in blocking another." Then, was the promoter of a Bill to get rid of the block by getting at one of the blockers? If so, it became almost the same as the present state of things; or if they wished to get the block taken off, were they to get the consent of the 6, 10, or 20 Members? If so, the block would be almost irremovable. If they allowed the system of blocking at all, they had better retain the simple system that one Member could block. The second Amendment of the hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Holland) was well worthy of consideration—that at the end of the week the block should lapse, unless it were renewed; because, after blocking a Bill, a Member might go down to the country, and then, unless he attended in person, he could not, even if he desired, by letter or through another Member, get the block taken off. There was a case of a Bill blocked by a Member who went to America, and left it blocked to the end of the Session, and no human being could take the block off.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped that the Amendments would be withdrawn, as there was another Amendment on the Paper which more conveniently dealt with both the points that had been mentioned.

Amendment of Amendment to said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment to Amendment, and Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. J. LOWTHER moved, as an Amendment, to insert, in line 4, the words "including an Amendment in Committee unless standing in the name of a Member in charge of a Bill," the effect of which would be to bring under the operation of the New Rule Bills with which Progress had been made in Committee. The Attorney General had already called the attention of the House to the fact that there was no stage of a Bill at which it was more essential that Members should have their faculties in full vigour than during its passage through Committee, and this Amendment would insure a reasonable chance of such being possible, which could not be the case if Bills were rushed through Committee during the small hours of the morning.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "Amendment," to insert the words "including an Amendment in Committee unless standing in the name of the Member in charge of the Bill."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DODSON said, that, on the part of the Government, he must decline to accept the Amendment. It was desired rather to relax the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule than to make it more stringent, and the Amendment would be a material impediment to the transaction of Business.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 5, to leave out the words "been given the next previous day of sitting," and insert the words "appeared for the first time on the Notice Paper,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said Standing Order."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. DILLWYN moved to amend the Rule by adding words to require that a Member giving Notice of objection to an Order or Motion should rise in his place to object to its being taken.

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "called," to insert the words "and the Member giving such Notice shall rise in his place and object to such Order or Notice of Motion being taken."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped the Amendment would not be accepted. One object of the Rule was that if a measure were really opposed, it should not come on at an unreasonable hour. If so, why should the House inflict a penalty on the person giving a Notice?

Dr. CAMERON said, he thought it undesirable to insert the Amendment, because it would render impossible the adoption of a more practical Amendment of which Notice had been given, to the effect that a certain number of names should be required in order to block a Bill.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he believed that the only result of passing the Amendment would be to make it necessary for each Party, in self-defence, to choose one of its Members every week to do the work of blocking. In the last Parliament he had himself had considerable experience of blocking with the aid of certain eminent politicians. In his judgment, the only obstacle to improper blocking would be to determine that it should expire at the end of a certain period.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would point out that the Amendment would introduce a mixed form of proceeding which was new to the House. On a Wednesday at a quarter to 6 o'clock a Member might oppose a Bill; but then he need not have given Notice of his intention to oppose. In the after-midnight proceedings, however, the House had adopted the other method. If the House were to say that a Member should be in his place to oppose a Bill, it ought not to say that he must also have given Notice of his intention.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he rose now to propose the Motion which he had described in the early part of the evening. He proposed to amend the Standing Orders of the 18th February, 1879, and 9th May, 1882, which provided—

"That Motions for the appointment or nomination of Standing Committees and Proceedings made in accordance with the provisions of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order be excepted from the operation of this Order,"

by inserting, after "Standing Order," the following words:—

"Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House."

He felt bound to admit that the subject was a very difficult one. It had been discussed by a large number of Members, and it was satisfactory to perceive that neither the discussions nor the divisions that evening had been of a Party character. Personally, he was attached in substance to the Standing Order. At the same time, he could not deny that in the matter of blocking there had been a great abuse, and that it was desirable to do something to remedy the evil. He was, nevertheless, extremely anxious that that something should not be of a nature to weaken the Rule. He had already explained the ground of the proposed Amendment of the Standing Order, and it was scarcely necessary to re-state it; but it did appear to the Government to be reasonable that no subject should be prevented by this Rule from coming before the House in the shape of a Bill, and also that when the House had taken the pains to go through the details of a Bill in Committee, an opportunity should be afforded to the House of deciding on the subsequent stages of the measure without being subject to a block.

Amendment proposed,

In line 10, after the words "Standing Order," to insert the words "Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND moved to amend the said Amendment by leaving out the word "and," in order to insert, at the end of the Amendment of the Prime Minister, the words "and Motions for Returns unopposed by the Government." His object in moving the Amendment was to insure that Returns which the Government consented to grant should not be blocked by being opposed by private Members. A few months ago, he gave Notice of a Motion for a Return which the Government entirely approved of; but, because an hon. Member on his side of the House had blocked the proposals of some hon. Members on the other side, all the proposals emanating from the Conservative side of the House were blocked in return. He thought the Government would not have any objection to insert the words he proposed after the words "Committee of the whole House."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the word "and," in order to add, at the end thereof, the words "and Motions for Returns unopposed by the Government."—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. J. LOWTHER thought his hon. Friend the Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had hardly realized the effect of this Amendment. He (Mr. J. Lowther) sympathized with those who were sufferers from the state of things referred to by the hon. Member; but it might be the case that the Government were disposed to agree to a Return in regard to which the House itself might take a very different view, or, at any rate, some hon. Members might desire to state their reasons for opposing it. It would be within the recollection of the House that the Government assented the other day, or rather declared their intention of assenting, to a Motion; but a certain hon. Member on their own side of the House at once intimated his intention of dissenting from it; and although in the particular instance referred to he (Mr. Lowther) happened to be in favour of the Motion in question, he hardly thought it would be right to accept this Amendment without further consideration.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther). It had happened to him more than once, when a Motion had been made for a Return, to state that it was not a Return which the Government had to refuse as a Department, and, therefore, as far as he was concerned, he did not object to grant it; but, at the same time, it might be a matter upon which the House would take a very different view and entertain a decided objection. If so, he did not see why Motions for Returns should be exempted from the operation of the Rule.

Amendment to said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that as the Amendment of the Government had been amended by the putting in of the words "of the whole House," some of the objections to it had been removed; because, if they had Grand Committees, a measure would, of necessity, have to pass through a Committee of the whole House. He thought the House had been making a great mistake lately with regard to legislation. Even the Prime Minister, who was a very high authority on these matters, told them that they would have an equally good opportunity of discussing Bills in the stage of going into Committee, instead of the second reading.

Now, he had always considered the second reading to be the most important stage of a Bill; and it was a grave mistake in any case, in his opinion, that the discussion should be shifted to the Motion for going into Committee. It must further be borne in mind that in Committee, when they came to any difficult point, or to some clause or Amendment that was disputed, or to which no definite answer could be given, the discussion was generally put off until the Report. This was not the case in regard to one Bill only, but in the case of a large number of Bills, and the most important which the House had to deal with. The consequence would be that they might have, and most likely would have, under this state of circumstances, very little discussion at all upon the introduction of, or the second reading of, a measure, and then the main provisions of the Bill relegated to the Report; and in that case the Report, if the Resolution as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister were agreed to, might be taken at a time of the night when there would be few Members present to discuss it, and when the Government themselves would have every opportunity of dealing with the measure in a manner which would not be submitted to in a full House. Therefore, he thought it would be a disadvantageous thing to do away with this check, and allow important Amendments to be taken at a time of night when they could not be fairly and properly discussed. The right hon. Gentleman might not assent now to what he was stating; but if the Rule were passed as it was now proposed, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was not at all certain that, on some future occasion, the very essence of a Bill might be discussed on the Report. It was because he entertained a strong belief in this matter, and because he was satisfied that it would be mischievous to require the House to discuss grave Amendments at a late hour of the night, that he had ventured to place an Amendment upon the Paper to exclude Bills which had passed through Committee. He begged to move that Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House." (*Sir Walter B. Barttelot.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS hoped that the Government would give a favourable consideration to the Amendment proposed by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). It seemed to him (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to be a matter of the greatest importance. It was quite true that if they allowed Motions for Leave to introduce Bills to escape the operation of this Rule, no harm would be done; and he imagined that, as far as the Rule was concerned, its primary object was to prevent opposition to the introduction of legislation, and to the passing of measures which had been practically disposed of. It had been recently discovered that the Standing Order enabling hon. Members to block the introduction of Bills operated to the great injury of the Public Service. It had already been found necessary to relax this Rule in the case of Money Bills, such Bills having been specially exempted. They were now going one step further—and he took no exception to it—by relaxing the Rule in favour of the bringing in of Bills. It was only of late that the custom had grown up of blocking the introduction of Bills, possibly to the great injury of the State, because he thought it was only right that hon. Gentlemen who wished to bring forward legislation should have an opportunity of stating their case. But it was also asked to relax the Rule in favour of a totally different change, by including all Bills which had passed through a Committee of the Whole House. Now, it was well known that a Bill in its passage through a Committee frequently underwent very important changes, and that many of its provisions were entirely altered from what they were when originally introduced. It was almost imperative, therefore, if they desired to discuss changes which had been effected in a Bill in Committee, that the Bill itself should be brought forward at a time when there was a reasonable hope that a discussion could take place. One observation which had fallen from his hon. and gallant Friend deserved the most serious consideration. It was this. When a Member or the Government was hardly pressed in regard to a particular portion of a Bill, it had become a growing practice—and, personally, he did not find fault with it—to defer that particular portion until the Report; but when the Report was brought up, the House did not possess the same opportunities of discussing the question as it did when the Bill was in Committee. Therefore, what his hon. and gallant Friend had pointed out was perfectly true; and if this Resolution, as proposed to be amended by the Government, were agreed to, there would be an enormous temptation to the Government to throw over all complicated points in Committee until the Report. At present the House attached great value to the opportunity it possessed of discussing the details of a Bill; but anyone would see that if this Standing Order were passed as it was now proposed to be amended, that privilege would be taken away altogether, and that, instead of there being an opportunity in future of discussing all the details of a measure, whether introduced by the Government or by a private Member, the discussions upon the most important points would be relegated to the Report stage, and the Report itself would be introduced at an hour of the night when important details could not possibly be discussed. Upon those grounds, he, for one, was entirely opposed to the latter part of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; and he hoped the House would consider the matter carefully before they accepted it.

DR. CAMERON said, he hoped that the Government would not accede to the Amendment. So far as the relaxation in regard to the introduction of Bills was concerned, both sides of the House were perfectly agreed; and the Amendment would bring them back to the state of things which existed a couple of Sessions ago, before the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule was made a Standing Order. It was even found at the commencement of the Session, before that Rule became a Standing Order, that it did not interfere with the introduction of Bills; but latterly hon. Members adopted the practice of blocking Motions for the introduction of Bills; and, therefore, in relaxing the Rule as far as the introduction of Bills was concerned, they were virtually going back to the state of things which existed a few years ago. It appeared to him that this was a most important Rule, and its object was to meet what had been expressed as a great evil by the House—namely, that, under the operation of this and other Rules, legislation which the country demanded could not be carried forward. Now, there was nothing divine in any of their Rules; there was nothing sacred in a Rule that they should be able to apply it to every stage of a Bill. All that they wanted was to get through a certain amount of Business during a Session. The Government did not propose to do away with the favourable opportunities which now existed of discussing Bills, but simply to remove two stages of a Bill from vexatious opposition. It was said that the Government, being pressed with Amendments, might relegate everything to the Report stage; that they could bring on Report at any hour of the night, and thus get rid of the necessity of discussion in Committee. But hon. Members who laid stress upon that point seemed to forget that Amendments in Committee could be brought up at any hour of the night, because no Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule applied to the stage of Committee. The blocking of the Report stage simply amounted to this—that the House was deprived of the opportunity of considering the Amendments which had been made in a Bill in Committee. If a Bill had not been amended at all, then there could be no Amendments on the Notice Paper, and there was no possibility of blocking a Bill upon the Report stage. A Bill could be blocked on the Motion for going into Committee; but if it had once been in Committee, then no Amendments which had been given Notice of in Committee could prevent it from going into Committee. But what did stop it was when the Report stage was reached, and a Motion was placed upon the Paper that the Report should be taken into consideration that day six months, or something of that sort. With all deference to the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross), he (Dr. Cameron) thought the arguments he had adduced fell entirely to the ground. In his opinion the Government appeared to have hit a happy mean. They had allowed two opportunities for full discussion, and they had removed the power of blocking the progress of a Bill upon other stages, so as not to render legislation altogether impossible. He thought they would do well to stick to their proposal.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, the hon. Member who had just spoken (Dr. Cameron) seemed to have missed the point in his objection. He said, and said truly, that the point at which blocking in opposition to a Bill could be resorted to, so far as the Committee stage was concerned, was on going into Committee, and not in regard to any clause contained in the Bill. It was just the same in the case of Report. Blocking Notices would apply only to the Report being taken into consideration. The hon. Gentleman had also overlooked the point which his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had argued with moderation, but with great clearness. The reason of the demand now made was that the Bill might be changed at any stage in Committee. When a Bill went into Committee the discussion did not go on certain fixed lines and principles. The only restriction apparently was that the Bill which came out of Committee should be one that could, by a certain reasonable stretch of language, bear the same title which it bore when it went into Committee. It might be changed in most important points; very important clauses might have been omitted, or imported into it, so that, for all ready-money purposes and considerations, so to speak, there was some equitable right to consider it fully and fairly on the Report stage, on the same basis as that on which it went into Committee. That was all that was now asked. An equitable claim might also be set up to extend the Rule to the third reading of a Bill; but they did not ask for that concession. They were desirous of co-operating with the Government in relaxing the stringency of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule by agreeing that it should not apply to the introduction of Bills. Both sides of the House were also, without debate, able to agree to the proposal that it should not apply to the third reading of Bills. Those were both of them very substantial concessions. On the other hand, he thought the reciprocal concession of the stage of Report was co-relative to the liberty of change in Committee. If they relaxed the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule in respect to Report, they at once brought into question the right of extensive change in Committee; and, for one, he should be very sorry to concede that there could be any doubt upon that. He thought it would be a very great blunder in legislation, and a very great limitation of the Privileges of the House, to check the almost unlimited power possessed by a Committee of handling any Bill that came before it. That being granted on all sides, then the complementary proposition came in, that a Bill so changed, and it might be in many vital points, should not be smuggled through Report at a very late hour of the night, or very early hour of the morning, in a very thin House. He trusted that upon these considerations, not with a view to Obstruction, but to meet the new state of things and the New Rules of Procedure, his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister would allow the Rule still to apply to the Report stage of a Bill.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the argument urged by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Beresford Hope) in support of the Amendment now before the House was that Bills might be fundamentally changed in Committee, and that, therefore, it was necessary to have them discussed before half-past 12 o'clock. That was possible; but they must look at the general practice, and they would find it was a thing that was extremely rare. As a general rule, Bills in Committee only underwent changes and modifications in detail that were compatible with their principles. They must look, in this matter, at the general rule, and not at the exceptions. Supposing there might be a case of a Bill which had undergone fundamental changes in Committee, so as to make it virtually a new Bill—and he did not deny that, very rarely, cases of that kind did occur—what would happen? Not that the Bill would be smuggled through legislatively, not that they were now going to say that such Bills should pass without any opportunity of debate; but hon. Gentlemen would very naturally rise in their places and say—"This is a Bill that has been fundamentally changed in Committee," and would give Notice that if it was brought on at a late hour it would be opposed. A question would be put to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill, as to when he proposed to bring it on; and if he declined to bring it on at a reasonable hour, Notice would be given that the adjournment of the House or the adjournment of the debate would be moved, so that the Member in charge of the Bill would know that he would obtain no facilities for carrying it through. But, looking at the general rule, that general rule was that a Bill was not fundamentally changed in Committee; and the argument was that, after all the labour spent upon a Bill, was it worth while to undergo all this inconvenience in order to prevent the risk of some particular point being got rid of, in some exceptional measure, without adequate discussion? The other argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge was that it often happened that points were postponed from the Committee stage to the Report, and that, consequently, that stage was very important, and should be carefully watched, and not taken at a late hour of the night. Now, so far as his own experience went, it was not at all unfrequent, in regard to large and difficult Bills; that points were postponed from the Committee to the Report. The re-adjustment of them often required it; but they were not dealing with the case of large and difficult Bills, but with all kinds of Bills; and he could not recollect, in the case of a minor Bill, such a concession having been made as to the postponement of such a point to the Report. It might have happened occasionally; but, if so, it had only occurred in the very rarest cases. The Report of Bills of a secondary character might be taken with very great facility; and, as a rule, the House had very little matter to consider with regard to them, because it must be borne in mind that all the details would have been dealt with already in a Committee of the Whole House at the usual hour. The only question was one of comparative convenience. The Government believed that the proposition they made was a reasonable one, and they were entitled to believe that they had good authority for the Motion, because when the question was raised, on a previous occasion, there was no doubt about it that the general sentiment of the House was expressed in its favour; he alluded to the occasion when the question was brought before the House by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk).

MR. GIBSON said, he had no doubt that what the Prime Minister had said was true, and that the question must be decided as a matter of convenience or inconvenience. The Rule, however, had been approached by the Government and by the Opposition in two different ways. It had been pointed out that the Rule had worked to the inconvenience of real legislation, and it was proposed to grapple with that inconvenience by two different methods, one of which was to modify the whole principle of opposition, and the other was to exclude the power of opposition. Personally, he thought the first was the soundest and the most reasonable, if it was found that the power of blocking or of opposing under the Rule had worked injuriously, unfairly, and inconveniently. Then it was reasonable that it should be re-examined and placed upon a sounder foundation. The other method was the one which was now under the examination of the House, and that was to exclude the possibility of having the Rule applied at all to a certain class of Public Business. The Government proposed to exclude two classes—one, the introduction of Bills on the first occasion; and the other applied to the class of Bills now under discussion—namely, Bills which had passed through Committee. He was himself entirely in favour of allowing Bills to be brought in on the first occasion without opposition. He thought it was reasonable, not only on the ground of courtesy, but on the ground of convenience, that hon. Members should be able to place their legislative proposals before their fellow-Members and the country, and he would, therefore, willingly assent to any modification of the Rule which would allow that to be done; and he thought it was better, for many reasons, if a Member had views upon important questions, that he should have the earliest opportunity of making them known to the House and to the country generally. Practically, that applied to the Government also; for he had known instances where a Minister desired to lay the views of the Government before the country, and he had been prevented from doing so by this system of blocking. Of course, in the case of a Government, blocking was only of a formal character; because, sooner or later, facilities would be given for circulating information to the country, by enabling the Minister to bring in his Bill. What was proposed to be done in the second case, covered by the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot)—namely, when Bills had been introduced, and read a second time and passed through Committee? It would be, if the Government proposal were adopted, no longer possible to insist upon such Bills being discussed before half-past 12 o'clock. He (Mr. Gibson) thought that would be a grave and serious innovation upon the practice of the House. He readily admitted that, with regard to some Bills, it might be done with convenience, and possibly with advantage. It was not desirable that the Business of the House should be discussed in the absence of the Press, or brought on at such an inconvenient hour that it would be left in the hands of those whose business it was, by their official position and strong Party ties, to support the Government. It was desirable that Bills should be brought on at a time when the House was generally represented, and that could not be if discussions were to be brought on after half-past 12 o'clock. The Prime Minister said, with obvious truth, that it was difficult to discriminate between Bills. He (Mr. Gibson) readily admitted that assertion; but the Government got over the difficulty by including all Bills in one category; and what he contended was that they had better subject the few to inconvenience, rather than destroy the check to which the larger number of Bills were required at present to be subjected. He did not think that the Prime Minister had answered the argument of his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) as to matters being left over until the Report. The House must not only take advantage of what their experience taught them, but what was likely to be the case in future, if this Rule were passed. Experience showed them that on all important Bills, whether they called them fundamental measures or not, many matters of importance were now necessarily allowed to stand over until the Report. Sometimes the Minister, or the Member in charge of a Bill, promised to bring up new clauses. Sometimes he promised that the drafting of a clause should be seriously changed, and should present a different point of view. That was the experience of the past; but what would be the practice in the future? Not only would that experience be reproduced, but, as a matter of practice or policy, the Minister or Member in charge of a Bill would find it very convenient only to amend the Bill in minor details, and keep all the fundamental changes for the Report stage. He apprehended that that would be a matter of grave inconvenience to the House and the country, and that it would lead to a frame of mind on the part of a Member in charge of a Bill, which would induce him to say—"Let us get the measure through Committee anyhow, and then we can do pretty much what we like on the Report stage." He was not impressed with the ingenious answer of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), who said that already they could get into Committee at any hour, when once the Speaker had been got out of the Chair. That was quite true; but, by way of compensation, hon. Members could speak as often as they pleased on that stage. That was not the case on the Report stage. In the future, if this Amendment passed unamended, he believed that the most important details of a Bill would be brought forward in Committee. The matter lay in a very narrow compass. He admitted that many arguments could be adduced both ways, and that the question could only be decided on the balance of those arguments. The arguments in favour of the Prime Minister's proposition had been supported by reference to minor and unimportant Bills. The arguments upon which he (Mr. Gibson) wished to rest his opposition to the proposition were supported by a reference to what might happen in regard to larger measures which were of interest to the country, and which were introduced in order to promote sound legislation. He was strongly of opinion that such measures should be discussed in a full and complete House.

Mr. MONK said, that if that proposal only affected the Government measures, he should allow the duel to be carried on between the Front Benches; but with regard to what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), he (Mr. Monk) wished to point out that, in the case of Government Bills, they were rarely or never brought on at a late hour of the night. Of course, he alluded to Bills that were opposed. The consequence was that, when important Amendments were moved on the Report, the Bill was brought up at an early hour. The Prime Minister had pointed out that if measures of that kind were not brought on at a reasonable hour, Notice would be given that the adjournment of the debate or the adjournment of the House would be moved. He (Mr. Monk) wished to point out that, in regard to what were called minor Bills, Amendments were rarely or never left over for the Report. It might occasionally occur that some question had to be referred to the draftsman, and was necessarily relegated to the Report; but that was quite an exception to the rule. He was extremely glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that he intended to adhere to the views expressed last Session by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), in regard to the relaxation of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule to the full extent of the Resolution which he (Mr. Monk) then moved, and which he believed met with the approval of the House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had an extremely strong objection to the Resolution as it stood; but the words which the Prime Minister proposed to add minimized that objection. As a matter of principle, the proposed alteration would be a serious innovation upon, and a very great relaxation of, the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule; and he was entirely opposed to any relaxation of that Rule, except in regard to formal matters, such as the introduction of Bills. And if the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) went to a division, he should feel bound to support him. He only desired to say one word more. The argument of his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) seemed to him to be a fallacy, because the only opportunity afforded for a full discussion of a Bill would be before the House knew exactly what that Bill was eventually to be. On the other hand, they would have no real opportunity of discussing a Bill after it had assumed its final shape. For his own part, he would prefer to get rid of one of the stages before going into Committee, rather than to be called upon to discuss seriously a Bill after half-past 12 o'clock at night.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, the Prime Minister had based his resistance to the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) upon the consideration that the occasions on which important matters would be relegated to the Report stage would only occur in regard to large Bills. But the Government were proposing to let in both the small Bills and the large after half-past 12. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) thought it would be better to leave the Rule alone. With regard to the larger and more difficult measures, the right hon. Gentleman said it would be in the power of the House to insist on adequate discussion, because the power of moving the adjournment of the debate or of the House would be resorted to. But it must be borne in mind that by the Resolutions already passed, they had materially curtailed the power of that weapon, and that in future it would only be of nominal value.

COLONEL MAKINS said, the hon. and medical Member for Glasgow—[*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"]—said that the Resolution was desirable to the extent in which it put down Obstruction to legislation. [*Cries of* "Withdraw!"] He really did not understand what the interruption meant. [An hon. MEMBER: It refers to the reference you made to the hon. Member for Glasgow.] Then he would say the hon. Member for Glasgow. He quite agreed with the hon. Member that this Rule was desirable in so far as it put an end to Obstruction. It was clearly objectionable to allow a Bill to be opposed before it was brought in, and before the nature of it was made known to the House. All that was clearly Obstruction, and it was also clearly Obstruction to oppose a Bill on the third reading, for then it had been discussed and settled. He had no objection, therefore, to prevent a Bill being blocked on either of those stages. But opposition to a Bill before it was settled, and while it was in the process of discussion, could not be termed Obstruction; and he thought the Government might fairly accept the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) in regard to this particular stage. The difficulty which had been pointed out by his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), was a real difficulty, and the Amendment was not brought forward with any desire to obstruct the Business of the House.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, the proposal of the Government was to omit from the operation of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule the introduction of Bills, and Bills which had passed through Committee. Now, in the case of Bills introduced by private Members, he (Mr. Newdegate) had known many instances in which the Government had consented to the second reading, on the understanding that the Bill should be materially altered in Committee. If they excluded the Report, which, in fact, was cognate to the Committee stage, from the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, they would, in such cases as those he referred to, exempt from the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule a Bill after it had assumed a new, but a different, form. On that ground, he supported the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot).

Mr. WARTON said, he should not have thought of interposing in the debate if it were not to call the attention of the House to two points which had not yet been mentioned. The first point was that the words "passed through Committee" might be applied to cases of Bills which had passed through Committee *pro formâ*. Only that Session a very important Bill—the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Bill—was brought in by the Government and passed through the Committee *pro formâ*, and it assumed a very different shape from that in which it was originally introduced. Now, he took it that if the proposal of the Prime Minister were adopted, any Bill which had once passed through Committee *pro formâ* would be considered to have passed through Committee; and it would be impossible to object to its being taken after half-past 12 o'clock. He was afraid that that construction would be placed upon the proposition of the Prime Minister. And in regard to Bills introduced by private Members, the House might find itself landed in a difficulty. The hon. Member in charge of a Bill might move the Bill through Committee *pro formâ*, and the House would find they had fallen into a trap, being informed, when they were anxious to discuss the measure, that it had already passed through Committee. Then, also, when they came to consider the proposal of the Government in regard to Grand Committees, they would find this further Resolution—

> "That all Bills comprised in each of the said classes shall be Committed to one of the said Standing Committees, unless the House shall otherwise order, and, when reported to the House, shall be proceeded with as if they had been reported from a Committee of the whole House."

The House would, therefore, be placed in this position—that Bills which had passed through a Grand Committee, sitting no one knew where, would be brought in, and the Report taken after half-past 12 o'clock, so that the House would be shorn of all opportunity of fairly and duly considering it. He thought it would be far better to confine the relaxation of the Rule to the introduction and the third reading of Bills, for it must be remembered that even then they would be taking away two stages to which the system of blocking now applied.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 122; Noes 62: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 380.)

Question, "That the words 'Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to*.

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule) 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, *deferred* till *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT — PRIVILEGE (MR. EDMOND DWYER GRAY, M.P.).

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [14th November], "That the Report from the Select Committee do lie upon the Table."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the House would remember that an error in form had taken place in the Committee. The Committee had been misinformed to the effect that the Previous Question could be moved in Committee, and a paragraph proposed by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had been set aside by that Motion having been made. The proceeding was undoubtedly irregular, and therefore he would move, as the proper course to be taken under the circumstances, that, so far as the paragraph of the hon. Member for Sligo was concerned, the Report be re-committed.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Report and Minutes of the Proceedings be re-committed to the Select Committee, so far as they relate to a paragraph referring to the Law of Contempt proposed to be added to the Report by Mr. Sexton,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. SEXTON said, the object he had in view in placing on the Paper the Notice of Motion standing in his name was primarily the same as that stated by the Prime Minister—namely, to secure a reference back to the Committee; but he also wished to place on record the nature of the irregularity which caused the necessity for a second Reference, and he wished to assure himself that the Committee would direct their attention to that irregularity. From the concluding words of the Prime Minister, he had no doubt that his object would be attained; and, therefore, he did not propose to trouble the House by moving his Amendment. But as the language of the Reference of the Prime Minister was extremely vague, he would like to ask a question upon it. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal was that the Report and Minutes be referred back, so far as they related to a paragraph referring to the Law of Contempt which he (Mr. Sexton) proposed to add. He believed certain eminent Members of the Committee were in favour of his paragraph, which simply stated that the anomalous condition of the Law of Contempt demanded the further attention of the House; but those eminent Members believed that the paragraph was outside the scope of the Reference to the Committee. They believed that any declaration on the Law of Contempt was outside the scope of the Committee; and he, therefore, thought it would be desirable that the Committee should be relieved from any misconception as to the nature of the Reference made to them now. Was it to be a Reference with regard to the error of form simply, or were hon. Gentlemen to be precluded from voting "Aye" or "No" upon the paragraph which he proposed to add?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, in reply to the point of Order which has been raised, I wish to state that, in my opinion, we shall be exactly in the same position when we meet again as we were when we met on the first occasion. Whatever the Order of Reference was when we first met, that same Order of Reference will continue in force when the Committee meets again; and we shall, when we meet, have to determine in Committee what the powers given to us by this House were on our appointment. I do not wish to enter into the subject further. Now, as the Committee itself will determine what the Reference was when the power was given to us, I think that determination will be arrived at by the Committee without much difficulty.

MR. PLUNKET: Sir, I do not wish to prolong the discussion already carried on with regard to this matter; but I wish to make an explanation. As this Motion is to the effect that the whole of this paragraph be referred back to the Committee, and it might appear to the House that the Previous Question had been moved and supported with regard to the whole of that paragraph, the portion of the paragraph to which I took exception was that which referred to the general Law of Contempt.

MR. SEXTON: I beg pardon. Before the Previous Question was moved, I had, on the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, agreed to withdraw that portion of the paragraph referring to the general Law of Contempt.

MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

MR. PLUNKET: Exactly. It was to that portion of the paragraph which referred to the anomalous condition of the Law of Contempt, and which was outside the question of Privilege involved in Mr. Gray's case, that I objected, and it was on that account I supported the Previous Question. I did so because this matter of the general Law of Contempt was separated from the other considerations in the case.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Ordered, That the Report and Minutes of the Proceedings be re-committed to the Select Committee, so far as they relate to a paragraph referring to the Law of Contempt proposed to be added to the Report by Mr. Sexton.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE) —THE REVIEW IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.—QUESTION.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the First Commissioner of Works, At what hours hon. Members who held tickets for the Review would be admitted at the Horse Guards on the morrow?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, he had given orders that the holders of tickets were to be admitted up to any hour.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 20th November, 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 20th November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the Correspondence which has taken place between the Belfast Board of Guardians and the Local Government Board, wherein it has been distinctly charged and not denied that the duties of the entire Board of Guardians has for some time past been discharged by the Chairman himself in the absence of a quorum of the Board, and one hour before the appointed time fixed for the weekly meetings of the Board; if his attention has been drawn to the deputy clerk's explanation relative to his conduct on the 12th and 19th September 1882; and, if he has official knowledge of the Local Government Board having declined to order an investigation into the circumstances?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have seen the Correspondence referred to in this Question, and find from it that in September last Mr. Stewart, one of the Guardians of the Belfast Union, represented to the Local Government Board that the Chairman had transacted some of the business before the Board of Guardians assembled and before a quorum was formed. The Local Government Board thereupon communicated with the Guardians; and, finding that this practice existed, they pointed out its irregularity, and it was at once discontinued. When this subject was brought before the Guardians they passed a resolution expressing entire confidence in their Chairman by a majority of 24 to 1, Mr. Stewart alone dissenting. The charge against the Assistant Clerk was, that he read the minutes before there was a quorum; and he has explained that this was part of the business disposed of by the Chairman before the proper time. The proceedings referred to were irregular; but there are no grounds for supposing that the Chairman and Assistant Clerk were influenced by any improper motives; and as the statements made were not denied, and as there were no facts in dispute and the practice was discontinued when the attention of the Guardians was called to its irregularity, the Local Government Board saw no necessity for the investigation asked for by Mr. Stewart, and declined to grant it.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BELFAST ASYLUM—R. NELSON.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that an inmate of the Belfast Asylum named Nelson was, without any application from his friends, or written authority from the Belfast Board of Guardians, removed to the Belfast Workhouse in May 1879, and has been since kept there as a permanent charge on the rates, although the expense of his keep in the Asylum was comparatively nil, and his transfer to the Workhouse was disapproved of by Nelson's relatives; if it be true that Nelson's relatives are highly respectable, and Nelson himself has a large sum of money in the bank; if it be true that the Guardians refused to hand over Nelson to his relatives, although his fitness to be removed had been previously certified for; and, if, under these circumstances, he will kindly furnish and have placed upon the Table of the House Copies of any and all Correspondence which has passed between the Local Government Board, and the Belfast Guardians, and the Belfast Asylum Governors, and of all resolutions adopted by either or all of these public bodies, in any way dealing with the original cause of removal from the Asylum, or subsequent admission or maintenance in the Belfast Workhouse; and also furnish such other explanations and statements as will be likely to satisfy the public mind that the Local Government Board for Ireland in this case has done its duty?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have made inquiry into the subject of this Question, and find that Robert Nelson, the person referred to in it, was discharged from the Belfast Lunatic Asylum on the 30th of May, 1879, his mania having assumed a harmless character; and on the same date was admitted into the Belfast Workhouse, as it appeared that he was destitute. It appears to be the practice to receive into the workhouse from the asylum a harmless lunatic when the Guardians desire to transfer a dangerous lunatic from the workhouse to the asylum; and it seems probable that Nelson's transfer was effected under this arrangement, as the records show that an inmate of the workhouse was taken to the asylum on the 30th of May. The Guardians did not refuse to hand over Nelson to his relatives; but in September last they were informed that he had a sum of money deposited in the bank, and, having ascertained that this was so, he was handed over to his friends, who removed him from the workhouse on the 14th of last month. I do not think there is any reason for laying the Correspondence on the Table.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—CONGO.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communication has been made by Her Majesty's Government to the French Government with respect to the alleged treaties made by M. de Brazza on behalf of the latter Government and some chiefs of Congo; and, whether he can state the nature of such communication? Perhaps the hon. Baronet will also kindly state whether it is true, as stated in the French papers, that Urgency has been voted in the French Chambers for the discussion of a Bill empowering the French Government to ratify those Treaties?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, with regard to the last Question of the hon. Baronet, I have seen the statement in the French papers to which he refers; but I have not seen Lord Lyons's report on the subject. With respect to the Question which the hon. Baronet has placed on the Notice Paper, I have to say that communications are passing between the two Governments on the subject of the Treaties stated to have been made by M. de Brazza; but the Correspondence is not yet in a state for publication.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can inform the House of the number of applications that have been made by tenants for loans to improve their holdings under the Land Act of 1881; and, how many of these applications have been granted?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, I may, perhaps, be permitted to answer this Question. The number of formal applications for loans to occupiers under the Land Act of 1881 received up to Saturday last, November 18, was 625; of these 310 have been sanctioned, 114 are still under investigation, and 201 have been found inadmissible. But I am happy to state that, under the recent reduction of the minimum amount of a loan, about 75 of the last class will become admissible, and it is expected that they will come in. It is also believed that the number of applications will soon show a considerable increase.

THE CATHEDRAL COMMISSION—THE FINAL REPORT.

Mr. MONK asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can inform the House when the Final Report of the Cathedral Commission will be presented to Her Majesty?

Mr. COURTNEY: In the absence of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, I have to remind my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester that, by the terms of its appointment, the Cathedral Commission is bound to present separate Reports to Her Majesty on the case of each cathedral. Eight of these Reports are now nearly completed, and are expected to be presented before the end of the year, and there will be no avoidable delay in the completion of the remainder. When all have been finished the Commission will probably issue a final Report embracing matters which could not be so conveniently dealt with in the separate Reports.

JURY LAWS (IRELAND)—DUBLIN JURIES.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, in a very important criminal trial just commenced at Dublin, no less than thirty-eight special jurors drawn from the panel were ordered by the representatives of the Crown to stand aside before a jury was made up; whether Her Majesty's Government have no present intention of availing themselves of the Law passed by Parliament, after much labour, enabling them to transfer to three judges the duty of trying prisoners in cases where there are objections to trial by jurors; and, if not, whether the Government propose to reduce the number and salaries of Irish Judges?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I find that at a recent trial in Dublin—that of Patrick Joyce—36 jurors were ordered by the Crown to stand by. So long as juries can be obtained who do their duty honestly and fearlessly the Government will not avail themselves of the Special Commission Court of three Judges, authorized by the Prevention of Crime Act. The Government do not contemplate making any proposal with regard to the number and salaries of the Irish Judges.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—WHITECHAPEL UNION—BOARDED-OUT CHILDREN.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been directed to the unsatisfactory result of the correspondence of the two past years between the Local Government Board and the Guardians of the Whitechapel Union upon the subject of a proposal by the latter for the periodical inspection of the homes of boarded out children; and, if the Local Government Board intend to adhere to their refusal to allow these Guardians the means of obtaining such a periodical inspection of the homes of these poor children as will, in their opinion, alone enable them to satisfactorily discharge this portion of their public duties?

Mr. BRYCE asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, seeing that it is the duty of Poor Law Guardians, who have sent pauper children to be boarded out, to ascertain that such children are properly cared for, and, seeing that such Guardians are accustomed to exact an engagement from those who receive such children to permit them to be visited on behalf of the Guardians, he will consider the propriety of permitting Poor Law Guardians to provide, where they may think it advisable, for the inspection of the places in which such pauper children are boarded; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence which has passed between the Local Government Board and the Whitechapel Board of Guardians upon this subject?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, my attention has been called to the Correspondence between the Local Government Board and the Whitechapel Guardians as to the proposal of the latter to appoint and pay an officer periodically to inspect the homes of children boarded-out by them beyond the limits of the Union. It is a misapprehension to suppose that it forms any part of the public duties of the Guardians to make the proposed inspection. The regulations of the Board provide that the children shall be visited at least once in six weeks by a member of the Boarding-out Committee, to whom they are entrusted by the Guardians, and the member making the visit is required to report the result. Besides this, the children are from time to time visited by the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. Under these circumstances, it appears to us unnecessary that the ratepayers should be subjected to the expense of providing for any further inspection, especially as the cost would in some cases be considerable. Moreover, it might tend to discourage the Boarding-out Committees, who are composed of persons of well-known character, and who voluntarily undertake their work from purely benevolent motives. If the Correspondence between the Board and the Guardians is moved for, I shall have no objection to produce it.

LICENSING ACT, 1874—UNAUTHORIZED VISITS BY CONSTABULARY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the evening of the 7th instant, at Drangan, county Tipperary, three members of the Constabulary Force stationed in that village entered the house of Miss Cusack, a licensed vintner, made their way, without legal warrant, and without asking leave, to a private room in Miss Cusack's house, and, finding there a tenant farmer who had been evicted from his holding in the locality a few days before, and Mr. T. E. Croke, of Drangan, who had before him two printed forms issued with reference to applications for relief by evicted tenants, and was engaged in filling up one, the constables deprived him of both the forms, declaring them to be illegal, retained one of the forms, intimating that they should send it on to Dublin Castle, and threatened that Miss Cusack's licence would be withdrawn for allowing her premises to be used for illegal purposes; whether this was an unfounded accusation; what notice will be taken of the conduct of the constables; and, whether the eviction forms, the property of Mr. Croke, will be returned to him?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, three members of the constabulary visited the licensed premises of Miss Cusack, at Drangan, county Tipperary, on the 7th instant, under Section 23 of the Licensing Act of 1874. They did not enter any private room. They entered the taproom, where people usually drink, and there found an evicted tenant named Burke, and the other person, Mr. Croke, referred to in the Question, who was filling up an eviction form, headed "The Ladies' Irish National Land League." The constable asked whether he might see the forms, and Croke immediately handed them to him. One was partly filled, and this the constable returned. He did not otherwise interfere. He did not say, as alleged in the Question, the form was illegal, or that he would send it to Dublin Castle, and he did not threaten Miss Cusack that her licence would be withdrawn; for, as a matter of fact, he did not see her at all on the occasion.

NAVY—AERATED FRESH WATER.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the value of Captain George Peacock's invention for the manufacture of aërated fresh water from the condensed steam of salt water; and, if so, if it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to recognize in any substantial manner the importance of Captain Peacock's services?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, I am aware that Captain Peacock claims to have invented, about 50 years ago, a system of aërating condensed water; but his system is not in use in Her Majesty's Navy.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISTRESS IN THE WEST.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any recommendations from the permanent officials of the Irish Local Government Board for the purpose of meeting the anticipated distress in Ireland; and, if so, whether he will state to the House the nature of these recommendations; and, if he has not received any such recommendations, whether he has decided upon taking any steps himself, or asking

Parliament for further powers than those at present existing for meeting this distress?

Mr. O'SHEA said, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, at the same time, whether, in reference to the threatened distress and want of employment in Ireland, he has received any answer from the Treasury on the subject of the proposed construction of the Ennis and West Clare Railway on the security of a baronial guarantee?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have not received an answer from the Treasury; but I think the answer that I propose to make to the hon. Member opposite will practically answer the hon. Member as to the specific Question he has asked with regard to the West Clare Railway. The permanent officials of the Local Government Board have reported that at present the information before them respecting anticipated distress in certain districts in the West of Ireland where it is most apprehended is not of such a character as would lead them to believe that the relief which may be afforded under the existing Poor Law Acts will be found insufficient to provide for the wants of the destitute poor in the coming winter. They have already issued a Circular to the Unions in the West of Ireland—that is, to all the Unions in Connaught, and to the Unions in the counties of Donegal, Clare, Kerry, and West Cork calling their attention to the necessity of making every provision both for indoor and outdoor relief, and especially to see that the relieving officers' districts are not too large, and that the relieving officers are within easy reach of the poor persons residing in every part thereof. The Local Government Board will also call upon their Inspectors to report as to the sufficiency of the arrangements in this respect made by the Guardians in each Union in their charge. In short, the Government have given every care to see that the normal machinery for the relief of distress is in proper order; and they expect to be able to meet the distress with the aid of that machinery. If exceptional pressure comes it will be their duty to see that the administration of the required relief is not interfered with from want of sufficient funds. I may say that this is a subject which, of all others, is most engaging the attention of the Government.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Will the right hon. Gentleman inform the House from what source it would be possible to obtain the additional funds to which he alludes in his answer?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, distress amounting to famine in such a state of things has always been a subject for special treatment by the Government; and I conclude that in the event of such a misfortune they would adopt the example of the Governments which have preceded them, and provide funds to keep the people from starvation, trusting to Parliament to support them afterwards.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government have information of widespread distress in Donegal and other parts of the West of Ireland; and, whether inquiries are promptly instituted upon the receipt of such information, in reference to what districts official inquiries have been held or ordered up to the present, and with what result?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, my answer to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) partially deals with this Question; but I may state, in addition, that I have obtained from the Local Government Board the Reports respecting the distress alleged to prevail, or to be anticipated, in the districts of Carrick and Glencolumbkill, county Donegal, Ennistymon Union, county Clare, and Corofin Union, county Clare. So far the result of the special inquiries has been to show that the relief which may be afforded under the existing Poor Law Act is sufficient to cope with the existing and apprehended distress; but further statements having been made respecting distress in Donegal, further inquiry has been ordered, and is now in progress. One of the most experienced and reliable Inspectors of the Local Government—Mr. Hamilton—is at present investigating the state of affairs in the Garrick and Glencolumbkill districts. I expect his Report in a few days, and, meanwhile, I have seen a note from him to the Vice President of the Board which makes me feel hopeful on the subject, as it tends to confirm the reports already received. Inquiries are also in progress in Tory Island, off the coast of Donegal, and in Dromore West Union, county Sligo, and a gunboat has been placed at the disposal of the Inspector for the Mayo and Galway districts to enable him to visit the Islands off the coast of those counties. I think the hon. Member will thus see that inquiries are promptly instituted on the receipt of information showing such to be necessary, and that the Irish Government and Local Government Boards are fully alive to the responsibility attaching to them.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board have any means of coping with exceptional distress unless additional powers are conferred upon them?

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. and gallant Member will find an answer to his Question is included in the answers I have already given in reply to similar Questions put to me this evening.

THE LAND ACTS (IRELAND), 1870-1881— APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the amounts applied for by tenants in Ireland, and the amounts advanced by the Government under the provisions of the Land Acts 1870 and 1881, to enable tenants to purchase their holdings in the years 1881 and 1882, up to the present date?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the amount for which application has been made to the Land Commission under Sections 24 and 35 of the Land Act of 1881 up to Saturday last is £141,954. Out of this total loans have been sanctioned amounting to £88,699; and of this £35,408 has actually been advanced. The total sum agreed to be paid by tenants for purchase of their holdings in sales already completed under these sections is £52,020. Under Section 26 of the Act tenants have purchased holdings from the Land Commission to a total amount of £4,667, of which £1,433 has been paid in cash by the tenants, and the rest remains on mortgage. Under the Act of 1870 the Board of Works have received between the 1st of April, 1881, and the 31st of October, 1882, applications for £25,736; loans amounting to £18,802 have been sanctioned, and £17,492 actually advanced, but some part of the amounts sanctioned and advanced is on account of applications made before April 1, 1881.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES — CAPTAIN WYNNE.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in the "Morning Post" of the 15th instant, signed by Captain Wynne, one of the dismissed resident magistrates; whether it is the case, as therein stated, that, on his being compulsorily retired on pension, he would lose £400 a-year, and all chance of future promotion, and has had a slur cast upon his character, without a chance of meeting his accusers (if any) face to face; and, whether there are other cases of a similar nature as stated by Captain Wynne?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have seen the letter referred to. The facts of the case are simply these—In reorganization of offices an opportunity is afforded of reviewing the capabilities of the persons employed, and of pensioning those whose services can with advantage to the public service be dispensed with. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, at a great crisis in the affairs of Ireland—and after the services of the Resident Magistrates had for a long while gone on without any check—acted on his responsibility in selecting gentlemen for retirement on the recent reorganization of the magistracy. I think he had good reason for it; and I do not think in this case, or in any other case when reorganization of offices takes place, that it is in the interest of the gentlemen themselves, or for the advantage of the public service that a Minister should be asked to state in Parliament the special reasons why the Government felt called upon to select some officer for retirement.

MR. TOTTENHAM: Do I understand that the Government cast any slur on the character of this gentleman by his enforced retirement?

MR. TREVELYAN: That is a very difficult inquiry to answer. Unquestionably no slur is intended to be conveyed by this enforced retirement. At the same time, Captain Wynne was retired because His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant was of opinion that the extremely important position of a Resident Magistrate in Ireland was one which, on the whole, he was not capable of filling with advantage to the public service.

THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE—THE CONSTABULARY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government are aware that a sub-constable of police has been attending the weekly meetings of the branch of the Irish National League at Bruff, county Limerick, and taking notes of the proceedings; whether a similar course has been pursued in other places; whether the police have any legal right to demand admission to such meetings, unless upon a warrant; and, whether the Government will direct the police not to continue to intrude themselves upon the meetings of a legal association?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed, Sir, that Sub-Constable Irwin, of Bruff, attended a meeting of the Labourers' League on the 29th ultimo, at which meeting it was resolved that the Labourers' League should lapse and that a branch of the Irish National League should be established in its stead. The meeting was adjourned until the 12th instant, when he again attended. He took no notes of the proceedings. He did not demand admittance to the meeting; he entered the outhouse where it was held the same as the others who attended it. He attended from mere curiosity, and made no report whatever to his superior officer of his having done so.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MARTIN, CROWN SOLICITOR, CO. DONEGAL.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that Mr. Martin, of Hamilton, county Donegal, and Sessional Crown Prosecutor for that county, is also law agent for several landowners in the county; and, whether he appears to represent the Crown in the Arrears Court?

Mr. TREVELYAN: In addition to being Sessional Crown Solicitor for the County Donegal, Mr. Martin is a solicitor in private practice, and may as such have acted as law agent for landowners in the county. With respect to the Arrears Court, Mr. Martin was instructed in the same way as the Sessional Crown Solicitors in the other counties to appear for the Treasury in such cases as were considered necessary.

Mr. BIGGAR asked whether Sessional Prosecutors were also frequently solicitors for landowners in the district?

Mr. TREVELYAN: To say I do not know that they are would be no answer. The hon. Member must give me Notice of his Question.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of applications under the Arrears Act down to the 15th instant?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the number of applications to the 15th instant has been 14,167, and comprised 20,729 holdings. There have been 6,164 joint applications, and 8,003 separate applications.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Would the right hon. Gentleman state the amount of money in question?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The amount, I believe, is £250,000.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF THE IRISH MAILS.

Mr. MOORE asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has any scheme in view for the acceleration of the mails between England and Ireland?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, the question of accelerating the mails between England and Ireland has been considered; but a decision has been deferred until the question of providing for the sea service between Holyhead and Kingstown under a new contract has first been disposed of.

ARMY—IRISH RECRUITS.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is within his knowledge that, outside the more specially Irish regiments, the Colonels of the great majority of regiments in Her Majesty's Service instruct their recruiting sergeants to refuse Irish recruits, with the result that, whereas the proportion of Irishmen in our Army was formerly above seventy per cent., it is now only about twenty-two per cent.; and, whether he approves of such exclusion of Irishmen from any regiment in Her Majesty's Service?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, the hon. Member is probably not aware that the whole management of recruiting for the Army is now under the Inspector General of Recruiting. General Bulwer informs me that no such instructions as the hon. Member conceives have been issued either by colonels of regiments or by colonels of regimental districts. I am afraid that the halcyon days of the Army consisting of Irishmen to the extent of 70 per cent, if those days ever existed, are long past. The Army now contains rather more than the proportion of Irishmen which is due to it on the basis of the population of the three parts of the United Kingdom; but I should, nevertheless, gladly welcome any addition of Irishmen of the stuff of those who stormed the entrenchments of Tel-el-Kebir.

ARMY HOSPITALS AND ASYLUMS—LORD MORLEY'S COMMITTEE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Report of the Committee appointed by him under the presidency of Lord Morley, to inquire into the condition and administration of Royal Hospitals at Chelsea and Kilmainham, the Royal Military Asylum, and the Royal Hibernian Military School, has yet been agreed to; if so, when it will be issued; and, if not yet agreed to, when it is probable that it will be ready, more than six months having now elapsed since the completion of the hearing of evidence.

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, the hon. Member is entirely in error if he supposes that the evidence taken by Lord Morley's Committee closed six months ago. I have quite recently read the Report, which is long and interesting; and when we have decided what action to take on its several recommendations, I hope to lay it on the Table, probably early in next Session.

MADAGASCAR—NUMBER OF BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDENT IN, INCLUDING CREOLES FROM THE MAURITIUS.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will instruct the British Consul to report upon the number of British subjects there are resident in Madagascar, including Creoles from the Mauritius.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Consul at Tananarivo has been instructed to furnish a Report of the number of British subjects and Creoles resident in Madagascar.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many applications under the Arrears Act have been lodged with the Land Commission; how many have been granted, and to what amount; how many refused; and how many remain to be dealt with; what is the strength of the staff of investigators now available for proceeding with these cases; what estimate is formed of the number of cases that may be heard by the 30th of this month; and, whether any estimate can be made of the number of cases of tenants contemplated by the Arrears Act who will be excluded from its benefits by the uncertainty arising from the hanging gale sub-section, and the termination, on the 30th instant, of the period within which the landlord may be satisfied in respect to the rent for 1881?

MR. TREVELYAN: Reporting on Saturday, the Land Commissioners inform me that 16,845 applications have been lodged; 1,243 have been favourably reported upon; but no orders for payment have been made since those set forth in the Return presented by command and which brings the proceedings down to the 31st of October. That Return shows the amount to be £5,062 3*s.* 1*d.* Forty-two cases have been unfavourably reported upon; 3,119 cases have been investigated, but not yet reported upon: and on the 18th instant 6,535 cases remained to be dealt with. Thirty-six investigators were employed up to Saturday, but many more are to enter on their duties this week. The Commissioners expect to be able by the 30th to list all the cases that are lodged up to and including the 25th instant. It is not possible to form an estimate of the number of cases referred to by the hon. Member in the final paragraph of his Question. The Land Commissioners ask me to say —and I am sorry to have to add this to my answer, but in justice to them I am obliged to do so—that the preparation of the statistics necessary for answering the foregoing Questions occupied the time of the Controller and three of his principal assistants for some hours. Just now every minute is of importance to them, and they deplore that at a time when there is a pressing necessity for doing work their staff should be occupied in stating what work had been done.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE HANGING GALE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that General Tisdal, investigator under the Arrears Act, heard a case at Tubbercurry, county Sligo, on Friday last, in which a tenant named Anthony Gallagher, claiming the benefit of the Act, and holding a tenancy the rents of which were payable every March and September, produced receipts dated 23rd May 1881 and 20th February 1882, each for a half year's rent, and claimed that these payments should be held to be in satisfaction for the rent of 1881, but the investigator, upon the statement of the agent, that the March rent was not called in until September, and therefore that rent paid before September 1881 could not satisfy the March gale, decided that there was upon the estate what he termed "a five months' hanging gale;" whether this decision is contrary to the instructions issued by the Land Commission to the investigators, and whether a gale "hanging" for a term less than a half year, falls under the provision of the Act; or, if so, whether it is open to an investigator to declare that a "hanging gale" exists in every case in which the rent is not called in upon the precise day on which it accrues due; whether General Tisdal, in the case in question, heard the tenant's evidence upon oath, but took the evidence of the agent without swearing him, and did not cause the oath to be administered to him until a clergyman informed him that public opinion would be brought to bear upon his conduct; who recommended General Tisdal for the office of investigator, and what his qualifications are; and, whether notice will be taken of his ruling in the case of Anthony Gallagher, and his omission to administer the oath impartially to witnesses before him?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commissioners have sent me a Report from General Tisdal in reference to this question, in which he says that he entered in his notes that in the case of Anthony Gallagher the rent of 1881 had not been paid, inasmuch as the ordinary course of dealing on this estate with regard to payments of rent was stated to be that the March rent accrued due on the 1st of September following, and the September rent on the 1st of March following. General Tisdal states that he did not think it necessary to swear the agent as to the custom of the hanging gale on the estate while he was arguing the case on the examination of the tenant; and he believed, to the best of his recollection, the tenant did not deny the agent's statement as to the custom on the estate. The Land Commissioners had not received General Tisdal's official Report on the case when sending me this letter, and they are unwilling to express any opinion as to whether or not his decision was right until the question comes judicially before them.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to ascertain whether, when a gale of rent was payable before the next gale was due, it was or was not a hanging gale?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The proper way to decide the question as to the hanging gale, raised by the hon. Member, is by a decision of the Land Commissioners on a cardinal case such as this, and I am quite alive to the importance of such decision being given as soon as possible.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (COURT VALUERS).

Mr. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that the three months temporary appointment of Court Valuers will expire in a very few weeks, he will appoint an early day for the discussion of the Motion on the Paper as regards the interference of the Government with the Court Valuers?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that the moment had not yet arrived for making a declaration on the subject. But before the end of December, when the present arrangement terminated, his right hon. Friend would state the intentions of the Government.

MADAGASCAR.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's

Government see their way to proffer their good offices to the Governments of France and Madagascar in order to a settlement of the differences which unfortunately exist between the Republic of France and the Queen of the Hovas, with the view of securing the independence and inviolability of Madagascar?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that the Government have considered it their business to watch carefully the relations between France and Madagascar, and that they will continue to do so. I cannot, at present, make any more definite statement than that.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — ULSTER TENANT FARMERS' ASSOCIATION.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has received a letter from the Tenant Farmers' Association of Ulster signed by a representative from each county in that province, making certain representations respecting the administration of the Land Act of 1881; and, whether he has any objection to a Copy being laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I have received such a letter, and I have no objection to a copy of it being laid upon the Table of the House.

EGYPT—SLAVERY CONVENTION OF 1877.

MR. PEASE (for Mr. W. E. FORSTER) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt have been or will be instructed to press upon the Khedive of Egypt the fulfilment of the Convention of 1877 between the British and Egyptian Governments for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and to endeavour to obtain the abolition of slavery in Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question, I need hardly state that the Government are, like my right hon. and hon. Friends, very anxious to deal both with the subject of the Slave Trade and the subject of slavery in Egypt. One of the very first despatches sent from the Foreign Office to Lord Dufferin was upon this subject. There has not been time since his arrival to receive any Report from him, nor do we know, indeed, that he had time to frame a Report; but it is a subject which he will by no means neglect, and on which we shall be desirous to pursue a policy in conformity with the spirit of that policy with which the name of this country has been associated for so long a period.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT— EXTENSION OF TIME, &c.

MR. PARNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has reason to believe that a considerable number of tenants in a position to prove their inability to pay antecedent arrears, and willing to satisfy the other requirements of the Arrears Act, are unable to take advantage of that Act owing to their inability to pay costs incurred in actions for ejectment and for recovery of such antecedent arrears; and, if a Bill for the amendment of the Arrears Act be introduced, whether provision can be made for the payment to the landlord out of the Church Fund of these costs?

MR. A. T. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can propose any plan by which the difficulty in connection with the Arrears Act can be surmounted?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, with regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), I think it has been already answered by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It does not specify details; but I presume it refers to a number of tenants who, it is supposed, have not been able to bring forward their cases before the 30th of November. Well, we have had communications from the Land Commissioners on that subject, and they are of opinion that only a small number of tenants will be debarred from the benefit of the Act by the limitation of the date. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), which is more detailed, and which appeals to me as to the character of the information I have received and the impression I entertain, the hon. Member is aware that there is nothing in the Act requiring tenants to pay costs as a condition for their obtaining relief under the Act. Accordingly, if there be tenants who are discouraged from seeking to obtain the advantages of the Act, owing to their inability to pay costs incurred in actions for ejectment and the recovery of antecedent arrears, we must also recollect that there may be other causes which would sufficiently discourage them in the same way. Even if the costs were remitted in such cases, they may be otherwise so deeply involved in debt as to deprive them of the resource of coming into Court under the Arrears Act, because the costs referred to in the Question do not differ from any other liability for which judgments might be obtained, and which did not influence the House when they decided in the debates upon the Arrears Bill. The latter portion of the Question contemplates an enlargement of the Act on this subject by legislation, and in opposition to the former judgment of the House; and I cannot say that we are prepared to undertake the re-opening of the Act at the present time for a purpose which is grave in itself and lies under the disadvantage that the House has already formed an adverse judgment upon it.

Mr. PARNELL: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that under the Arrears Act in any judgment which may have been recovered against a tenant in ejectment or for the recovery of rent, which is not discharged by the order of the Court directing the payment of a year's rent out of the public funds, and the remission of the antecedent arrears by the landlord, the tenant must pay the costs incurred by the proceedings in ejectment or for recovery of rent?

Mr. LEWIS: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I wish to ask him what significance there may be in the words "at the present time," which he has just uttered. In other words, whether Her Majesty's Government now have in contemplation to amend the Arrears Act in the next Session of Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I did not intend to convey any intention at all on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I intended to say that at the present time —that is, in the present circumstances— they were not favourable to entertaining the question on the suggestion of any Member of Parliament. In reply to the hon. Member for the City of Cork I have no doubt that the hon. Member stated the Act correctly; but I would rather answer the Question with the assistance of the Irish Law Officer.

POST OFFICE—POSTING IN MAIL TRAINS.

Sir JOHN HAY (for Mr. R. N. Fowler) asked the Postmaster General, To what and to how many Sunday evening mail trains the rule he proposes refers; whether he will give a list of the stations at which the facility for posting will be supplied; whether the facility is for foreign letters only; and, how many boxes will have to be opened in London on Sunday evening to collect the letters to be forwarded under his proposed new arrangement?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, the rule refers to 10 mail trains in all—namely, the Irish and the Scotch night mail trains from Euston; the Great Western night mail train from Paddington; the Midland from St. Pancras; the London and South-Western from Waterloo; the Great Eastern night mail trains to Ipswich and Cambridge respectively from Liverpool Street; the foreign and the inland night mail trains respectively from Cannon Street; and the London, Brighton, and South Coast night mail train from London Bridge. The facility is for inland letters and for Continental alike. My right hon. and gallant Friend is under a misapprehension in supposing that it will be necessary to open any letter-boxes in London except those attached to the mail trains just mentioned.

INDIA (BRITISH BURMAH)—MRA THA DOON.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has received a Petition from Mra Tha Doon, lately a native magistrate at Akyat in British Burmah; whether Mra Tha Doon complained of being dismissed without a hearing after more than twenty years' service; whether the Petition of Mra Tha Doon was rejected by him on the ground that no complaint made direct to the Secretary of State can be attended to; whether it is the fact that Mra Tha Doon had previously petitioned the Deputy Commissioner at Akyat for a hearing and had received no reply; had then petitioned the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah for a hearing and had received no reply; and then petitioned the late Governor General of India, Lord Lytton, for a hearing and had received no reply; and, whether he will take any steps to obtain a fair hearing for any complaints of alleged wrongful dismissal which this native ex-magistrate has to make?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, early in 1881 a Petition reached the India Office which purported to come from Mra Tha Doon, who was formerly an extra Assistant Commissioner, third grade, at Akyat, in Arakan. That Petition was returned to India, not having been forwarded according to the rules of the service through the Government under which the memorialist served. It is impossible to say now what particular complaints were made in that Petition. There is no information in the India Office as to whether it is or is not the fact that Mra Tha Doon had previously presented all or any of the other Petitions referred to in the Question. But there are records in the India Office which show that Mra Tha Doon was dismissed by order of the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, dated the 15th of July, 1879. The charges against him were considered in detail by the Commissioner of Arakan, by the Judicial Commissioner of British Burmah, and by the Chief Commissioner, Sir Charles Aitchison, and each of these officers in succession considered the explanation submitted by Mra Tha Doon entirely unsatisfactory, and that it was necessary he should be dismissed. Having no reason whatever to doubt that Mra Tha Doon was fairly and properly dealt with, I have no intention of taking any steps in the matter.

INDIA (BOMBAY)—LOCAL ADMINISTRATION.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the statement in the "Bombay Gazette" that the officials in the Bombay Presidency,

> "Taken as a body, are resisting Lord Ripon's scheme for associating the Natives in the work of Local Administration;"

and, whether, if this statement be true, he has received any information as to the grounds of such official opposition?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have seen, in the newspaper called *The Bombay Gazette,* the statement referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. I have no reason to suppose that statement is correct—on the contrary, a telegram has been received stating that the Bombay Government have informed the Government of India that they would give a fair trial to the proposed experiment for self-government. Of course, there is some difference of opinion among Government officers as to the extent to which effect can at once be given to certain portions of the scheme of the Government of India; but there is no reason to suppose that the Bombay Government would obstruct the Government of India.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked whether Lord Ripon's scheme had been submitted to the Secretary of State for India in Council, and approved?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the Resolutions of the Government of India containing the principle on which they proposed that the scheme of local government in India should proceed had been sent home and approved. He proposed shortly to lay before Parliament Papers on this subject.

PARLIAMENT — ORDER — PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)— NOTICES.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to ask a Question on a point of Order? I wish to draw your attention to the Order Book of the House, where you will observe that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has placed for to-morrow and several following days up to the 1st of December Notices of Motion relating to his Colleague, the other Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), the Northampton Election, and other matters connected with it; and I desire to draw your attention to the fact that these Notices of Motion were not placed in the Order Book of the House until after the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) had given Notice of a Motion for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the release of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell); and I would ask whether the hon. Member for Northampton is in Order in placing on the Order Book for several days to come Notices of Motion relating to the other Member for Northampton, substantially identical in their object, though varying in their terms; and if this course is taken to prevent the hon. Member for Gloucestershire from bringing on his Motion, whether such a proceeding is not only an invasion of the Forms of the House, but a gross irregularity?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I venture to ask you, Sir, whether the noble Lord has a right to describe my Notices of Motion as identical? My Motion for to-day is that, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that all duly-elected Members of Parliament should be allowed to affirm their allegiance, and that applies to every other Member of the House, as well as to my hon. Colleague. I wish also to ask whether the Orders of the Day will not come before the Notices of Motion on Monday?

Mr. SPEAKER: My attention has been called to this matter. I have looked into it, and I am bound to say that the course proposed to be taken by the hon. Member for Northampton is highly inconvenient, if not irregular. I have examined the several Notices of Motion referred to by the noble Lord; and, although they may not be identical, if some of the Motions were negatived by the House, many others could not be put, as being substantially the same.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: After your ruling, Sir, may I be allowed to ask the hon. Member for Northampton whether he will take off the Notices alluded to?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I would ask again whether Orders of the Day on Monday have not precedence of Notices of Motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is well known that that is the case.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I must press the hon. Member to give me an answer to my Question. [Mr. Labouchere: Notice.] I wish to know whether, after your decision, the hon. Member will not at once remove the Notices he has placed on the Paper?

[No answer was given.]

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked at what time the Prime Minister proposed to move the adjournment of the debate on Procedure in order to permit the discussion of his Motion for a Select Committee into the circumstances attending the release of Irish Members from Kilmainham?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I must refer the hon. Member to the statement I made on Thursday with respect to the Motion on the Report of the Gray Committee. I shall act in the same manner with respect to the hon. Gentleman's Notice. More than that I cannot say, as much depends upon the course that the discussion on Procedure may take to-night.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—EIGHTH RULE (THE HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE).

[adjourned debate.] [twenty-fifth night.]

Standing Order (Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule) 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, *further considered.*

Mr. HINDE PALMER, moved, as an Amendment, to add to the exemptions "Bills which have been settled by a Select Committee." The House would admit that a Bill which had gone through the ordeal of a Select Committee always came before it in a much more complete form than one that had not, and any Amendments were narrowed down to a very small compass. If such Bills were exempted from the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule a great deal of valuable labour which had been undergone by Committees would not be lost. They would still be open to revision by a Committee of the whole House. He would remind the House that, though the Floods Prevention Bill passed through a Select Committee, it was blocked by a private Member in the House, owing to the operation of the Rule. He, therefore, trusted that Bills that had passed through a Select Committee would be excepted from the Rule.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "House," at the end of the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words "or have been settled by a Select Committee."—(*Mr. Hinde Palmer*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, he thought that the hon. and learned Member for Lincoln's (Mr. Hinde Palmer's) proposed exemption would destroy the effect of the decision which had been reached, with great unanimity, by both sides of the House after discussion on Friday. The Amendment was against the spirit of the concession made by the Prime Minister, which only opened the Report stage to Bills which had passed a Committee of the Whole House, and which had been made in view of the possible Grand Committees. If carried, it would throw the House back into a vortex of confusion and disorder. The House must know how often it found Bills coming back from Select Committees totally altered, not in details, but in principles—important elements omitted, or else introduced. He need only point, in his own experience, to the great and important Committee on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford's (Mr. W. E. Forster's) Endowed Schools Bill, of which he (Mr. Beresford Hope) had been a Member, to show what the revision of a Select Committee meant. Besides, the House must recollect the system on which Select Committees were composed and the element of chance about them, with the narrow majority of 1 always secured to the Party which was in the majority in the House, so that a chance cold or two might alter the whole upshot of its deliberations. So, notwithstanding the hon. and learned Member for Lincoln's appeal as to the hardship of Bills over which Select Committees had been laboriously hammering after all falling through, the evil would be much greater of subjecting the House to the haphazard chances of having to take Bills without adequate investigation, merely because they had passed—no one could tell how—the ordeal of a Select Committee.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that, while admitting the force of a great deal of what had been said by his hon. and learned Friend behind him (Mr. Hinde Palmer) in favour of the Amendment, he (Mr. Gladstone) hoped his hon. and learned Friend would withdraw it. He must remember that they were considering Rules which would diminish opposition and Obstruction, and it was important to keep that detail in view. It was true that a Select Committee frequently most considerably enhanced the value of a measure, giving it the character of a work of art, thereby making it far more perfect for the consideration of the House; but consisting, as such Committees did, of a very limited number of Gentlemen, specially interested in a particular subject, they sometimes changed the character of the measures submitted to them; and those measures, therefore, ought to command the consideration of the House at hours when they could be fully discussed. But there was still a more serious ground of opposition to the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend. The words "or Committee of the whole House" had been inserted in the Rule now before the House, in order to leave liable to the operations of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule Reports from Grand or Standing Committees. They could not consistently say that a Report from a Select Committee, composed of 15 Gentlemen, should be exempted, and that a Report from a Standing Committee of 60 or 80 Members should come under the operation of the Rule. For these reasons, he trusted the hon. and learned Member would not press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR HENRY HOLLAND, in rising to move an Amendment, said, that, as there were probably now in the House many hon. Members who were not present on Friday last, when his Amendment was partially considered, he would venture very briefly to re-state his reasons for moving it. It was admitted by the great majority of the House that the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule had, upon the whole, worked well; but it was equally admitted that certain abuses and defects had shown themselves in the working of it, and it was against one of those abuses that his present Amendment was directed. The Prime Minister had, on Friday last, strongly urged the House not to accept any Amendment which would enervate the Standing Order. In that desire he (Sir Henry Holland) cordially concurred; but he thought that to amend an abuse, and thus remove a legitimate objection to the Rule, would be not to enervate, but, on the contrary, to strengthen the Rule. He hoped, for that reason, to have the support not only of the Prime Minister, but of his right hon. Friend the senior Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John Mowbray), than whom there was no more staunch upholder of the Rule. Now, what was the defect or abuse that he (Sir Henry Holland) desired to check? It was that the Rule, as at present worked, enabled a single Member to stop not only the passing of a measure, but even the discussion of it. It surely could not have been intended by the framers of the Rule that Bills to which the majority of the House were favourably inclined should be practically stopped at the will of a single Member. Nay, he would go further, and say that it surely could not have been intended that measures not commanding the assent of the majority, but only supported by a minority, should be stopped by a single Member from being discussed. It had been frequently said that there was now too much private Member legislation. Even if such was the case, such measures should be rejected on their merits after discussion. He had some difficulty in understanding how hon. Members who had voted steadily against the Clôture Resolution could submit to the present working of the Rule, which, practically, stopped discussion, and acted as a most effective *clôture*. The present system was, in his opinion, unfair to a Member who brought forward a Bill, as he had a right to lay his views before the House for their consideration; and it was also unfair to the House, who had a right to have measures discussed and to decide upon them, and to separate the good from the bad. The present system tended also to keep the Order Book uselessly full, and thus to check legislation. If a Member introduced a Bill one Session, which he thought of importance, and all discussion on it was stopped that Session, he would, not unnaturally, introduce it again the following Session. But that course he would be less tempted to adopt if the Bill, after discussion, was rejected by a large majority. Again, a Bill was often introduced in a somewhat crude form, which, if those crudities were removed, as they might be, upon discussion in Committee, might commend itself to the majority of the House. But, in the absence of discussion, this Bill, not amended, would appear Session after Session in the Order Book. By the proposed Amendment of the Standing Order, every Notice of opposition would have to be put down, in the first instance, by six Members, and regularly supported by that number of Members. That would prevent a single Member from blocking a Bill in which, perhaps, he had no earthly interest, in a spirit of pique or retaliation, because some measure of his, or of some Friend of his, had been blocked by someone else, or because he thought he had been ill-treated by the Government, or by some section of the House. It would prevent a single Member from blocking a Bill because he objected to legislation generally, or because he wanted to get to bed early. He (Sir Henry Holland) had added some words to the Amendment to secure that the block should be kept on the Order Book by six Members. This he had done in the hope of meeting the objection raised on Friday last by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson). That right hon. Gentleman stated that he thought it would be more difficult to get rid of the block of six Members than it was to get rid of the block by one Member. But if the promoter of a Bill could persuade one of the six Members to withdraw his name the block would now cease to be valid; and he thought it would be quite as easy to get at one man out of six as to get at one man who had blocked under the present system. As to the number of "six," the House would see that different numbers had been proposed. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had proposed "three"—other hon. Members on the opposite side of the House had proposed "twelve" and "twenty." He himself was not opposed to "three," nor particularly wedded to "six." But when he found that difference of opinion to exist he thought he had struck a fair medium number, sufficient to show a *bonâ fide* opposition; and he should, therefore, be prepared to adhere to "six," though he ran the risk of not fully satisfying either side of the House. He turned now to the second branch of the proposed Amendment, to which he confessed he attached great importance. This provided for a weekly renewal of the block. Such a renewal would not only tend to show the *bona fides* of the block, but it would also tend to prevent the recurrence of cases which had been mentioned to the House, when a Member who had blocked a Bill went away, abroad, or into the country, forgetful of the block, or careless as to its effect. The consequence of such conduct might be that, though the promoter of a Bill might have accepted Amendments, and thus disarmed opposition, he would be unable to proceed with the measure, because unable to communicate with the Member, and to induce him to withdraw his block. It would be observed that he had fixed one day—Friday—in each week on or before which the renewal of the block should be entered, as he thought it would be more convenient for Members to be able to rely on the Saturday Order Paper than to have to consult the Paper every day, which would have to be done if the renewal was to be within a week after the date of Notice being given. The House had, in an earlier part of the Session, approved of an Amendment to the Standing Order which he had proposed, and which now formed the second part of the Standing Order; and he hoped, if the first part of the present Amendment, as to the number necessary to validate a block, was not acceptable to the House, that, at all events, the second part of it, providing for a renewal of the Notice of opposition, might be approved of. In accordance with a suggestion from a high authority, he had slightly altered the form of the Amendment, so as to make it a Proviso; and he would now move the Amendment to which he had referred.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, to add the words "Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by six Members at the least, and six names be kept on the Order Book to make such Notice valid; and that such Notice shall lapse at the end of the week following that in which it was given unless renewed by the Friday in that week."—(*Sir Henry Holland.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he would propose to substitute three Members for six, believing that that number would answer all the purposes required.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "six," and insert the word "three," —(*Lord Randolph Churchill,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'six' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that it was not very often that it was his good fortune to find himself in agreement with Her Majesty's Government; but upon this occasion he must endorse the arguments brought forward on Friday night by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) with regard to this subject, because he thought them conclusive, and that the right of any individual Member of Parliament to give Notice of opposition to a Bill ought not to be infringed. He was prepared, however, to admit, with the hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Holland), that there might be something to be said for the latter part of the Amendment, providing that there ought to be a renewal of the blocking Notice every week, although he would rather, for his own part, leave the matter as it already stood.

MR. RYLANDS said, that the Amendment, if accepted, would strike a severe blow at the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. He, therefore, felt bound to oppose it altogether, for, in his opinion, it would be much better to keep the present block system as it now stood. He might remind the House what was meant by blocking a Bill. It had often been said to be unjust to the House to block a Bill; but it meant no more than this—that the Member who, under a deep sense of public responsibility, put down the Notice of opposition, found a Bill on which so much difference of opinion existed that, in his judgment, it ought not to be discussed late at night. A man who blocked a Bill, in such circumstances, deserved not to be reprobated, but to be hailed as a public benefactor. By doing so he saved others from being kept in their places till the early hours of the morning. He appealed to the Prime Minister to maintain the compromise which had been accepted by the House.

MR. BRYCE contended that the systematic blocking of Bills which had prevailed for the last few years was altogether unlike the reasonable opposition described by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). He would ask whether it was under a deep sense of public responsibility that the hon. Members (Mr. Biggar and Mr. Warton) had blocked so many Bills, and stopped half of the legislation of the country? If the hon. Member (Mr. Rylands) regarded those hon. Gentlemen who did that as public benefactors, the next suggestion would be the erection of statues in recognition of their distinguished services. His (Mr. Bryce's) experience was that the practice was not confined, as it should be, to important Public Bills. He hoped, therefore, that the Government would accept the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), and would do what they could to relieve the present hardships of private Members. Indeed, he wished that the number "six" should be made "twelve," with a view of stopping the vexatious blocking of Bills. It might be easy to get together the smaller number of Members, but not the larger number; and a block when effected by 12 Members would be a more *bonâ fide* block. He believed that the acceptance of the Amendment by the Government would remove a great deal of the harshest and worst features of this Rule.

Mr. WARTON said, he, once for all, fully accepted the compliment paid him by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and did not hesitate to regard himself as a public benefactor, because his opposition had been productive of a great deal of public good. He did not wish to detain the House with a long catalogue of his legislative virtues in that respect; but he might mention that he had blocked several Bills, and that, by his opposition to Government measures, he had obtained justice for poor lunatics by securing for them four instead of two visits of inspection annually. He had also, by the same process of "blocking," obtained an extension of time for poor writers in sheriffs' offices in Scotland, whose rights would otherwise have been abolished without compensation. He would say, however, that before taking that step he always took care to find out what they were about; and, in doing so, he frequently found that not only the House, but Committees, had overlooked the most important provisions. The Amendment of the hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Holland) started on the baseless theory of the imaginary Member who blocked a Bill and ran away. He (Mr. Warton) was not that Member. Besides being obscure and making no provision for Wednesdays, it was based on a wrong hypothesis, and was in every way less satisfactory than the proposals of the Government. He, therefore, trusted the Prime Minister would give no sanction to the proposition under discussion.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, he was astonished at the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), who had drawn a fancy picture of the operation of the Rule. Even if it had no application to Bills, it would still be important as affecting the Motions of private Members, whose Business would be little, if at all, promoted by the other Rules. He considered the Amendment moved by the hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Holland) would allow the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule to work with all its former efficiency, while it would remove certain existing abuses. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment. It was not too much to ask that those who blocked Bills should watch for the coming round of the Friday, so as to renew their block if it were necessary.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he was far more in accordance with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) than with the Amendment. On the whole, the Rule seemed to have worked well, rather than ill. He would suggest that the hon. Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) should give up the first part of the Amendment as to the number of Members, and move only the second part, as to the weekly renewal of the block, for the alteration that would be effected by the first part would so weaken the Rule as to make it ineffectual. The object of the Rule was to stop important legislation, which ought not to go on after midnight. If the Amendment went to a division in its present form he would be obliged to vote against it.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he hoped the Government would adhere to the Rule as it stood. He believed it had been abused; but, on the whole, it had done much good. He thought the Amendment would lead to a great deal of inconvenience and confusion, owing to the difficulties in the way of securing the renewed assents of six Members every Friday.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought it was clear from what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) that the Government would adhere to their original proposal. The blocks of the hon. Members for Bridport (Mr. Warton) and Cavan

(Mr. Biggar) had been secretly, if not openly, supported by a large number of Members; and he had reason to believe that a right hon. Gentleman sitting on the Government Bench had incited the hon. Member for Cavan to block a certain Bill. The question was also repeatedly asked in the Lobbies whether someone was not going to block a Bill which Members generally did not wish to come on at a late hour. He was glad the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) was no longer tongue-tied, but could express his opinions freely. He should not object to the acceptance of the last part of the Amendment; but he thought it would be wise and prudent to adhere to the Rule as it stood.

MR. ARTHUR VIVIAN said, he hoped the Government would accept the Amendment. For a Member in charge of a Bill blocked by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) life was not worth having. He believed that if the two Front Benches knew what difficulties were in the way of private Members in getting any legislation at all, they would support the Amendment, which he considered a most fair one. He supposed the Votes issued on the Saturday morning would show whether a block had been taken off or not?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was not in favour of the first part of the Amendment, for instances had occurred in which all Bills had been blocked by one Member, and it would hardly be possible to get three Members to join in such a proceeding. Therefore, he did not think it would be any use altering the Rule in that respect. He felt it was necessary to guard against private Members putting down their Bills night after night, and keeping many Members in their places to resist them. He would, however, like to see the second part of the Amendment carried, necessitating a Member who blocked a Bill to renew the block every week. He considered that really good, and hoped the Government would accept it.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the way in which hon. Members regarded Amendments which tended to limit the application of the Rule would naturally depend on the view they took of the value of the Rule itself. They were too apt to forget the value of the Rule, because their attention had been so frequently called to its abuse. If the Rule were not in existence, an active private Member, who found that the Government, or a large section of the House, were opposed to his Bill, would put it down for every night in the Session. At the same time, he would not be bound to declare on which night he intended seriously to bring it forward. Thus, the majority who were against the Bill must attend every night in the Session in sufficient numbers to defeat the Bill, or else the Member in charge of it might, when he had a temporary majority in his favour, slip his Bill through. He did not think it fair to any Government or to the House that any Member should have that power; and, therefore, he thought the Rule must, in some shape or other, if not in its present one, remain on the Standing Orders. With regard to the Amendment, so far as it concerned the greatest abuse of the Rule—that where a Member blocked a Bill, and then perhaps went away for three months, without caring anything as to the convenience of the House in the matter—he did not think any attempt to increase, as it did, the number of persons who intended to block a Bill, would prevent that abuse, because it would be perfectly possible to get three Members to block any particular Bill, or any number of Bills; and if the block were really a legitimate one, intended to prevent the discussion of a measure at a time when it could not be thoroughly discussed, it was not fair to impose on those who opposed the Bill the necessity of getting others to support them in their opposition. It might, however, be fair to require a Member to renew his block from time to time. Such a proposal would have many arguments to recommend it; and, if it were satisfactory to both sides of the House, there was no possible question of principle which could prevent the Government from accepting it.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, that he had been a sufferer from the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, as he was interested in many Metropolitan measures, which did not usually come on until a late hour. He thought it a grievous injustice that men were permitted to put their names down in opposition to a measure without their personal attendance being also required. He hoped that, if the Government could not accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), they would accept the proposal just shadowed forth by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade.

MR. MONK said, he deeply regretted the decision of the Government. There was a strong feeling that single Members had abused the privilege of blocking Bills—that, seemingly, being the only function of some Members. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment requiring three Members for a block, if they did not accept six.

MR. MACFARLANE also supported the Amendment. He objected to the continuance of a system under which such a Member as the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) should regulate the amount of legislation passing through the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he hoped the Government would accept the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). It would do no harm to the Rule, and prevent, at least, the gross abuse of it. He held that it was a scandal that one Member was able to block as many Bills as he chose.

MR. LEWIS, in opposing the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), said, that, if it were accepted, it would so whittle away the Rule as to render it worthless. As a matter of fact, its whole effect might be put on one side by the accidental absence of one of the three Members. But he objected to both Amendments. The principle of the Membership of the House was based upon individual action; and he should be sorry to see that principle interfered with. Every hon. Member who had spoken in favour of the Amendments had, like the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), the hon. Member for West Cornwall (Mr. Arthur Vivian), and the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), a destroyed Bill in his pocket. They were all a noble Army of Martyrs, who, not being able to carry their own little schemes, wished to continue to administer something in infinitesimally small doses to the House which would have the effect of making life miserable to all other hon. Members. Notwithstanding their sufferings, he hoped the Government would stand by their Resolution.

MR. J. HOLLOND said, the argument of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) cut both ways. If so many Members had suffered by the existing Rule there was good reason for its repeal. Blocking Bills ought to be made a difficult matter; and he, therefore, supported the Amendment requiring that six should be the number for carrying that process into effect. Even if three Members were required to do so, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would not lose his title to be called a benefactor; he would only have to admit others to the monopoly.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he thought care ought to be taken, in driving away one abuse, not to introduce another. He feared that if the Amendment were carried, one Member would block one Bill in consideration of another's blocking another Bill. Thus a system of joint-stock blocking would be brought into play, to which he would have the strongest objection. He hoped the Government would keep to the Rule as it stood.

MR. DILLWYN said, he should have been strongly inclined to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), except that it did not make provision for the removal of the block. One Member would, by his absence or by not co-operating with his fellow-blockers, destroy the block. He thought the Government had sufficiently met the difficulty; but he hoped they would accept the second part of the hon. Member for Midhurst's Amendment, providing that the block should be renewed once a week.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the subject before the House was a difficult one, and he did not very distinctly see his way in the matter. He felt bound to admit that there had been a considerable abuse of the Rule by "public benefactors." He must own, also, that he had a considerable jealousy of the multiplication or creation of new quorums. Of late they had had occasion to create a good many; and he had no wish to go further in that respect than he possibly could help. For instance, they had a quorum of 200 for one purpose, a quorum of 100 for another purpose, there was the old and venerable quorum of 40 for a third purpose, a quorum of 20 for a fourth purpose, a quorum of 10 for a fifth purpose; and he certainly had objections to the creation of another quorum unless he very distinctly saw his way with respect to it, and at present he did not see his way. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. R. H. Paget) had rightly called attention to the danger that existed of the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Henry Holland) leading to a system of combinations for blocking Bills—to a system of exchange and mutual assistance and assurance societies in the blocking of Bills. It would be likely to lead to a more extended and better organized form of opposition to a Bill. Now, that was unadvisable, for organized opposition was not wanted. What was wanted was free discussion. As he could not see how these small combinations would work, he viewed them with some apprehension. He would admit that the renewal of the Notice would be a considerable check. Indeed, he had not the least doubt that the necessity of coming down to the House and writing an objection from Friday to Friday would be a very considerable check upon any tendency that had heretofore existed to a wanton use of this Rule. There was considerable force, too, in the observations of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). He was afraid that an equally complicated machinery for the withdrawal of blocks would be necessary as for their imposition. There was another point he might mention. The House looked a great deal to the Government, and justly so—he meant to the Government of the day—for checking what he might call officious legislation of a certain kind; and he thought that if the House were to accept this Rule, and look to the Government to adopt this method of checking the blocking power, the exercise of such a right by official men would be extremely invidious. He admitted there was great difficulty in the case. For his own part, he must own that he did not see his way sufficiently to be responsible for the creation of a new quorum in the matter. With respect to a check against the abuse of the Rule, he did not feel that they had before them a perfect scheme; but, on the whole, he considered that, as he had said, the proposal that a block should be renewed week by week, though not an entirely sufficient check, was a very considerable one; therefore he thought they would be acting more safely if they took the course suggested by the last half of the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Henry Holland), and rejected the first part.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he rose to Order; for, unless there was need, he should hardly like to trouble the House with a division. He therefore wished to know whether, as the Government had expressed a favourable opinion on the latter part of the Amendment, he might move the second part —that was, the clause after the word "valid," and abandon the first part?

MR. SPEAKER said, he would point out that the Question immediately before the House was whether the word "six" should stand part of the Amendment, and until that question was disposed of the Amendment could not be altered.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he intended to vote for the Amendment as it stood, and he hoped the hon. Brronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) would go to a division. He himself intended to get as much legislation, and as quickly as possible, out of the House; and he thought that placing in the hands of a single Member the power to stop discussion, was likely to act prejudicially against progress. He could not himself understand upon what principle the Prime Minister opposed the first part of the Amendment, seeing that he had already, in previous Resolutions, established a considerable number of quorums. He thought, looking at the necessity there was for some limitation to be placed upon the power of blocking Bills, that the number "six" might with advantage be even increased to "twenty."

MR. WARTON said, he would suggest that a way out of the difficulty might be found in putting it to the House, that the numbers "three" or "six" should stand part of the Amendment; and, after those questions were negatived, the latter part of the Resolution might be put.

MR. BIGGAR said, he differed from the hon. Member for Galway Borough

(Mr. T. P. O'Connor). He (Mr. Biggar) thought it desirable that one Member should have the power of saying that a Bill should not pass a stage without discussion. He did not think that, under any pretence, the stage of a Bill should be proposed after half-past 12 o'clock. As to the latter part of the Amendment, he did not see the advantage of putting Members to the trouble of going to the Table every Friday and re-entering blocks to a Bill. The only result of it would be to give more trouble to the Clerks at the Table.

Mr. PARNELL said, it was his full intention to support the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), because the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, perhaps more than any other of the proposed Rules, precluded the possibility of private Members obtaining the judgment of the House on the Bills they brought forward. As it was proposed, the Rule provided for the wants and necessities of the Government, and it shut out private Members entirely. He complained strongly, in regard to the whole of those Rules, that the Government appeared to consider that they constituted the only section of the House which was entitled to facilities; and when they secured facilities for the measures they deemed of importance, they seemed to think that everything else might go by the board, and that the wishes of private Members and their constituents were to be entirely disregarded in connection with the result of the labours of Parliament. The Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule was a modern innovation. It had existed as a Standing Order during the last two or three Sessions only. Before that time, of so little importance was it considered by the then Government, that the proposition that it should be in force as a Sessional Order was left to a private Member. Now, however, they found the Rule adopted by the Government in its most objectionable form, by which they prevented the possibility of a private Member's Bill that had been read a second time on a Wednesday getting through the Committee stage. It would be better to hand over the Wednesdays to the Government, if the object of the Resolutions was to save time, and enable Parliament to proceed to a definite conclusion on the matters brought before it; because the time spent in getting private Members' Bills read a second time on Wednesday, if they were not allowed to reach their further stages, would be practically lost both to the House and the country. Some opportunity ought to be afforded, by the modification of the Rule, for private Members to pass their Bills through Committee; and he therefore proposed, after the Amendment of the hon. Baronet was disposed of, to move an Amendment to except from the operation of the Rule Bills which had been read a second time on a Wednesday.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he rose for the purpose of explaining that, assuming that the words of the Amendment requiring six names to be attached to a blocking Notice were negatived, and also that the further proposal that there should be three names were negatived, the Government thought that the word "Members" should be changed into "a Member." Then the Amendment would run "and such Notice shall lapse at the end of the week following that on which it was given." He would take the opportunity of saying that the course proposed to be taken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork would not be a satisfactory one.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he would accept the Prime Minister's suggestion as to the second part of the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 39; Noes 147: Majority 108.—(Div. List, No. 381.)

Question put, "That the word 'three' be there inserted."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 52; Noes 126: Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 382.)

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to insert, after the word "Member," the words "and dated."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment amended, by leaving out the word "Members," and inserting the words "a Member, and dated, and," instead thereof; and by leaving out the words "at the least, and six names be kept on the Order Book to make such Notice valid, and that such Notice;" and also by leaving out the words "unless renewed by the Friday in that week."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question, "That those words 'Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by a Member, and dated, and shall lapse at the end of the week following that in which it was given,' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, to add the words "Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees; and if objection be taken by any Member of the House to the name of any Member nominated on a Select Committee, the vote of the House on such a nomination shall be taken without Debate."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not see that the necessity for that Proviso was very great, because the cases which his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers) desired to guard against were very rare where any difficulty had been felt. Besides, he thought, it would be inconvenient to allow a decision to be taken on the appointment of any individual Member in the manner proposed by his hon. Friend, and, therefore, that the latter part of the Amendment should not be accepted. As regarded the first portion of the Amendment down to the word "Committees," he was prepared to accept it, and he would suggest the insertion of the word "also" after "provided."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked whether the Rule was to apply to the nomination only of the Committee?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he was quite willing to accept that modification of his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, the words "Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. PARNELL said, that, the Government having accepted that Amendment, he did not see why they should not go further, so as to include the appointment of Select Committees, as well as the nomination of them. The Amendment was, he believed, another intrenchment on the rights of private Members. It would throw into the hands of the Government any nomination for a Select Committee which they might choose to bring on after half-past 12. The same Rule that applied to the nomination ought also to be applied to the appointment of such Committees.

MR. DODSON said, he was sorry that the Government could not accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). He would remind the hon. Member that there was a great distinction between the appointment and the nomination of a Committee. The question of the appointment of a Committee might give rise to a great deal of discussion with respect to the policy of the inquiry; but that was not the case in respect to the nomination of the Members who were to sit upon it.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY remarked that, if the appointment of Select Committees were exempted from the Half-past Twelve Rule, they would have every conceivable question raised in that form. Hon. Members could put any Motion they chose into the form of a Motion for a Committee of Inquiry.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he felt bound to oppose the Amendment, on the ground that it would throw the nomination of Select Committees absolutely into the hands of the Government.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that, at the present time, Select Committees were appointed by the Whips, although private Members who had moved for the appointment of the Committee had some slight influence in the nomination. If the composition of a Select Committee was of a partial and unrepresentative character, then the only resource left to private Members was by blocking the nomination. But it was proposed to take this power away. He knew cases in which, on railway and insurance questions, as many as six or seven railway or insurance directors respectively had been appointed on the Committees. He hoped the Amendment would not be accepted.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he hoped that the Government would not give their assent to the proposal, which was calculated to take the House at a disadvantage, and to incapacitate, further than was already done by the New Rules, the minority for the time being.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 78; Noes 20: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 383.)

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he rose to move, in a slightly altered form from the way in which it had been originally framed and printed, an Amendment which stood in the name of his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). Those alterations which had been made in it were found necessary, to his (Mr. Clarke's) regret, in consequence of the changes which had been made in the Rule by the Amendments which had been adopted. As altered, it provided—

> "That when such business as may be taken has been disposed of, or at Half-past One of the Clock precisely, notwithstanding there may be business under discussion, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without putting any Question: Provided always, That when the Division on an Amendment has not been concluded until after Half-past One the Original or Main Question, may, if no Debate arise thereupon, be put by Mr. Speaker, and a Division taken after Half-past One."

His noble Friend stated last week that there was no Legislative Assembly in the world which sat more than half the number of hours occupied by that Chamber. That was the last attempt which could be made in the course of the discussion of those Rules to secure a fixed period for the adjournment of the House. The average length of their Sittings, taking four nights a week, was 10¼ hours, or nearly double the length of time occupied by any other Legislative Assembly; and if the proposal were adopted it would reduce the time to 9½ or 9¾ hours per night. No one could say that that would not leave a sufficiency of time on an average for the discharge of Public Business. Two answers only had been given to the proposal. One was the jocose answer of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that the best of all ways to lengthen our days was to spend the hours of the night in discussing Bills. The other answer was that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who said that if an hour was fixed the result would be a prolongation of the debates by Members wishing to get rid of certain measures, and that thus more time would be lost. Now, no one would deny that the long hours which the House sat imposed a severe strain on many hon. Members. He thought it a good thing for the Tory Party that the Tory Ministry went out in 1880, for had they remained in Office for another 12 months some of their most prominent and useful Members would have been incapacitated from discharging their duties, for they were breaking down under the strain. Private Members also felt the burden; and, therefore, the House did not get the full benefit of their assistance, as many of them were obliged to leave the House before the end of its Sitting. Further, many persons well qualified to take part in the deliberations of Parliament were deterred from entering the House because they were afraid of the great injury to their health from the prolonged hours; but a still greater and stronger argument than that appeared to him to be involved in the question of publicity. He quite agreed that legislation should go on with increased rapidity, but distinctly thought it would be better not to legislate than to do so, as far as the public were concerned, in the dark. The public knew nothing of the debates after 12 o'clock, and the country did not derive half the advantage it otherwise might from legislation after that hour, as it had no knowledge of its nature. The Government must have very little confidence in the Rules which they had passed and were passing, if the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was of any value. The Resolutions for preventing unnecessary debate and tedious repetition must surely be expected by the Government to have some substantial effect.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE resumed, saying that the only objection to the Amendment was that it would encourage Obstruction by tempting men to talk on particular questions up till half-past 1; but there was no substantial reason why the Sittings of the House should not be concluded at a reasonable time; and both the health of the Members and the necessity for publishing the debates was an argument in favour of the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end of the said Standing Order, as amended, the words "Provided also, That, when such business as may be taken has been disposed of, or at Half-past One of the Clock precisely, notwithstanding there may be business under discussion, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House, without putting any Question: Provided always, That when the Division on an Amendment has not been concluded until after Half-past One, the Original or Main Question may, if no Debate arise thereupon, be put by Mr. Speaker, and a Division taken after Half-past One."—(*Mr. Edward Clarke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he must oppose the Amendment on behalf of the Government. It was admitted that the hours during which the House sat were very long, and that it would be desirable to curtail them; but he (the Attorney General) would ask how, if they could not now transact the Business of the country, it would be possible to do it if they accepted this Amendment? They would, if they agreed to it, deprive themselves of a portion of the time which was now usually occupied, and give power to any Member to talk out a question by continuing the debate up till half-past 1. As a great mass of unopposed Business had to be dealt with at the end of each day's Sitting, the result of adopting the Amendment would be to give any individual Member the means of talking it out; and, in fact, one Member would be able to bring the Business of the House to a close at half-past 1, preventing a division being taken which would be desired by the great majority. In that case the present evils would be greatly aggravated.

MR. E. STANHOPE observed, that the Amendment met with the approval of many hon. Members, though the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who, as a Law Officer of the Crown, was supposed never to need sleep, was not in its favour. Every hon. Member ought to sympathize with a proposal which limited the Sitting of that House to nine hours and a-half daily. Surely that was enough for any deliberative Assembly. Nor was it unnatural that some such limit as this should be proposed, particularly as a great many Members would find their work much increased if the Government scheme of Grand Committees were carried out. He did not see what answer there was to the argument that if the New Rules were to be of so much use they ought to enable the House to shorten the duration of its Sittings. He was in favour of limiting them, and they must come to it at some time, for they could not go on as they were now doing. It was utterly impossible that human strength could support such lengthened Sittings. They must come to such a proposal as this some day or other, or the difficulty would possibly be met by some Member proposing the adjournment at half-past 12 every Sitting. Still, it might not be expedient to press the matter to a division at the present time.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the reply of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would have been more conclusive if the New Rules had not been passed. He believed the practical effect of a Rule of this kind would be that, in case there was a disposition to decide a question, when they came to half-past 12 the Speaker would be driven to apply the *clôture* in a reasonable way. At that hour the Speaker would probably be bound to declare that it was the "evident sense of the House" that the debate should close; a division would then be taken, and there would remain half or three-quarters of an hour, during which Public Business practically unopposed might be taken. He wished the Amendment had been put in a shape in which it could have been better considered. He agreed with the view that when they were reforming their Rules they should try to get rid of this terrible evil of carrying on legislative Business in the small hours of the morning. Old Members of the House of Commons had been debauched by the late hours they had kept for many years. Suppose a General Election should result in the return of men not debauched by these late hours, they would be unanimous in their determination to rise at a reasonable hour.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that as one who had held the Offices of First Commissioner of Works and of Postmaster General, he took a very serious view of the evil results of prolonged Sittings on the working staff of the House, whose constitutions were thereby subjected to an excessive strain.

MR. PARNELL viewed the Amendment as a most reasonable one, and believed that the Government would only aggravate its difficulties by attempting to force on Business after half-past 1 o'clock. If the House adopted the Amendment it would arrive a little sooner at the solution of the question how the work of the country was to be effectively carried on. It would, perhaps, enable Members to see that in the splitting up of the labour of the House rested the only chance of its fulfilling its functions.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 33; Noes 76: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No: 384.)

Question proposed, "That the said Standing Order, as amended, be agreed to."

MR. PARNELL desired to add to the Standing Order the following Proviso:—

> "Provided, That this Rule shall not apply to any Order of the Day which may have progressed through the stage of second reading on any Wednesday."

He proposed this Proviso in the interests of private Members who might be so fortunate as to obtain the second reading of a Bill on a Wednesday. If they succeeded in achieving such an almost unheard of feat, they could not, under this Proviso, be blocked on the Committee and subsequent stages by a Member preventing it from coming on after half-past 12 o'clock by signing his name.

MR. WARTON rose to Order. He apprehended that the House had already disposed of this question on the Motion of the hon. Member for Gloucester.

MR. SPEAKER said that when the hon. Member for the City of Cork first placed this Amendment in his hands it seemed to him that it might be put; but, on further consideration, it appeared to him that it could not be put, as the question had been practically decided.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 100; Noes 12: Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 385.)

Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule.

[Standing Order of 18 February 1879, amended 9 May and 20 November 1882.]

(8.) *Resolved*, That, except for a Money Bill, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion be taken after half-past Twelve of the clock at night, with respect to which Order or Notice of Motion a Notice of Opposition or Amendment shall have been printed on the Notice Paper, or if such Notice of Motion shall only have been given the next previous day of sitting, and objection shall be taken when such Notice is called.

That Motions for the appointment or nomination of Standing Committees and Proceedings made in accordance with the provisions of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, Motions for leave to bring in Bills, and Bills which have passed through Committee of the whole House, be excepted from the operation of this Order.

Provided, That every such Notice of Opposition or Amendment be signed in the House by a Member, and dated, and shall lapse at the end of the week following that on which it was given.

Provided also, That this Rule shall not apply to the nomination of Select Committees.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—NINTH RULE (ORDER IN DEBATE).

MR. GLADSTONE rose to move the 9th Resolution, which he said consisted of a recital of the present Standing Order, together with certain Amendments introduced into it. It was necessary to read the Standing Order to understand the nature of the Amendment. The Standing Order was passed more for the purpose of removing all the scandals in the conduct of Public Business than as an effective instrument for securing despatch; but he did not think that any penal or restrictive measures ever could attain the whole, or the main part of the object that the House had in view in dealing with its procedure. He regarded this as a penal Resolution, intended to provide for a particular class of cases, and, viewing it in that light, he did not find fault with the original framers for having drawn it in a mild form; but it was quite plain there ought to be a considerable enhancement in the amount of penalty in the shape of suspension. At present, in the case of a first offence, the House had to go through the operation of a division; and if the offence had occurred in Committee, the process was still more elaborate, because then the Question had to be put twice—once in the Committee and once in the House. Thus the House was compelled to spend almost as much time in deciding the Question—or the two Questions—as the offending Member would be suspended for, if he were only suspended for the residue of the evening. Looked at from the point of view of the House, and not of the guilty Member, the process was needlessly and unreasonably cumbrous. No doubt, suspension was a serious thing; but in common practice it was preceded by one or more warnings. The warnings were not required by this Resolution, as there might be inconvenience in requiring them. As to the second offence, nothing could be more manifest than that it ought to be followed by a greater penalty than that proposed by the present Resolution, which treated the first and second offences exactly alike. The enhancement of the penalty with a view to the greater efficiency of the Resolution was the substance of the Government proposal, and it would be for the House to consider whether the Rule which they had framed was a fair one. When the grave character of the offence was considered, and when it was remembered that the punishment was only inflicted by the deliberate act of the House, he thought the punishment stated could not be regarded as excessive. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving that the Standing Order be now read.

Standing Order of 28 February 1880 read as followeth:—

"That, whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding the authority of the Chair, or abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate, being allowed, 'That such Member be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of that day's sitting;' and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and if the Motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee and report the circumstance to the House; and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended three times in one Session, under this Order, his suspension on the third occasion shall continue for one week, and, until a Motion has been made, upon which it shall be decided at one sitting, by the House, whether the suspension shall then cease, or for what longer period it shall continue; and, on the occasion of such Motion, the Member may, if he desires it, be heard in his place: Provided always, That nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he differed from the views of the Prime Minister, because the proceedings under the existing Standing Order had had great effect in accelerating Business. He had always regretted that more attention had not been paid to that Order, which made the offender suffer; whereas by the 1st of the New Rules the whole House was punished for the offence of a small number. He regretted that more Rules of that kind had not been introduced. The Standing Order which had just been read had been used with great effect and sledge-hammer force by the right hon. Gentleman himself, and had enabled him to carry one measure which he would not otherwise have been able to carry. But the Prime Minister said the Rule was not stringent enough, and could only be applied after divisions; and divisions of 300 or 400 Members took a long time. But the Government seemed to forget the Rules already passed, one of which, in many cases, made a division unnecessary. If the offender was manifestly wrong, he would not find 20 Members to support him. He did not say that the Rule should not be strengthened; but to propose that the first offence should meet with a week's suspension, the second with two months', and the third with suspension for the remainder of the Session, was one of the most monstrous proposals he had ever heard. If the punishment was too severe the Speaker or Chairman would be very careful in applying the Rule. The House must, moreover, recollect that under the existing Rule it had scarcely ever happened that a Member had been Named a third time. That showed that the penalty already imposed had the very effect now sought—namely, to prevent a Member from offending a third time. Why, then, was it necessary to inflict suspension for a whole Session? The proposed Rule would also act unfairly in punishing not only the offending Member, but also his constituents. If it rested with the Speaker to enforce the penalty, it would be different. But the Speaker was only to take the initiative, and then, probably, after a heated discussion, the House would rise against the offending Member and enforce the Rule simply because it was angry. So that there would not be that deliberate action of the House of which the Prime Minister had spoken. The time for proposing such an extension of power was singularly ill-timed, considering that there were outcries throughout the country as to the powers of suspension possessed by Judges; and the Prime Minister himself had promised to introduce a Bill next Session dealing with that subject. He predicted that if the Resolution passed in its present form, and was acted upon, the Government would be called upon every Session to repeal it.

Mr. GORST rose to move an Amendment of which he had given Notice; but——

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR rose to Order, and asked whether other Members would not be allowed to follow the example of the Prime Minister and the late Home Secretary? Otherwise, the moving of an Amendment would preclude Members from discussing the general Question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Strictly speaking, there is no Question before the House. The right hon. Gentleman has moved that the Standing Order be read, and it has been read by the Clerk at the Table.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he hoped he would be within the indulgence of the House in following the example of the two right hon. Gentlemen.

Mr. GLADSTONE denied that he had entered on a discussion of the general Question.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER submitted that the two right hon. Gentlemen could not have spoken as they did unless it was in Order for every Member to speak in a similar manner.

Mr. SPEAKER: If I am to adopt a regular course on this occasion, I should desire some Question to be before the House before the debate proceeds.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked if he would be in Order if he moved that the Standing Order be not read?

Mr. SPEAKER: That obviously is not regular. If any hon. Member desires to move an Amendment at a point previous to that of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, he is at liberty to do so.

Mr. GORST said, the chief question, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, seemed to be that of time; but in a matter of this kind, where penalties were concerned, time could not at all compare in importance with justice. The question then was, whether this Standing Order was just and fair, and whether it would redound to the reputation of the House if put in force? It was now proposed to make the Rule more consonant with justice by adding the word "individual" to "any." The case of each offending Minister ought to be judged by itself, without being mixed up with that of any other Member, thus following the principle adopted in Courts of Justice of trying by itself the case of each individual prisoner. On one occasion several Members of the House had been Named collectively; but that was because the same evidence applied to the whole. But another instance had happened in which the Chairman Named several Members collectively when the evidence in each case was separate and distinct. He believed that in that instance the Chairman acted entirely under a misapprehension as regarded one particular Member, and that that Member was wholly innocent of any offence whatever. It therefore seemed to him that in order to save the reputation of the House for justice they ought to amend their Standing Order so that the case of each Member should be individually dealt with. In order to secure that in future, in the exercise of that judicial power on the part of the presiding authority, and also on the part of the House, the case of each offending Member should be separately dealt with, he now moved to insert in line 1 of the proposed Rule the word "individual" after the word "any."

Amendment proposed, in line 1 of said Standing Order, after the word "any," to insert the word "individual."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'individual' be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the question raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman was one of very great importance; but he greatly doubted the expediency of discussing it upon this Amendment, because the phrase which the hon. and learned Member proposed to introduce was either ambiguous or quite null and void. Every Member was, undoubtedly, an individual; and if they said that when any individual did so and so he should undergo such and such consequences, that did not prevent any number of individuals being included in the same sentence. He, therefore, recommended the withdrawal of that Amendment, and that the question which the hon. and learned Member desired to raise should be raised in a different and more distinct manner.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought there could be no doubt that that particular application of the Rule on the two occasions mentioned by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham was certainly not contemplated by the late Chairman of Committees (Mr. Raikes), when he was examined before the Select Committee on Public Business in 1877, although it was in consequence of the evidence then given by Mr. Speaker and Mr. Raikes that the Rule was subsequently passed. Mr. Raikes distinctly laid down that no Member could be suspended for the sins of another, and that no body of Members could be suspended together. The possibility of the application of the Rule in the way in which it was afterwards applied—namely, to cumulative or to constructive Obstruction, and also against a large number of Members, and against Members some time after they had committed the alleged offence, having presented itself to his own mind while Mr. Raikes was under examination, he had asked him several Questions bearing on those points. In Question 1,113 he asked—

> "Then, in fact, the proposed Rule would give the power to a Member to rise and charge any number of Members with Obstruction?"

Mr. Raikes replied—

> "That is not quite an accurate representation. The objection would have to be taken during the particular speech of the particular Member, and the Question submitted to the Committee would have reference to that Member only."

Again, he said—

> "It would only be competent to call attention to the subject in the case of and at the time of the Member committing the offence."

And lower down he said—

> "It would not be open to a Member to go back to the case of any Member who had addressed the Committee half-an-hour before.

But the House knew well that in the application of the Rule on a remarkable occasion during the present Session, when a number of Members were suspended who had not taken any part whatever in the proceedings of the Sitting during which they were suspended, and who had not been present in the House for many hours before, the House knew that the considerations then urged by Mr. Raikes were entirely thrown overboard and disregarded. It was, therefore, of the greatest importance that the question should be raised and fully discussed, that they should discuss it by the light of the experience which the working of the Rule had thrown upon it, and by the light of the experience which the interpretation of the present Chairman of Committees had afforded. The Rule had been used in such a way as to suspend and deprive of their rights on one occasion so large a body as 35 Members, and upon another occasion a body of 25 Members were deprived of their rights, and expelled from the House for the remainder of the Sitting. But now the Government went still further, and, notwithstanding the experience the House had had of the manner in which the Rule might be used, proposed practically to give the majority the right to suspend any number of Members for the rest of the Session. They might thus, at some future time, get rid of the Front Opposition Bench and all their followers, and deprive them of their Constitutional rights during the rest of the Session. Now, he should have very much liked to have heard the Prime Minister inform the House as to whether there existed any example or any precedent in any foreign country, or any Assembly, for a Rule of this kind, under which a whole minority—a whole Party—of the House of Commons might be suspended, and kept out of the House for the rest of the Session? He had not heard of any such an example, and he did think it was a matter which had become of very great importance in view of the way in which a Rule had been exercised. This, in fact, was what the Government now asked them to do. They said—"Give us the power to suspend not one particular Member for any particular offence committed at any particular time, but give us the power to suspend all our opponents, if we want to do so, if we can obtain a Speaker or a Chairman of Committees sufficiently pliable to our hands." They did not know that such a Speaker or Chairman of Committees might not arise hereafter—because, looking back, they found that they had had Speakers who had been subservient, and who had been pliable—and there was no reason in the world why they should not again have Speakers who might be subservient, and who might be pliable. Then, where was the necessity for such a power? Could it be shown that any time had ever been gained by the application of this Rule during the three years in which it had existed? Could it be shown that Public Business had ever been appreciably put forward by the use of this Rule? Was it going to enable them to pass a single Bill very much sooner? By all means, if an individual Member wilfully obstructed the Business of the House, let him be suspended; if he repeated the offence, let him be suspended for three months; and if he transgressed again, let him be suspended for the rest of the Session. But that was not what they were asked to do. They were asked to give the power to the Government—for that was really what it came to—of suspending a whole body of Members for the sins which might be committed by some of them, if the Chairman chose to think that they were acting in combination with other Members, or that they approved of their proceeding. Never before had any Minister or responsible person come forward with such an extraordinary proposal; and he was much disappointed to find that, so far from being modified in the direction which experience suggested as right and proper, it should have been made more stringent and more destructive of the rights of minorities in that House. It was not a Rule under which they could make their Business progress any more quickly than it did at present. They had used it against the Irish Party twice, and they might be able to use it hereafter against the Conservative Opposition. It was not to be supposed that in these days of Radical progress the Conservative Opposition would always continue as numerous as they were at present. It was possible that they might find the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote)—who was absent at present, he regretted to say, through ill-health—with no greater following than 50 or 60 Members; he might be in exactly the same position as the Irish Party were in on one occasion, when their numbers did not deter the Government from forcibly expelling them; and the Conservative Opposition, numerous as they were now, might regret the day when they drafted a Rule of this kind, which was capable of such extraordinary use in the hands of a Chairman of Committees, and which had paved the way for such a further extraordinary demand as that now made by the Prime Minister.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD sympathized with the object of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, but declined to support his Amendment, on the ground that it would not have the desired effect.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he thought it would have been more satisfactory if the Prime Minister had given the House an intimation as to the views of the Government upon the manner in which the very important question under discussion should be decided. It could not be denied that there was a strong feeling in favour of some Amendment like that of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). The original Order never contemplated the suspension of Members *en masse.* If that Rule were seriously adopted, there was no reason why he himself should not have been included in its operation on that famous occasion when the Irish Members were suspended, if the Chairman had taken it into his head to think he had obstructed the Business of the House, although he was not, and had not been, present for some days. The House certainly ought to know whether individual or collective Members were intended. So far as the punishment of individual Members was concerned, he did not agree with the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) in condemning the penalties suggested as too severe; on the contrary, he regarded them as not more weighty than the nature of those offences demanded.

Mr. WARTON regretted that they were precluded from a general discussion of the Resolution. He was, however, in no apprehension as to the future fate of the Conservative Party suggested by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), inasmuch as they had just won another seat at Salisbury, making the twelfth since the General Election, while the Liberal Party had only secured two. He was sorry to see in the New Rule that the penalties were more stringent than hitherto; and therefore it became more imperative that an explanation should be given, whether it was intended that those penalties should be applied to individual Members, or to Members in a body.

Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, that the introduction of this Amendment would not, in the smallest degree, advance the purpose of its proposer, and he suggested that the Amendment should be withdrawn. He wished the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) and the House to consider whether they should not really arrive at the object he had in view by considering the terms of the Resolution generally, rather than by looking at the words in particular. If they were to increase the penalties in the severe manner proposed, he should be very much inclined to examine very stringently the terms of this Resolution, because, as they were at present framed, they were of the largest and vaguest kind. He had great hesitation about giving to the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees such a tremendous power as was proposed, if it was to be applied to cases of what the Speaker or Chairman might consider wilful Obstruction of the Business of the House. He was as much at sea now as he was at the beginning of these discussions as to what Obstruction meant. It might be applied by very virtuous persons, as well as by persons who wished to interfere with the real Business of the House.

MR. SALT feared that if the present Amendment were inserted, it would have an effect upon the clause different from that which was desired; but the hon. and learned Member, no doubt, might attain his object by an Amendment introduced in the sixth or seventh line. He would suggest that there was a wide difference in the character of the action of the Chair when directed against an individual and when directed against a Party. When applied to an individual for offending against the Rules, he was perfectly satisfied that the Chair would always be supported by 99-100ths of the House; but when directed against a Party, the effect would be a more solid, desperate, and determined resistance on the part of that Party. He thought that in matters of that kind the House should be unanimous in its support of the Chair.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR must say that the tone of the Conservative Party on this occasion, and the tone of at least two Members on the other side of the House, contrasted, he thought, agreeably with the tone of the Government with regard to this Resolution. He must say that he was perfectly at a loss to understand not merely that the Prime Minister proposed the penalties of this Rule, but that he proposed the imposition of this Rule at all. There was not a single power of curtailing debate or suppressing anything like irrelevant observation on the part of a Member or a Party that the right hon. Gentleman had not already. He defied the right hon. Gentleman to give a single instance in which the Business of the House could be delayed or disarranged which was not already quite sufficiently provided for without this Rule at all. The right hon. Gentleman, instead of doing away with this Rule altogether—and he submitted that he would be perfectly entitled and justified in doing away with it—proposed exactions which, he might say, shocked hon. Members on both sides of the House. Was the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman, or something like it, unnecessary in the face of the notorious fact of the earlier portion of this Session? Was not the use of this Rule on a former occasion—of course, it would be altogether out of Order for him to say a scandal—but was it not notorious that it gave a large amount of dissatisfaction and apprehension on every side and quarter and section of the House—Liberal and Tory and Radical? The House, of course, would naturally support the Chair as against an individual Member; but did the Prime Minister think they were such slaves of words as to call that the deliberate judgment of the House? This Resolution appeared to him to be described by one adjective and one adjective only—it was the anti-Irish Resolution of these Procedure Resolutions. To most Members it would be a great relief to be ordered to give up their Parliamentary labours; but it would be a deprivation to the constituencies, and he was surprised to see the right hon. Gentleman give his sanction to such a mischievous and ridiculous proposal.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he might state that when his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) first brought forward this Rule it was not his intention that it should be brought into operation *in globo*, but that it should act on Members individually. He (Lord John Manners) thought it best, under the circumstances, to make clear the will of the House that this Rule should not be brought into operation in the first-mentioned way. He considered that that was a favourable opportunity for some Members of the Government to come forward and say whether they were generally in favour of the words suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) or not, or whether they were prepared to introduce some other words at the proper place in order to effectuate his intention.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that when the issue which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham desired to bring forward was raised, the Government would be prepared to state the course they would advise the House to take. It would be inconvenient to discuss at great length a general question upon an Amendment which it was generally admitted would settle nothing at all. He did not propose to go any further into the general question except to say that the observations of his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister seemed to have been somewhat misunderstood. They did not say that it might not be possible to consider some modifications of the Rule; but his right hon. Friend had never committed the Government to the proposition that the power existed of applying the Standing Order to several Members for the offence of one.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought that the Government would save time if they took the earliest possible opportunity of stating their intentions with regard to the Resolution. It would be inconvenient that they should resume the consideration of the Amendment without knowing the intentions of the Government with regard to the applicability of the Rule to such proceedings as took place earlier in the Session. He came down to the House one morning, and, finding the authority of the Chair in question, without having any opportunity of mastering the details of what had been going on, no debate or explanation being permissible, he voted in support of the authority of the Chair. He confessed that he was much astonished to find that some of the hon. Members whose names were mentioned, who he thought during his absence had been guilty of some direct challenge to the authority of the Chair, had only been enjoying slumber as he had for many hours. A recurrence of anything of that kind would be much to be regretted, and would greatly impair the dignity of the House. He hoped the Government, when in their judgment the proper time arrived, would be prepared to offer to the House some proposal which would prevent the recurrence of such proceedings.

MR. C. S. PARKER said, he hoped that before the Government committed themselves to any course with regard to this Resolution they would direct their attention to the fact that two questions of a different character were raised by it. Up to this point the debate had turned mostly on the question of Obstruction. He confessed in dealing with that he thought, in general, it would be well to punish the individual offender and not many collectively. At the same time, he remembered that soon after the present Rule was adopted by the House, the Speaker was understood to hold that a case might arise for applying it to a collective offence. But, besides the offence of Obstruction, the Rule dealt with the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair. They had had an instance where that authority had been deliberately disregarded by a number of Members collectively. On one occasion 28 Members of the Irish Party, feeling themselves aggrieved by the course taken by the Speaker, refused to vote, in defiance of the authority of the Chair. It was possible that such an occurrence might happen again; and, unless the Rule could be applied collectively, it might be necessary to go through some 25, or, if it happened in Committee, even 50 divisions.

MR. LEWIS said, he could not help thinking that the debate had taken a new departure since the speeches of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India and the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. Parker) had been addressed to the House, and that it would now appear that the Rule was to be used for collective punishment. If collective offences were punished collectively, it should be made clear that there were to be several offences and collective offences to be punished in different ways. It ought not to be left in doubt. The real difficulty with the Rule was that it had been misapplied. He could perfectly well recollect the extraordinary occasion to which reference had been made. He was many thousand miles away in a foreign country, amongst a foreign people. He had to consider how best he could justify the action of the Representative of the House of Commons, and he was totally unable to do so. The Rule was plainly intended by its author and by the House as an instrument to be used cautiously and against individuals; but it had been used incautiously and against bodies of Members. The Government ought to state plainly whether they wished the Speaker or Chairman to retain the power to sentence Members collectively. The justification of what had taken place on the occasion of the suspension of the Irish Members had never yet been uttered. It had been excused, it had been palliated; but it had been regretted by all. It had been regretted universally on all sides of the House. ["No, no!"] He heard some utterances now from behind the Treasury Bench, which showed that there were Ministerial Members of the House who delighted in the fact that on one occasion some 30 Members were sentenced to be banished from the House in the absence of three or four of them.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, one thing was plain, that they had been sitting there at great inconvenience for a month, and the Government must have found that whenever they had shown a disposition to be conciliatory they had made the best progress, and no impediments had been thrown in their way. [*A laugh.*] The Home Secretary laughed, as he always laughed at a truism, and was prepared to deny it; but he could not have been in the House, or he would know that good progress had been made. If the Prime Minister wished to make progress now, he must take care that no injustice was done to any Party in the House. There could be no doubt for a moment that the Resolution as it was drawn was aimed at the Irish Party, and the Irish Party alone. The Prime Minister said that none of the Resolutions were framed against any Party; but he could not but say, looking at this Resolution as proposed to be amended by the Government in the light of past occurrences, that it was aimed against the Irish Party. Whatever might be thought of some of the proceedings that Party had carried on, there was one thing he held most dear, and that was that any Member should have justice and fair play. Whatever might be the voices that expressed dissent from behind the Treasury Bench, no one would deny that the proceedings the Chairman took on a recent occasion had left a rankling in the minds of Members which he should be sorry to have renewed. He said nothing against the Chairman, for he had the greatest regard for the right hon. Gentleman. It would be a gross abuse of power to place this Rule in the hands of any Chairman, this Rule allowing him to deal with the conduct of Members collectively, except with the greatest safeguards. When the Committee was heated, and a certain number of Members, for reasons they considered amply sufficient, placed themselves in antagonism to the majority, how easy it would be to say the whole of this number should be suspended, though some amongst them might not have acted actively. It would be fatal to the liberties of the House; and he humbly, earnestly, and energetically urged the Prime Minister to declare how far he intended to go with this Resolution, so that the House might know how to deal with the present Amendment.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that Her Majesty's Government were engaged in an attempt to mystify the House. It was for them to make their meaning clear and beyond the possibility of mistake. The Government must remember that there had been the very greatest division of opinion as to the construction put on the Standing Order by the Speaker and the Chairman on two particular occasions, and it was clearly the duty of the Government to make the understanding clear as to whether they meant the Rule to apply individually or collectively. He challenged the Attorney General to deny that if the Rule were passed as it stood, and were administered by a Judge, it would not be construed as meaning a collective application. He asked the Prime Minister if he was prepared to insert in the Resolution, after "Member," the words "or Members?" If that were done, the House would have a distinct issue before it; and till the intention of the Government were made clear, there need be no surprise if much valuable time were lost before they came to a decision on the point.

MR. NEWDEGATE wished to remind the House that on the night of the suspension of the Irish Members those Members left the House in a body.

MR. CALLAN denied the statement, and said that the Chairman had suddenly produced his list of Members, and that not one of the Irish Members left the House. Several of those Members had been in bed many hours when the suspension occurred. He had consulted the reporters of four daily papers, and they informed him that the name of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) was never read out by the Chairman, and the vote suspending him was not put to the House. Then the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum) was also suspended; but even the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), who voted for the suspension of them all, would hardly get up and say that that hon. Member had been properly suspended.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had listened with some attention to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who anticipated the statement of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), that if this were an Act of Parliament, it would not be read collectively. That was not so, because, under the Act generally known as Lord Brougham's, words in the singular number were allowed also to be read in the plural. He was astonished to hear hon. Members opposite say that the Government ought now to mitigate the severity of the action of the House towards private Members; because when the Government proposed the 1st Resolution they were told that they ought not to interfere with free discussion, but ought to punish private Members for acting obstructively. And the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon), whom, he regretted to think, they would no longer hear in that House, said—"I would increase the penalty upon private Members." But now the hon. and gallant Member (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) stated that this Resolution was drawn against the Irish Members. Why, the Resolution was drawn by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), and not by the Prime Minister. [Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: The Amendments.] The hon. and gallant Member's assertion was that the Resolution as it stood was directed against the Irish Members. [Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: As proposed by the Government.] The Resolution was the same as that drawn and passed by the right hon. Member for North Devon at the time he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. and gallant Baronet did not say the Amendments were drawn against the Irish Party, but the Resolution.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that that was not his statement. He spoke of the Resolution as amended by the Government, and it was with regard to the Resolution so amended that he made his statement.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the hon. and gallant Baronet's statement was that this Resolution was drawn against the Irish Members. And the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) now said that he voted as to the action of the Chairman without inquiring what took place. Was the right hon. Gentleman in such a state of ignorance that he concluded something had taken place which had not? But now all the responsibility for this conduct was thrown off, and right hon. Gentlemen representing the Opposition were objecting to the action of the Government, which on a former occasion they supported and the responsibility for which they shared. The Amendment raised a very small point, and it would be far more convenient to wait for the Prime Minister's statement till the question, as a whole, came before the House in a practical form. The matter could not be discussed now, for the Amendment, as he had said, did not raise the whole question. The Government would undertake, when the time came, to make a statement on the entire subject.

COLONEL STANLEY said, that the Government objected to the time of the Amendment, and asked the House not to demand explanations till they came to another Amendment which might or might not be moved. He might contend, however, that the point now raised was one of considerable importance, with respect to which the House had a right to press for an answer. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the Resolution was originally framed by the Leader of the Opposition. That might be so in form; but since the Resolution was first submitted to his right hon. Friend circumstances had occurred which had altogether altered the construction put upon it, and it was now necessary, in order to prevent misapprehensions, that the House should know whether the Government intended the Rule to be applied individually or collectively. The sole question was whether, according to the Rule, an offending Member should be Named to the House, or whether the

Rule should be the means of taking action against a Party?

MR. DODSON observed that hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed anxious to convey to the House that they were not responsible for the Rule in its present shape.

COLONEL STANLEY: Not for the form in which it is now to be applied.

MR. DODSON accepted, and was glad to hear, the correction of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. As to the interpretation of the Rule in a collective sense, he would draw attention to the debate of the 31st of January, 1881, when they had an All-night Sitting. The late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) then said, appealing to the Speaker—

> "I put it to you, Sir, whether all these speeches, if they be taken, not one by one, but in combination, do not show that there is a decided combination for the purpose of wilful and persistent Obstruction? I would ask further, whether, under this order of the House, you have not the power of putting a stop to these proceedings?"—[3 *Hansard*, cclvii. 1943-4.]

That was inviting a collective application of the Rule. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon rose later in the Sitting, endorsed what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, and went on to ask for some expression of opinion on the part of the Government in order to strengthen the hands of Mr. Deputy Speaker to put down what he was fully convinced was nothing short of Obstruction. He thought the instance he had given was sufficient to show that the Rule had already been applied to collective Obstruction, the initiative having been taken by right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was not unusual on Bills in Committee to move Amendments for the sake of eliciting opinions from the Government. The proceeding on that occasion was analogous to that, their object being to get an expression of opinion from the Government. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down seemed entirely to have missed the point. He quoted cases which had nothing whatever to do with the question at issue. He really believed that if the Speaker's attention had been drawn to the fact, the right hon. Gentleman would have been called to Order on the ground of irrelevance. They wished that the Speaker or the Chairman should deal with each particular case, and give the House an opportunity of judging of such case. No other course would be tolerated for a moment in a Court of Justice; and it was to secure the ends of justice that they supported the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend. It would be unsatisfactory to leave the question to be dealt with subsequently by a Proviso, for the Government might then be able to shelve the question altogether.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not altogether agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) in the remarks he had made upon the speech of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson). The right hon. Gentleman said that the passages quoted from previous debates by his right hon. Friend were altogether irrelevant to the present issue. Of course, the question raised by the Speaker in 1881 distinctly pointed to the question of combination. He (Sir William Harcourt) did not wish, however, to press that matter too far; but he certainly did remember that in the particular instance in question, when the objection was taken and referred to the Speaker, the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to that particular action of the Chairman of Ways and Means was a justification of it in view of there having been a combination. Consequently, the Speaker did on that occasion, in his ruling, distinctly regard it as being germane to the action of the Chairman of Committee. But, as he had said, he did not wish to push that point too far. Certainly, if it were asked, as a general proposition, whether the action ought to be against Members singly or collectively, he should say that it ought to be singly and not collectively; but, at the same time, he feared that there might be occasions when the action was really of a collective character, and therefore all the Government wished was to have something to carry out the penal operation of the Rule in both cases. As a general principle the Resolution would be applied to Members singly, but it would not altogether exclude particular cases where there might have been a collective action which ought to be dealt with as a whole. That was a fair statement of the case; but he could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that it would be a convenient course to take the discussion at that point upon an Amendment which did not meet it at all, but he thought it would be better to take it upon an Amendment which distinctly raised the point. In a case of this kind it was undoubtedly the desire of the Government to collect the opinion of the House for the discussion which took place, and he hoped when the Government had collected the opinion of the House, that they would endeavour to carry that opinion out. It would, however, be highly improper to state what the views and intentions of the Government were before they had had an opportunity of collecting the opinion of the House and of endeavouring to meet the views of the House upon the subject. So far as he gathered from the course the discussion had taken, it seemed to him that there were two points which had to be met. First of all the general and governing principle was that there should be single action, but that they should not exclude collective action, if it was necessary. The Government would be prepared, although they would not bind themselves to the actual words, to introduce an Amendment something to this effect—

> "Provided also, That no more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members present together have concurred in an act for which they are named."

The object, in the first instance, would be to provide that as a general rule the Speaker should only Name a single Member; but if a number of Members were palpably acting together, then they might be dealt with collectively. As he had framed the Proviso, it would obviate the objection which had been taken, that any Member who was not present could be Named. It required that the Member Named should be present, and also that if there were a number of Members present who were concurring in a particular act, that they might also be Named if occasion should arise. He had felt it right to explain the intentions of the Government, but at the same time he had no desire to encourage hereafter a practice of discussing an Amendment which could not be decided. The Government submitted this Amendment now, but they entertained the hope that the House would refrain from discussing it until the time arrived when it could be properly proposed. He trusted that the announcement he had now made would have the effect of shortening the discussion upon the Amendment at present before the House.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the words which had just been read by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, no doubt, altered to some slight extent the effect of the Rule. He did not know whether the Government considered it proper that the House should proceed to criticize those words now. There were only two courses open: either instantly to proceed to criticize the words, because they were words skilfully framed and involving a secondary meaning which might not easily be discerned; or, in the second place, to take the more convenient course of adjourning the debate until to-morrow, in order to enable the House to ascertain what was the real meaning to be attached to these words. The utmost range of the concession made by the Government was this—that only one Member should be Named at the same moment, but that any number of Members, if they were believed by the Speaker to have concurred in any act for which a Member was Named, might also be Named and suspended on the same occasion. Now, what was concurrence? How was concurrence to be determined? Concurrence might be manifested by speech or by act, or it might be merely a determination in the mind of Mr. Speaker. The right hon. Gentleman now in the Chair, or the Speaker of the future, versed in the thought-reading of which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had spoken, might convict a number of Members of concurrence in an act simply because he supposed them on general grounds to be in sympathy with the Member Named. There were two great points to which hon. Members on that side of the House attached importance. In the first place, that a Member should only be suspended because of an event immediately arising, and not on account of something which had taken place at a previous Sitting; and, secondly, that the Members suspended should be suspended singly and not *en masse.* In those respects he did not think the words proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman afforded any very great security to the House. The case of the Government was wretchedly bad before the House were favoured with the speech of that great logician the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson); but, bad as it was, the right hon. Gentleman had succeeded in making it infinitely worse. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, conscious of the weakness of his own arguments, was not prepared to take upon himself the additional weakness of the arguments of his right hon. Colleague, and he simply slid by the speech of the President of the Local Government Board by declaring that the quotations he had read were not irrelevant. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had risen in his place, and, brandishing a volume of *Hansard* before their faces, by way of showing that the Conservative Party were responsible for the monstrous reading given in this Parliament to the Conservative Rule made a few years ago, he had cited what? Not a declaration of opinion by the Leaders of the Conservative Party, but an appeal made to the authority of the Speaker by two right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, as to the construction of a Standing Order. The Speaker was asked on that occasion by the late Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether or not a certain course of conduct pursued by certain Members of the House might or might not be brought under the operation of the Standing Order. The same question, although in different words, was put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). Now, in the first place, neither of those right hon. Gentlemen made any declaration as to the meaning of the Standing Order, but both of them simply submitted a question to the Speaker, and if the Speaker had resolved that question in the affirmative, it still could not have been asserted that the Rule could have been applied to long past affairs. The principle would still have been maintained that the Rule was only applicable to events and circumstances immediately arising. Even if the Speaker had replied in the affirmative, it would actually have been necessary, in accordance with the original interpretation of the Rule, to proceed separately against each offending Member. The questions put by the two right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench did not authorize or support in any way the subsequent action taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Lyon Playfair). It would still have been necessary to proceed separately against each offending Member. The Speaker on that occasion gave the ruling which had been quoted as an evidence of the right hon. Gentleman's opinion that collective action might be taken upon the Rule; but how was it the right hon. Gentleman really acted? Did he act upon his own ruling, and suppress whole bodies of Members of the House? Not at all; rather than act upon his own ruling and his own view, the right hon. Gentleman resorted to an act unprecedented in history. He chose to interpose his personal will between a certain Party in that House and free speech, and the right hon. Gentleman had preferred to take that course rather than put upon the Standing Order the interpretation which the Government now put upon it. In such a state of facts, how could the Government have the intellectual audacity—although, perhaps, intellectual was a bad word to apply to it—how could the Government have the audacity to come to the House and place upon the Standing Order an interpretation which the Speaker had refused to apply to it, although ruling in its favour? The Attorney General had appealed to the application of the Rule with very bad success. He had referred to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon), who had expressed his willingness to apply the Rule, however severe it might be, against any Member who was guilty of Obstruction in the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman next alluded to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), who spoke of the Rule as being directed against the Irish Party, and the Irish Party only. The hon. and learned Attorney General professed to find an inconsistency between these two speeches, but there was none at all. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool said he was willing to assent to the punishment, however severe, of a person guilty of wilful Obstruction. So did the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex. But what the hon. and gallant Member objected to was that the Rule passed in the late Parliament, and consistently applied to that purpose only by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North

Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), should have been taken up by a Liberal Government and enlarged and misapplied and misused, according to that ancient rule of Whig Governments which induced them to take great delight in burnishing up all the weapons of offence which were handed down to them by the Tories. What Member in that House knew the merits of the case? The merits were wrapped in an impenetrable veil, which even the Day of Judgment would not remove. On one occasion 16 Members of the House were suspended. And for what? The House had been for weeks and weeks debating an obnoxious Bill which put an end to trial by jury in Ireland, which created a batch of new offences, which legalized nocturnal visits to the dwellings of the people, which enabled the police to clear away all strangers, which authorized the suppression of the Press and the liberty of speech, which enabled the Lord Lieutenant to swamp whole districts with a blood tax, and which, in point of fact, destroyed every vestige of liberty in Ireland. The House had been for six weeks engaged in debating that Bill. At various times they had received an acknowledgment from the Head of the Government that the Opposition had not transcended the bounds of reason. At what point could the Prime Minister say that they had transcended the bounds of reason? It would be beyond the bounds of reason for any man to decide. The Attorney General was hardly justified in the attack he had made upon the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) for desiring to become acquainted with the intentions of the Government. What the House wished was that they should hear those intentions now, and not have to wait for them for an indefinite time. It was said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary that this was not an Amendment which showed the merits of the Standing Order. He (Mr. Sexton) contended respectfully that it did. They wanted to know on the threshold of the Resolution what it would mean when in working order. The Resolution said "any Member;" but, so far as its operation had hitherto gone, it might as well have said "any or every Irish Member," because the English Members had been practically exempt from its working. He believed there was an English Member (Mr. Whalley) who was at one time the moral Colleague of the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) in protecting the interests of the Protestant religion in that House, who fell nominally under the operation of the Standing Order. But the hon. Member on that occasion did not suffer any inconvenience from it, and ever since then it had been directed against Irish Members and Irish Members only. Therefore, the Irish Members needed no suggestion from the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Bartelott) to assure them that the Standing Order was directed against them. But if it was to be used against them, they had a special reason for demanding from the Government on the threshold of the consideration of the Resolution, which was the pivot upon which everything was to turn, a statement of their intentions. The Amendment of the Government proposed to multiply the punishment. Instead of a day's suspension for a first offence it was to be increased to a week; instead of a week's suspension for a second offence it was to be increased to a month; and instead of a month's suspension for a third offence it was to be increased by suspending the offending Member for the rest of the Session. There was another and a significant penalty to which the Prime Minister had not alluded. At present, a Member threatened with suspension was allowed to rise in his place and defend himself. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in the resolute pursuit of the policy of the gag, already so fully exemplified in the 1st Resolution, had so amended the Standing Order that hereafter a Member threatened with suspension would have no opportunity of defending himself.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is now debating the Standing Order at large. He should confine himself to the Amendment before the House.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would not further refer to the Standing Order at large. He would simply explain that he was endeavouring to point out that the action of the Irish Members on the Amendment now before the House, and in regard to subsequent Amendments, would be governed by the explanations they had now received from the Government. He hoped he had said enough to convince the Government that the Irish Members had special reasons for desiring a full explanation, as they did not know in what manner the Rule would be used against them. They would be glad to be convinced that the Standing Order would be used against individual offenders and not against Members collectively; and although the explanations offered by the Government placed the Resolution in a different light from that in which it appeared at first, the Irish Members could not consent to proceed further with it until the Amendments of the Government had been placed upon the Paper. The Government would only have to blame themselves if the progress of Business was delayed in consequence of their having refused to make reasonable concessions.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT said, that throughout the discussion there had been one remarkable feature in it, and it was this—that there had only been one discordant voice against confining the Resolution to individual suspension. Every Member who had spoken during the last two or three hours had been against collective, and in favour of individual suspension. The only hon. Member who had spoken in a different sense, and he did not think the opinion of the hon. Member was very strong, was the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. Parker), who had referred to certain circumstances which occurred in the House some time ago. Those circumstances, however, in all probability would never occur again; and he thought that to frame a Resolution in regard to that single event would be a most irrational proceeding. He trusted that when the Government declared their opinion they would take into consideration the views which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had expressed. He (Mr. Bright) thought it was a most odious thing to ask the House to suspend half-a-dozen Members in a batch. If he were asked whether a Member ought to be suspended or not, he could, if he were present, say "Yes" or "No," because he could judge of the conduct of that Member; but if he were asked to form a judgment on half-a-dozen Members—and he undertook to say that hon. Members sitting on those Benches would be better informed as to the character of any action taken by Members in the House even than the authorities of the House—if he were asked to pass judgment upon the conduct of half-a-dozen men, in all probability he should feel inclined to say that one or two deserved to be suspended, but that one or two others did not; and rather than vote for the suspension of the entire number, he would prefer not to vote at all.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had listened very carefully to the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, and in his opinion his right hon. and learned Friend had expressed the views of the Government with perfect clearness. At the same time, he was bound to accept the complaints of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright), who seemed to be labouring under some misapprehension; and he would endeavour to make the position of the Government more clear than it was at present. Most of the observations made by hon. Members applied to the Standing Order as it was, and not to the Standing Order as amended by the Amendment which had been read to the House by his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary. As the Standing Order stood, and as it had been construed by the Chairman of Committees, it amounted to the creation of a new offence under certain circumstances — namely, the offence of constructive Obstruction; and it had been called constructive Obstruction, or conspiracy, to obstruct the Business of the House. It was upon that view of the Standing Order that certain hon. Members had been suspended *en masse* some time ago. Hon. Members opposite spoke as though the only question was the infliction of punishment, and as though all that they desired was that the punishment should be inflicted singly and individually. That left the offence of constructive Obstruction untouched, and it might be possible for a future Chairman of Committees to declare a number of Members who were not present at the time to be guilty of constructive Obstruction. All that was necessary to meet the views of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite would be to provide that the punishment should be put separately to the House, so that the House might order punishment in some cases and reject it in others. The Government, however, in the Amendment they had proposed, intended to go further than the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross). So far as they were concerned, they gave up in future, at all events, all idea of constructive Obstruction. That, he thought, was perfectly clear; but he would read once more the Amendment as it had been read by his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary; and he would add, further, that if it did not carry out the intentions of the Government, they would be ready at the proper time to accept any Amendment which might be suggested for the purpose of making its meaning clear. What they said in the Amendment was—

> "Provided also, That no more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members present together have concurred in an act for which they are named."

The Amendment, by providing that the Members Named must be present, did away with any question as to a Member being Named in his absence. Then what was the kind of act which the Government had in their mind? It would be in the recollection of the House that last Session a number of Members were ordered by the Speaker to leave the House, and they refused collectively and together to do so. They were, consequently, all of them at once suspended for what was a collective act.

Mr. PARNELL: They were suspended for disregardiug the authority of the Chair.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that was so. They were supended for disregarding the authority of the Chair; but it was quite clear that in such a case the punishment ought to be inflicted *en bloc,* and it was not necessary for such an offence that the House should be put to the trouble of dividing in each individual case. But it was only in such a case —namely, where a number of Members concurred in disregarding the authority of the Chair, that the Standing Order would be put in force in that way. In all other cases he agreed with previous speakers that the punishment should be individually inflicted.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, that after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), the House, probably, might not feel disposed to prolong the conversation at the present moment, because the right hon. Gentleman had intimated that if the words he had read did not carry out the promises he had made, the Government would be willing to alter their Amendment. Now, there was just one word in the Amendment to which he wished to direct the attention of the Government. It was the word "concur." The Amendment read—

> "Unless several Members present together have concurred in the Act for which they are named."

He thought the words "have committed an act" would better convey the intentions of the Government. It would be easy to determine whether an act had been committed by hon. Members acting together; but it would be very difficult to determine whether certain Members present had concurred in an act.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he had listened to the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government meant to exclude the idea of constructive Obstruction; but he would beg to point out that the preceding Government never contemplated the idea of constructive Obstruction when they passed this Rule; and yet, notwithstanding the fact that constructive Obstruction was not contemplated by the preceding Government, constructive Obstruction was discovered in the Rule by the Presiding Authority. If the present Government wished to exclude constructive Obstruction from the proposed Rule, it would not at all do to exclude it in intention. Let them exclude it in words, and he did not see that the present form of words at all excluded constructive Obstruction. It excluded a marvellous stretch of constructive Obstruction which suspended an absent Member; but he thought he might say with tolerable certainty that the probabilities were extremely remote that that stretch of constructive Obstruction would ever again make its appearance in Parliament. There were some things that could only happen once, and he thought that constructive Obstruction, leading to the suspension of Irish Members of Parliament for certain acts, could only happen once, and even that once was too often. The provision read by the Home Secretary specified that only one Member was to be Named at the same time, unless several of the Members present had concurred in an act for which they were Named. Were they to concur in a permissible act, and were they to be Named notwithstanding; or were they only to concur in an act of disobedience to the authority of the Chair? If it was necessary that they should have concurred in an act of disobedience to the authority of the Chair, why were not those words introduced? Let the Government amend their proposed Amendment by inserting, after the word "act," the words "disobedience to the authority of the Chair;" and, furthermore, if there was to be any real protection, he ventured to suggest that there ought to be such a thing as a warning given. Before a Member was excluded from the House for a week, or a month, or for the entire Session, there ought to be some distinct assurance that an explicit warning should be given. On the last occasion of constructive Obstruction there was no warning whatever given; and, whatever the intentions of the Government might be, no warning might be given next year or the year after. He understood that Her Majesty's Government had given the assurance that if this Rule was not found to carry out their intentions, they would be prepared to consider the Amendment. Well, he ventured to think that if half-a-dozen Members had been turned out of the House on a reading of the Rule, contrary to the express intentions of Her Majesty's Government, it would be a little too late to introduce an Amendment. As they had a special Autumn Sitting—although it was promising to become a Business Sitting—for the discussion of the Rules, they ought to take advantage of it to introduce all the necessary modifications of the existing Standing Orders forthwith. The present form of words, looking at it with a somewhat experienced eye, he pronounced to be totally inadequate to prevent the abuses of which so many hon. Members complained.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY pointed out that what had taken place justified the House in entering into the discussion of the question. For his own part, he freely acknowledged the value of the assurances which had been obtained from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) and the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt). He understood that the House had obtained two assurances from the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. First of all, the Government proposed to abolish once and for ever constructive Obstruction; and if their Amendment did not carry out that intention other words would be introduced. The only doubt or difficulty he felt was whether these words did at all carry out the intention which seemed to be the desire of the Government. He was inclined to doubt whether they were sufficient for the end they had in view. He would suggest that the Amendment now before the House should be withdrawn. There would then come an Amendment upon which the Government might give effect to the first part of the intention they had indicated. But, as it was impossible to discuss the matter at the present moment, he thought the best course would be to adjourn the debate. The Government would then have an opportunity of placing upon the Paper the Proviso they intended to introduce; hon. Members would know what to support and what to oppose, and the House would be able to arrive at a satisfactory decision.

MR. GORST said, that, with the permission of the House, he would now withdraw the Amendment on the understanding that the debate would be adjourned, and that the House would have an opportunity of seeing the words proposed to be introduced by the Government upon the Paper before the question was again discussed. He begged to ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Amendment. ["No!"] Then he should certainly divide the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is desirous of withdrawing his Amendment?

MR. GORST: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE said, they had on that side of the House been frequently taunted by hon. Gentlemen opposite with not showing a spirit of independence towards the Prime Minister. He proposed that evening to show hon. Gentlemen opposite that they were independent when they had opinions of their own. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had proposed that the debate be now adjourned. It was only 10 minutes after 12 o'clock, and it appeared to him that that was an exceedingly early hour to break off the debate. The House had been called together at an inconvenient time in the Autumn of the year for a specific purpose. That purpose had been much complained of by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but the Prime Minister had stated, as he understood him, before the close of the last part of the Session, that he intended to limit the Business during the present Sitting to the discussion of the Rules of Procedure, and any other Business of immediate importance. They had now been sitting for more than a month, and they had only arrived at the 9th Resolution.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON rose to Order. He wished to call the attention of the Speaker to Resolution No. 5, and to ask whether the hon. Gentleman was not contravening it?

MR. SPEAKER: I understood the hon. Member to be giving reasons against the adjournment of the debate, and, so far as he has already gone, I have seen no reason for my interposition.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was quite sure the noble Lord had not read the Resolution to which he referred. Looking at that Resolution—["Question!"] If the House would not allow him to refer to the Resolution, he must point out, with all respect, that it would be exceedingly difficult to know precisely how far he might go in moving or in debating an adjournment. They had had as yet exceedingly little experience of the New Rule. Of course, it was not his intention in any way to violate that Rule. He had been in favour of its being passed—["Question!" "Order!"] Well, then, he would refer to the immediate Question before the House, and that was the question whether they were to adjourn the debate at this early hour. He had stated as one of the reasons why they should not adjourn that they had been called together at a late period of the Autumn for the purpose of discussing certain Rules.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL rose to Order. He wished to draw attention to Resolution No. 5, which provided that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees might call the attention of a Member to continued irrelevance or tedious repetition.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought that the most tedious of human beings could not be considered tedious when he had only been for three minutes on his legs. He would go back again to what he had been saying when the noble Lord interrupted him. They had been called together—["Question!" "Order!"] That was the whole point of the question. They were there to discuss specific Business, and why were they asked to adjourn the debate at the present moment? He supposed it would be within the scope of the Question to consider whether they should adjourn—for there was no mincing the matter—in order that the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. Yorke) should not be brought under the operation of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule. Now, he considered that that was not immediate and important Business. He had no intention of going into the question involved in that Resolution—namely, the liberation of certain hon. Gentlemen opposite from Kilmainham. But he must say, for his own part, he considered that that Resolution was a direct insult to the Prime Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to enter into that question.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he would not say another word about it. The House had 17 Resolutions before them. They had already been four weeks discussing those Resolutions, and they had only reached the 9th. Some of the Resolutions still remaining to be discussed were most important; and he gathered from hon. Gentlemen opposite that they would strongly oppose the appointment of Grand Committees. It seemed to him that as time was a most important matter they ought not to waste a moment of the time of the House upon vague historic discussions, when that time might be employed to much greater advantage in continuing the discussion of these Resolutions. Besides these Resolutions, they had also a most important question coming before the House—namely, the question whether these Resolutions should be made Standing Orders. He also gathered from hon. Gentlemen opposite that it was their intention to oppose the proposition for making the Resolutions Standing Orders. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must call upon the hon. Gentleman to apply himself to the Question before the House which is that of the adjournment of the debate.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he would confine himself to the immediate Question before the House. He thought that if they did adjourn the debate, they ought not to adjourn it before 1 o'clock, and he would state the reason why. On Thursday or Friday last, a debate took place upon the question whether they ought to break off all Business at 12 o'clock, and it was decided that they ought not to do so. Many very able arguments, no doubt, were urged by hon. Gentlemen opposite in favour of breaking off at 12 o'clock, but the House decided that they should go on later. The Question then that was really before the House was at what hour they ought to adjourn this debate. It was known that there was a Resolution down on the Paper to follow the present debate, in regard to the imprisonment of certain hon. Members below the Gangway on the other side of the House. [" Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is distinctly out of Order in referring to any other Question upon the Paper.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was desirous as far as possible of keeping within the Rules; but he had very great difficulty in knowing how he was to discuss the Question without infringing the Rules. The whole thing was the limit of time—whether they were to adjourn now, or to adjourn a little later—and it must be involved in that question whether they were at that late hour of the night to go into a lengthened and protracted debate. He thought they ought not, but that it was more reasonable they should go on with the Resolutions for another quarter of an hour, and that then they could do as they usually did on such occasions, adjourn the House. He certainly took that view, and he should therefore oppose the adjournment of the debate, and, if it became necessary, he should take the liberty of dividing the House upon it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he was of opinion that the House would do better to hasten forward the Business with which they had been specially called upon to deal, rather than adjourn the debate at that unusually early hour. They were in ordinary Sessions in the habit of Sitting until 3 o'clock in the morning, or even later, when their time was occupied by Business of several kinds; but there had never been an intention of taking any other Business during this adjourned Session than that of the Procedure Resolutions now before them, and, therefore, he thought the discussion should be continued for at least an hour longer. If the debates were to be suspended as early as was now proposed, he could see no guarantee that the end of the Session would be reached before Christmas. Many Members wished to get back to their homes, and he hoped hon. Members opposite would not be appealed to in vain to allow the discussion of the Resolutions to proceed without interruption. Under the circumstances, he should feel it his duty to vote against the Motion of the Prime Minister for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. MELLOR said, he hoped the adjournment would not be agreed to. The discussion of the Resolutions was the sole purpose for which they had assembled, and he was certain that any interference with that object would be unsatisfactory to their constituents. Hon. Members, he thought, could hardly be aware, when they supported the adjournment, that to this Resolution alone there remained 30 Amendments to be disposed of; and, under the circumstances, he sincerely trusted the House would not assent to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman. It could not, of course, be denied that the adjournment of the debate might properly be agreed to in order to admit of the discussion of some question of immediate importance or great political interest; but no such pressing reason had been given for the adjournment on this occasion, while certainly on that side of the House there was a very strong feeling against it. That being so, he contended that the Resolutions should be proceed with without interruption until they were finished, in which case there was a prospect of their being concluded in a reasonable time; but if the discussion were to be suspended at that hour in order to make room for other Business, it would be used as a precedent on other occasions, and so many questions would crop up that the Resolutions would not be got through by the end of the year.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he believed that hon. Members on both sides of the House would recognize the validity of the arguments which had been urged against the adjournment of the debate. He would remind the House that the words proposed by the Government to be included in the Resolution were of great interest, and that the revision of them which had been suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) had brought about a near approach to an agreement upon the subject. It seemed to him, under these circumstances, most lamentable to have to adjourn the consideration of a question which every hon. Member would admit to be deserving of attention, in order to enter upon Business which certainly had no such claim upon them. For that reason, and because he regarded the Business proposed to be taken up as frivolous and vexatious, and moreover calculated to disturb the growing peace of Ireland, he should vote against the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CAUSTON appealed to the Government not to adjourn the debate at that hour for the purpose of entering upon the Motion of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Yorke). He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that many hon. Members, amongst them himself, had had Notices on the Paper which for months past they had in vain sought opportunities of discussing. He considered it unreasonable that, having been summoned to deal with the Resolutions on Procedure, they should be called on to adjourn at half-past 12 o'clock in order to enter upon unimportant Business. For his own part he was strongly against the proposal, and he hoped the Prime Minister would rise in his place, and, recognizing the general feeling of the House, withdraw his Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. LEWIS said, before the Prime Minister replied to the appeal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton), he wished to draw attention to the "wonderful unanimity" of the Liberal Party in opposing its Leader. ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: I must call upon the hon. Member to confine his observations to the Question before the House.

Mr. LEWIS would at once submit to the ruling of the Chair. They were, it appeared, to be prevented in the satisfactory disposal of the Motion of the hon. Member for East Gloucester (Mr. Yorke) because of the action of several Members opposite who opposed the adjournment of the debate on the ground that, in the opinion of the Liberal Party, the Motion of the Prime Minister was totally unworthy of support. It might have been expected that, having regard to the convenience and Business of the House generally, the Liberal Party, at any rate, would have supported the Motion of the Prime Minister; but, notwithstanding that the right hon. Gentleman had risen in his place to move the adjournment of the debate, in order that other matters might be discussed, hon. Members in favour of the Motion were told by those who sat around the Prime Minister that the right hon. Gentleman was entirely wrong, and that he must submit to defeat on division.

Mr. CALLAN appealed to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), seeing that his object had been attained, to save the House the trouble of dividing on his Motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. DILLWYN said, he also would appeal to the hon. Member for Northampton to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 21*st November,* 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 21*st November*, 1882.

MINUTES.] — NEW MEMBER SWORN—Coleridge John Kennard, esquire, *for* City of New Sarum.

SELECT COMMITTEE — *Report* — Privilege (Mr. Gray). [No. 406.]

QUESTIONS.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE REGENT'S PARK.

MR. DILLWYN (for Mr. D. GRANT) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he has yet received the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown as to the rights of the householders over the inclosure in Regent's Park; and, if so, whether he will communicate the same to the House?

MR. COURTNEY: The opinion of the Law Officers has been received, and the subject is now under consideration. I am not yet in a position to make any statement with regard to it, but the matter will be expedited as much as possible.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will agree to include, in the Return of Justices of the Peace in Ireland, lately ordered by the House, particulars of the designation, profession, or occupation of each person at the time of his appointment to the Commission of the Peace; and, whether the Return will be so prepared as to distinguish between the different classes of magistrates, namely, the ordinary Justices of the Peace, the Resident, Special, and Superintending Magistrates, Queen's Counsel, Mayors, Coroners, Justices appointed under the Towns Improvement Act, and any other persons who exercise magisterial functions in Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I see no objection to including in the Return referred to the further information which the hon. Member wishes for. I cannot say that it can be all given, or that it will be entirely accurate; but I will give orders to have the Return made so as to meet the hon. Member's wishes as far as possible.

PUBLIC HEALTH — TEMPORARY ABODES.

MR. BURT asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Government intend taking any steps early next Session for registering and bringing temporary abodes, such as shows, tents, vans, and places of the kind, under the influence of sanitary officers?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, he would consider whether the law, as it stood, was in need of amendment in this respect; but he could not, at present, on this, any more than on any other subject, now give any undertaking as to the introduction of a Bill next Session.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—GIPSY AND NOMADIC CHILDREN.

MR. BURT asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, If the Government intend taking any steps early next Session for bringing about the education of gipsy and other travelling children living in vans, carts, shows, and other temporary dwellings?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, it is exceedingly difficult to devise any effectual scheme for the education of the nomadic population referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend, and up to the present we have received no suggestion for dealing with the subject which appears to be practical. The matter, however, is under consideration, and we propose during the Recess to confer with the Local Government Board respecting it.

SPAIN — INTERNATIONAL LAW — SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has yet received the Report of the Committee of inquiry as to the case of the Cuban Refugees; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; we have not yet received the Report of the Committee of Inquiry. The latest telegram we have received from Lord Napier arrived this morning, and is to the following effect;—

"Committee have completed inquiry; evidence very voluminous; Attorney General hopes to deliver Report next Friday; will be forwarded as soon as possible.

From this I gather that the Report will reach us about the middle of next week.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps the Government have now taken to secure the release of the Cuban refugees by the Spanish Government; and, whether he will lay all the Correspondence between the British and Spanish Governments upon the Table of the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It is too soon to make a statement upon this subject, as we have not yet seen the Report of the Inquiry.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: What Inquiry does the hon. Baronet refer to?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I mean the Inquiry which is being held at Gibraltar. We cannot make any formal application to the Spanish Government until we know the result of the Inquiry.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the hon. Baronet state what Correspondence has passed between the British and the Spanish Governments on the subject up to the present time?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; it is quite impossible to do so, as we have been asked by Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid not to make any statement.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I will repeat my Question on Friday.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It will be impossible to make a statement on Friday, because, as I have said, Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid has asked us, in the interests of this Question, not to make any statement until the matter is completed by the result of the Inquiry.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: The result of the Inquiry, if not known now, could be made known by telegraph by Friday. I shall repeat the Question on that day to both hon. Members.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether Her Majesty's Government had any assurance from the Spanish Government that the refugees would not be maltreated until the Report of the Inquiry had been received?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That is not a Question growing out of the Question on the Paper.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—NATAL—THE CHIEF LANGALIBALELE.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (for Mr. Gorst) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, How long Her Majesty's Government have now held the Chief Langalibalele in captivity; whether in 1875 this Chief was promised by Mr. Brownlee that if he behaved properly he should be sent back to Natal in a few years; whether he is an old broken-down man, whose only desire is to return to Natal before he dies; and, whether Her Majesty's Government can hold out any definite prospect of his being allowed to return to Natal?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, Langalibalele was brought from Natal to Robben Island in August, 1874, and was soon after removed to the place on the mainland in the Cape Colony where he is now detained. During the short time we have had for inquiry we have been unable to find in the records of the Colonial Office any such promise as that referred to in the second part of the Question. The statement in the third part of the inquiry is a fair description of the case. The Secretary of State, however, has already requested Sir Henry Bulwer to report whether, in his opinion, there is any objection to the idea of Langalibalele's return to Natal being entertained.

STATE OF IRELAND—EXTRA FORCE OF CONSTABULARY—LOUGHMORE, CO. TIPPERARY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the people of the parish of Loughmore, Templemore, county Tipperary, assembled in public meeting a few days since, unanimously adopted a resolution emphatically denying that the existence of crime and outrage can be alleged as a reason for quartering an extra force of Constabulary in the district of Loughmore East; that for months a single outrage or crime has not been committed in the district; that the relations existing between the tenant farmers of the district among themselves, and also between the tenant farmers and the landlords, are without exception friendly, and that the people court investigation into the truth of these statements; whether it is true that the most recent act committed in the district, which could be brought within the category of offences in regard to which the quartering of extra Constabulary might be ordered, was the posting at least three months ago of notices "boycotting" a sale of meadow, and whether the sale was carried through without any impediment whatever; and, whether the Government, in view of the condition of Loughmore, will remove the charge from the poor tenants of that district of extra police?

MR. TREVELYAN: I understand that a small meeting of about 20 persons assembled at Loughmore, County Tipperary, on Sunday, the 12th instant, the object being to establish a branch of the National League. At the conclusion of the meeting the resolution referred to in the Question, denying the existence of crime and outrage in the district, was passed, and a copy of it was forwarded to the authorities in Dublin Castle on the 15th instant. No outrage of importance which would necessitate extra police has occurred actually in the parish of Loughmore; but on an adjoining townland, which is almost surrounded by Loughmore East, William Hickie was brutally murdered on the 27th of September last. In consequence of this murder, it has been deemed necessary to locate in this district a party of four police for the protection of Hickie's family. These are the only additional police it is proposed to send; and it will be for the Government to consider—regard being had to the improvement visible in the district—whether some portion of their cost may not be remitted.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CONGO.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that urgency has been voted in the French Chamber for the discussion of a Bill empowering the Government to ratify and give effect to the Treaty between M. de Brazza and the Congo Chiefs?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir; the fact is as stated in the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—NOTICES OF MOTION.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the honourable Member for Northampton, Whether, in view of the ruling of the Speaker with respect to his Notices of Motion now standing on the Order Book of the House, he will withdraw those Notices of Motion?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did not gather, Sir, from what fell from you yesterday that the Notices to which the noble Lord refers were out of Order; but as I gathered that you were of opinion that they ought not to remain upon the Notice Book, I have asked the Clerk to take them off, with the exception, of course, of the Notice which stands first in my name for this evening—

> "That Mr. Bradlaugh be heard at the Bar of this House upon his right to take the Parliamentary Oath."

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL—LEGISLATION.

MR. BRINTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to the serious injury to land and other property in the Midland and Southern districts, consequent on the overflow of rivers during the present autumn, he is prepared to give the earliest possible attention next Session to the Rivers Conservancy Bill?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, he was aware of the mischief caused by floods in many parts of the country; but he could not now, on behalf of the Government, enter into any engagement as to the measures to be introduced next Session to meet the difficulty.

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table Copies of any Reports recently made to the Irish Local Government Board by their inspectors in reference to the existence or apprehension of distress in any districts of Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: As a general rule, Sir, Inspectors' reports to the Local Government Board are deemed confidential communications made for the information of the Board; and I cannot consent to lay on the Table all reports made on the subject of distress. If, however, the report on any particular district were asked for, it would be a subject for consideration whether that report, or extracts from it, might not be presented.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875—DYNAMITE EXPLOSION AT PEMBERY BURROWS.

Sir JOHN JENKINS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give any information with regard to the second explosion, on Friday last, of dynamite (involving, it is stated, the death of several persons), which has taken place at Pembery Burrows, near Llanelly, the works in respect of which I asked him a question on the 16th instant; and, whether, in view of the report of the Inspector of Explosives declaring that the precautions taken at the above works, which appeared to him at the time sufficient and satisfactory, he will consider whether some means ought not to be taken for a more thorough and efficient inspection?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, Colonel Majendie has gone down to make inquiry into this lamentable explosion, and I have heard from him that the full particulars are not yet made known to him; and I should, therefore, not think it would be proper to make any statement on the subject; but, in answer to the latter part of the hon. Gentleman's Question, from the information we have received, we have no reason to believe that this accident arose from any want of thorough or efficient inspection.

AGRICULTURE—ENSILAGE.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering the advantages which have attended the ensilage of green forage in the United States and France, he will direct that inquiries be made as to the best means for carrying out this economy, through the Legation and Consular Service, in these two Republics, with a view of informing agriculturists in the United Kingdom, especially as British agriculture is still suffering under considerable depression, and the Home trade suffers in proportion to such depression? The hon. Member added that one of the motives that induced him to ask the Question of the Prime Minister, in the absence of any Minister of Agriculture, was that the very bulky Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture made not the smallest allusion to this matter.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, notwithstanding the absence or postponement of the production of a Minister of Agriculture, the subject has been by no means overlooked; and very interesting information upon it has been obtained, and more will be found—though I do not know whether the very vigilant eye of my hon. Friend has yet discovered it —in Mr. Victor Drummond's Report from Washington, already laid before Parliament in 1882. Copies of a special Report published by the United States Agricultural Department on the practical tests to which the system of ensilage of green forage had been submitted in Canada and the United States has also been received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Representatives abroad, and has been communicated to the Board of Trade, the Royal Agricultural Society, and the Central Chamber of Agriculture. Moreover, the British Ambassador at Paris has been instructed to prosecute the subject by procuring information respecting the results of any experiments that may be tried in France. The Government quite agree with the hon. Member as to the safe and rational method which he has pointed out—namely, that of procuring the information as the proper object of the Government at the present juncture with regard to this very interesting subject.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—MR. BRADLAUGH.

Mr. FIRTH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he would move the adjournment of the debate to-night in sufficient time to give his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton an opportunity of bringing on his important Motion.

Mr. GLADSTONE: After the experience of last night, Sir, I am not much encouraged to make premature attempts at adjournment. I think we shall endeavour to make as much progress as we can.

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked the Prime Minister, Whether he had had under his consideration the methods successfully employed by some of his supporters to prevent the Resolution of which he had given Notice from coming on last night; also the steps taken in a like direction by the hon. Member for Northampton in pre-occupying the Order Book with Motions on divers subjects, so as to postpone indefinitely the opportunity which last night the right hon. Gentleman had wished him to enjoy; and whether he intended to take any, and, if so, what, steps to convince his supporters how distasteful such manœuvres were to him, and to induce them no longer to delay the institution of the inquiry in which, at his earnest invitation, he had consented to engage.

MR. GLADSTONE: This is an argumentative Question, apparently having for its object to state a case, which I feel some difficulty in answering, inasmuch as it contains recitals which, I think, are totally inaccurate. The hon. Gentleman says I earnestly invited him to engage in this inquiry. I did nothing of the kind. I pointed out that if he chose to interrupt me with such an extraordinary manifestation as he thought proper to make individually when I asserted that there was no Kilmainham Treaty as indicated by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), then that it was his duty to take some other step; that is the nature of the invitation I gave him. It appears to me that if the hon. Gentleman really wanted an inquiry he ought to have moved for it six months ago, when it would have been difficult for me or my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton to interpose. I have no knowledge of the proceedings of the House last night except what the hon. Member has himself; but I observed this—that the hand of the clock was moved across the mystical hour of half-past 12 by the speeches of two hon. Members who are not supporters of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. J. R. YORKE: It would have been quite impossible for me to have moved this Resolution at the end of last Session, for the Government had possession of all the time of the House. I hope, after that explanation, the right hon. Gentleman will assist me in doing that which he has challenged me to do.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that it is not the case that he directly challenged my hon. Friend to move for an inquiry?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have correctly and accurately, I believe, recited what happened, and that I do not call an earnest invitation or challenge. I pointed out to the hon. Gentleman what, if he chose to adopt such a line of behaviour as he adopted on that occasion, it was his duty to do. That was the extent of my invitation.

MR. J. R. YORKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman enable me to do that at the earliest possible opportunity?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it will be remembered that there were two requests, one with regard to the case of Mr. Gray, and one with respect to the hon. Member himself. I proceeded exactly on the same footing in both cases; but for me now to move the adjournment at 12.15 would be totally useless to the hon. Gentleman, as other Motions interpose.

MR. J. R. YORKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me a day?

MR. GLADSTONE: If the hon. Gentleman can find a convenient and clear day, that will be a different matter; but it would be useless for me to move the adjournment of the debate now, as it would only cause a repetition of what happened last night, or else another subject, and not the Motion in question, would be brought before the House.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—NINTH RULE (ORDER IN DEBATE).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWENTY-SIXTH NIGHT.]

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *further considered.*

MR. GORST said, he proposed to insert words to secure that the Member should be "present in the House at the time" when sentence, so to speak, was pronounced on the recalcitrant Member. He thought it was the least thing they could do to require the Member to be present when they called into exercise this penal power. If he was absent, why, "let us thank God we are rid of a knave."

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "Member," to insert the words "present in the House at the time."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would admit that, had they intended to continue the Rule in its original form, the Amendment would have been a very proper one; but, as the matter now stood, the Government were willing to exclude all reference to constructive Obstruction, consequently any Naming under the Resolution would either be the Naming of a single Member or more than one, the Members Named being involved in a common act taking place in the face of the House; therefore, the case against which the hon. and learned Member wished to guard would not arise. But the Amendment was not only unnecessary, it would be attended with serious inconvenience. Suppose the House in a state of tumult after a Member had flagrantly violated the Rules, and insulted the House, the offending Member, while the Speaker was waiting a minute for comparative stillness, might slip out of the House before the Amendment operated, and then come back and renew his Obstruction. If they were to adopt the manners of Dogberry they ought to have the same grounds of reason as Dogberry had. Dogberry had no reason to believe the "knave" would come back again; but it was quite evident the offending Member would be in a position to come back again. The Government agreed upon the equity of the case that constructive Obstruction should not be subject to this Rule; and, in these circumstances, he thought it unnecessary to introduce words which might frustrate some part of the action of the Chair.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the idea which had suggested itself to the mind of the Prime Minister was ridiculous; it could only have occurred to such a mind as his. It was ludicrous to suppose a Member could insult the House, and then run away, and so prevent the operation of the Rule. He held that, in a matter of this kind, the House ought to be extremely cautious; nothing ought to be left to chance, especially after the extraordinary construction that was put upon a former Rule by Mr. Lyon Playfair on a well-known occasion. ["Oh!"] Gentlemen who cried "Oh!" forgot that on the previous night Members of the Government got up one after another and pronounced the action of the Chairman on that occasion to be extraordinary—["Hear, hear!" *and* "No, no!"]—and the course taken by the Government in putting down their Amendment was a distinct acknowledgment that they repudiated the Chairman's construction. ["Hear!" *and* "No!"] That being so, his hon. and learned Friend wished to provide against any such misconstruction of a Rule occurring again, and to that end he proposed that only present and individual action on the part of Members should be taken account of.

Mr. DODSON said, all that the Government stated was that they would alter the Rule so that it should not hereafter be applied to constructive Obstruction, and the Amendment of the Prime Minister was designed to give effect to that proposal; but that was not a repudiation by the Government of the construction of the Rule in its present form as interpreted by the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. PARNELL said, he did not propose to enter into the question of the correctness or incorrectness of the action of the Chairman of Committees on the occasion referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst). He thought the disposition of the majority of the House was to unravel this question as quickly and as well as they could, and, as regarded the action of the past, to let bygones be bygones. It was admitted by the Government that it was desirable that the Rule should be altered in such a way as to prevent its being applied against Members for the offence of constructive Obstruction; but the words "or otherwise" were so vague that they might be held to cover any possible offence. The offence for which Members were suspended in the Session of 1881 was that of disregarding the authority of the Chair, and not for obstructing the Business of the House. The Amendment which had been placed on the Paper by the Prime Minister included any action which might come under the definition of disregarding the authority of the Chairman, by abusing the Rules of the House, or wilfully obstructing the Business of the House, "or otherwise," which obviously included everything. The Amendment of the Prime Minister did not, therefore, limit the scope of the Resolution to some sudden offence which it might be necessary for the House to have power to meet; but it obviously applied to the whole of the offences included in the Rule. It therefore applied to the offence of constructive Obstruction, because the essence of constructive Obstruction was the joining together at various times of several Members in the same act. The Amendment, therefore, of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, although going only a very short way, was absolutely necessary if they wanted to carry out the views of the Government. He thought Obstruction might be fairly defined as an act of which a Member was guilty at the time he was Named by the Chairman or Speaker, and which derived its importance from what he had done himself, and not from what had been done by any number of other Members. If a Member was only to be responsible for his own acts, and if the Presiding Authority was not to be entitled to suspend him for the acts of some other Member, it should be stated in the Rule. If they were to guard against the suspension of Members for constructive Obstruction, it appeared to him that they should, amongst other provisions, adopt that proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham—namely, that the Member should be present at the time the offence was committed; otherwise he might be held responsible for the offences of somebody else at some other time, or he might be held responsible for little bits of offences committed by himself a week before, and which, taken in connection with the act which gave rise to his suspension, constituted in the mind of the Chairman the offence for which he was punished.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD objected to the Amendment, because it did not provide for what the hon. and learned Member for Chatham really desired. He hoped, under the circumstances, that the hon. and learned Member would withdraw the Amendment, and allow the subject to be re-introduced at a later stage.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that he had listened with much surprise to the remarks of the President of the Local Government Board in reference to this point, which had rendered it necessary that the Opposition should reconsider their position with regard to it. It was evident, from what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, that the Government did not repudiate the construction which had been put upon the Rule by the Chairman of Committees last Session by which Members could be suspended in their absence.

MR. DODSON remarked, that what he had intended to convey was that it was because the Government did not repudiate that construction of the Rule in its present form that they had thought it well to propose the alteration of the Rule.

MR. CHAPLIN observed, that the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman amounted to a verdict of "Not Guilty" against the Chairman of Committees, with a recommendation that he should not do it again. If the Rule were framed in accordance with the general feeling of the House Members could not be suspended under it in their absence. He hoped that some words would be adopted which would insure offences by Members of that House being dealt with as they were committed, and that the suspension of Members *en masse* in their absence would not again occur.

MR. RYLANDS said, he did not think it necessary to go back upon the old question whether the Chairman of Committees was right or not in the construction he had placed upon the Rule last Session. It was quite sufficient to know that that construction had been extremely annoying to the House, especially when it was clearly established that two or three of the suspended Members were entirely innocent. There was a general agreement upon two points; the first being that when any Member was to be punished under this Resolution, the punishment was to be immediate upon the offence being committed, and that there should be no idea in the mind of the Chairman of bit-by-bit offences accumulating at length—in the hon. Member being Named. It had been objected that under this Amendment the Member might go out of the House, and thus escape the punishment. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) suggested that he should be brought back again; but they could not do that without using a machinery which would occupy a great deal of time. The Government had shown every disposition to meet the point; but he should be very glad if they would get rid of these constructive and collective offences. They were not worth fighting about; but, at the same time, he would use every means for keeping order in the House.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped that if the Government could not accept this Amendment they would propose some other words, to carry out the object they had in view. The Member should be present in the House when he was Named, and the punishment should follow immediately on the offence being committed. He would suggest that they might introduce words that, "whenever any Member, after an offence has been committed, shall be Named," &c., or they might add a Proviso to the effect that any person so Named should be Named forthwith.

Mr. GLADSTONE entirely agreed with the principle of the Amendments suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, and was of opinion that the Proviso introduced last night would secure such an operation of the Rule.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT suggested that some period of time should be inserted after the commission of the offence within which alone a Member could be Named.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he did not believe the Amendment announced by the Government would carry out the object that was intended by the Government; and he would, therefore, suggest the insertion in the second line of the Government Amendment, after the words "Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House," the words "immediately after the commission of the offence," which would prevent such a thing again taking place as occurred with respect to the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum) during last Session.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he had no objection to these words.

Mr. NEWDEGATE, with regard to Naming a number of Members collectively by the Chairman of Committees, desired to call the attention of the House to their former practice. [*Cries of* "Divide" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] Those interruptions appeared as if hon. Members were ashamed of the House in which they sat, and had no faith in its fairness; but he had always believed that the House of Commons was distinguished for its justice, its legislation, and its internal discipline. He had risen to say, however, that he hoped some words to the effect of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) would be introduced into the Resolution, because he had a vivid recollection of the case of the late Mr. Smith O'Brien. When that hon. Gentleman refused to serve on a Committee of this House, the House sent its messenger for him, and when, in obedience to that summons, Mr. O'Brien came, he proceeded to take his place in the House, but was told to retire to the Bar, because the House was still deliberating as to what penalty should be inflicted; but the hon. Member was allowed to be present, and had the opportunity of claiming to be heard before any judgment was given, and of apologizing to the House before the penalty was enforced. Remembering that precedent, he agreed entirely in the object of the Amendment moved by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham.

Mr. WARTON suggested that the Standing Order should be re-cast, so as to place the offence first and the punishment afterwards, as was done in all Acts of Parliament dealing with offences.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he thought it was only reasonable that the Government should agree to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. He (Mr. Biggar) protested against Members being Named when not in the House.

Lord JOHN MANNERS believed that if the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) were adopted, the Standing Order would be rendered much clearer.

Mr. GORST asked leave to withdraw his Amendment, on the understanding that that of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wigtown (Sir John Hay) were adopted.

Mr. SALT said, he would support the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), if he put it into words and moved it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved to amend the Resolution in line 1, by inserting, after "Member," the words "after a full and reasonable notice." The object of the Amendment was to remove all doubt as to the wilful character of the offence, and to prevent a recurrence of the well-known incident when a considerable number of Members were Named by the Chairman of Committees without any notice whatever having been given to the hon. Gentlemen concerned. The indulgence shown by the Speaker was beyond all praise, and it was desirable to enshrine his rulings in these Resolutions. The Amendment was an attempt in that direction. He hoped that the Prime Minister would accept it, bearing in mind his own words when the Resolution was originally passed in 1880, that it was safer to err on the side of leniency than of severity.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "Member," to insert the words "after a full and reasonable notice."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE, in opposing the Amendment said, he would not dwell too much on the fact that in discussing the 5th Resolution the proposal to make notice an absolute condition was negatived, because then they were dealing with light penalties, and in the present Resolution with heavy ones. He would further admit that, in ordinary cases, it was a correct assumption that the Speaker or the Chairman would give notice. That had been the ordinary practice of the Chair, and he hoped that it would always be pursued. But he objected to any word being inserted in the Resolution to bind the discretion of the Chair for two reasons. In the first place, there might be cases where the disobedience and breach of the order and decency of the House was so palpable and violent, and so plainly indicated a determined will of disobedience, that notice would really be disparaging to the authority and dignity of the House. It was not the case that it had been the uniform practice of the Speaker to give notice; for in the great case where the Members remained in the House in defiance of the order of the Speaker no Notice was given.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The Speaker did give notice.

MR. SEXTON: After the first division, the Speaker informed the hon. Members who remained in the House that if they repeated their conduct he would take notice of it.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that, at all events, there was no necessity to give notice. If the Speaker presumed ignorance, it was a charitable presumption, for the act was done in defiance of the express order of the Speaker that the Members should quit the House. A stronger and more palpable argument in favour of vesting the discretion in the Speaker could be drawn from the case of a Member who, after being punished for his first offence, deliberately committed a second. Could it be said that warning was again to be given him? No doubt, as a general rule, warning would be given in the case of the first offence, but not for the second. There might be new forms of disobedience with which the House was not acquainted. The House was yet young in this science, and as they grew older the professors of the art might improve and develop it. He thought, therefore, that for the first offence the warning should be at the discretion of the Presiding Officer; and that in the case of the second offence it would be injurious and disparaging to the dignity of the House that any warning should be given. For those reasons he was opposed to the Amendment.

MR. GREGORY said, he did not think the words proposed by the noble Lord were workable. There was no jury in the House to say what was "full and reasonable notice." He urged the noble Lord to withdraw his Amendment in favour of the one which the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had intimated his intention of moving.

MR. ONSLOW said, that it should not be forgotten that these Rules were to apply when the Chairman of Ways and Means was in the Chair. It ought to be provided that full notice should be given by the Chairman that hon. Members were disregarding his authority. In laying down hard-and-fast Rules provision should be made that Members were treated in a proper way, and that such occurrences as took place last Session should not happen again. The Amendment of the noble Lord was not explicit enough, while it went too far. He would suggest that "ample notice" should be substituted for "full and sufficient."

MR. SYNAN approved of the principle of the noble Lord's Amendment, that warning should be given to Members that they were offending; but he thought that the words used were too vague and general.

Lord JOHN MANNERS suggested the withdrawal of the Amendment, and the settlement of the question by the means the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had recommended.

Mr. WHITBREAD believed that every Member who had been Named for Obstruction had been repeatedly warned by the Speaker before being silenced. ["No!"] When he said that Members had always been warned, he meant that their attention had been called to the fact that they had strayed from the Question to which they ought to have confined themselves. There were other cases besides cases of Obstruction to which the Amendment of the noble Lord would apply—namely, cases in which well-defined Rules were directly and flagrantly violated. To lay down that a Member guilty of such violations was entitled to warning would be absurd.

Mr. GORST argued that, in the opinion of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), the conduct of the Speaker on more than one occasion must have been absurd, for it had happened more than once that the Speaker had warned Members who were wilfully disregarding the Rules of the House before Naming them. In one case the warning was repeated two or three times. He referred to the occasion when 27 Members refused to go into the Lobby and vote. The hon. Member for Bedford was mistaken when he said that there was no instance of a suspension for Obstruction which had not been preceded by several warnings. Had the hon. Member never heard of the case of the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum), who was suspended on a memorable occasion, not only without previous warning, but just after his entry into the House after a night spent in bed?

Mr. HOPWOOD contended that, in cases of flagrant violation of the Rules of the House, no warning should be necessary before the punishment of the delinquent.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, on the occasion when 27 Irish Members were suspended, so far from the Chairman giving them any warning, he had only been a few minutes in the House, and did not know what had taken place.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 184: Majority 131.—(Div. List, No. 386.)

Mr. WARTON proposed to omit all the words from "have," in line 1, to "disregarding," in line 3, and to insert the word "disregarded." The effect of that, with two or three consequential Amendments, would be to put the horse before the cart, instead of putting the cart before the horse, as the Standing Order did at present. They would have the offence first and the punishment after. The Rule would then read thus—

"That whenever any Member shall have disregarded the authority of the Chair or abused the Rules of the House, then, if the offence be committed in the House, he may forthwith be named by the Speaker."

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, as disregarding," and insert the word "disregarded,"—(*Mr. Warton*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'been named by the Speaker' stand part of the said Standing Order."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought the question raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman would be very well worth considering if they were in a private room or a Committee Room engaged in drawing up this Resolution for the first time. But to attempt to re-adjust it at present would only throw them into confusion, while no substantial advantage would be gained.

Lord JOHN MANNERS observed that, as one who had encouraged his hon. and learned Friend to propose the Amendment, he thought the form suggested would be a decided improvement; but, after what had fallen from the Prime Minister, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Mr. GLADSTONE moved to insert the words "immediately after the commission of the offence," which Amendment would provide against the possibility of a Member being Named for constructive Obstruction.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, after the word "House," to insert the words "immediately after the commission of the offence."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL moved to add to the Prime Minister's Amendment the words "by such Member," in order to completely carry out the principle that each Member shall be Named separately.

Amendment proposed to said proposed Amendment, to add, at the end thereof, the words "by such Member."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be added to the said proposed Amendment."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that he should propose certain subsesequent Amendments, which would meet the object which the hon. Member had in view.

Amendment to proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Words *inserted.*

Amendment made, in line 3, by leaving out the word "as," and inserting the word "of,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON moved the omission of the words "disregarding the authority of the Chair," which, in his opinion, either were superfluous or created a new Parliamentary offence. The Speaker or Chairman acted under the directions of the House, and an offence against the authority of the Chair was an offence against the Rules of the House. The relations between the House and the Chair, which had been much strained lately, would probably be altogether changed by the New Rules of Procedure; and it would be well, as it seemed to him, that the discretion of the Chair should be limited by the directions of the House.

[The Amendment, not being seconded, could not be put.]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought the Rule ought to discriminate between accidental and wilful disregard. He would have preferred the words "insulting and disregarding;" but, as he could not obtain support for the word "insulting," he moved to insert the word "wilfully."

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the foregoing Amendment, to insert the word "wilfully."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'wilfully' be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that a Speaker or Chairman would not enforce the Rule for accidental disregard; and, as the Rule had been in operation for years without revealing the supposed defect, he appealed to the hon. Member to leave the matter to the discretion of the Chair.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, in line 3, by inserting after the word "or," the word "of."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL rose to move the omission of the words "abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the Business of the House." He said, they were absolutely unnecessary, because such abuse was now impossible with the New Rules, under which several Members had been called to Order.

MR. SPEAKER said, the House having inserted the word "of" after "or," the Resolution would not read if the Amendment were carried.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I got up to move my Amendment before the Prime Minister moved his.

MR. SPEAKER: As the Resolution now stands, the Amendment cannot be put from the Chair, because, if it were carried, the Resolution would not be sense.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he should limit his Amendment to the omission of the words "by persistently and wilfully obstructing the Business of the House." It seemed almost impossible to devise methods of Obstruction now. There could be no Obstruction in debate, or in divisions, or in making long speeches for that purpose, as the Resolutions already passed could be put in force. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had put down several Notices of Motion on one subject to prevent a Motion on another subject coming on. Was he to be suspended for abusing the Rules of the House in that way? On Monday night the hon. Member moved the adjournment of the House in order to prevent the House reaching that Motion, which the Government professed to be anxious to bring on; and although this was done wilfully and deliberately, the hon. Member was not suspended, though, if an Irish Member had done as much, he would have been in considerable danger. He did not think it was possible for the Government to make out any case for retaining these words, and the Resolution would be greatly simplified if so tremendous a penalty were imposed only for disregard of the authority of the Chair.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House." —(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said Standing Order, as amended."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought that the noble Lord had moved an Amendment which might act against his own views. If the House should agree to this Amendment, they would leave the Speaker and Chairman with very much larger powers and authority than if the words were left in the clause, as neither would take wilful and persistent Obstruction alone into view. It was in the interests of individual Members that the words were inserted, because they indicated to the Speaker or Chairman the kind of abuse which the House had in mind when they agreed to the Rule. The words stood well as they were, and should not be altered.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he would have supported the Amendment as it originally stood; but he thought that if it were carried in its present form this severe penalty might be inflicted for the infringement of any Rule of the House.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved to leave out the words "or otherwise," and, in support of the Amendment, cited a speech made by the Prime Minister upon the introduction by the late Government of their Rule for dealing with Obstruction. The right hon. Gentleman had on that occasion objected to the words "or otherwise" being in the Resolution, on the ground that whereas the Resolution was aimed at the offence of "wilful and persistent Obstruction," if those words were retained the Rule might be applied to the abuse by any Member of any Rule of the House. The noble Lord was perfectly content to rest his objection to the words upon the ground then stated by the Prime Minister.

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the words "or otherwise."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or otherwise' stand part of the said Standing Order, as amended."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he was not responsible for the report of his speech, but he accepted it; but he must point out that at that time they were dealing, not with Procedure generally, but with some specific offence; and he submitted to the House whether they ought not to confine their proceedings to that one specific offence. That was the idea which lay at the root of his remarks. He did not press his objection, however, and he believed the House did determine to legislate so far as to make its penal Resolution applicable to every species of offence. As they were now considering generally the question of altering the authority of the House, he had not the least hesitation in accepting the authority of the decision of the House against the suggestion which he then made.

Mr. WARTON supported the Amendment.

Mr. GORST said, it seemed to him that the conduct of the Government in the matter was extremely inconsistent. By the retention of the words "or otherwise" the restriction previously contained in the Resolution would be removed. They might as well leave out all the words of definition and leave the matter wholly in the Speaker's discretion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he did not agree with his hon. and learned Friend. If the words preceding "or otherwise" were omitted, there would be no words of discretion or restriction to the Speaker. There was a discretion given to him as to the nature of the offence, and after the words defining the offence came the words "or otherwise." His hon. and learned Friend well knew that in the definition of an offence general words must be construed in correspondence with particular words.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the words were either without meaning or they had a dangerous meaning. In either case they ought to be rejected.

MR. WHITBREAD supported the words of the Rule, declaring his belief that, so far from Obstruction being a perfect science, Members indulging in it were as yet only entering a vast territory not 100th part of which they had surveyed or mapped out. When Obstruction was being persisted in, in the last two Sessions, he used to wonder night after night at the immense fields of Obstruction to which they seemed perfectly blind. The only alternative to the retention of the words would be to frame an exhaustive catalogue of offences punishable, which would be an invidious and disagreeable task.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he thought the question ought to be considered in connection with the penalties which were to be imposed. He thought the offence should be clearly stated; and he, therefore, hoped the Government would accept the Amendment by the omission of the words "or otherwise."

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he thought the words "or otherwise" vague and indefinite. In fact, he thoroughly accepted the reasoning on which the Prime Minister himself two years ago opposed the insertion of those words in the Standing Order. He adhered to the text of the speech, while he rejected the Talmudical gloss upon it with which they had been favoured. Two years ago, when the House had to meet Obstruction, it laid down a Code of very mild penalties, and to-day they were asked to reform this article of the Code by making it very much more stringent. No Member at that time much cared about being suspended for an "otherwise," when the penalty was having to spend half the evening at the opera. Now, the proceeding was serious and should be accurate. If the penalties were more stringent, surely the offences should be more distinctively marked. Moreover, the words "or otherwise" were unnecessary, because the Speaker already had full power of Naming a Member who abused the Rules of the House. They had for the last few weeks been haunted by a ghost, and the Speaker of the future roamed about the House. What would he say to the uncertain responsibilities thrown upon him. The future Speaker or Chairman must, indeed, be greedy of despotism if he wanted more power than he possessed already. He had listened with wonder to the hon. Member for Bedford's (Mr. Whitbread's) picture of the illimitable vista of future Obstruction — strange and ingenious forms of torment that would have entered the imagination of no one but the hon. Member for Bedford. Let him make a suggestion to the hon. Member. They all of them recollected the tracts of their youth, which taught them so much mischief in the history of the naughty boy, who indulged in inconceivable tricks till he was transported or fell into the duck pond, and then they knew they had been reading a moral treatise. Let the hon. Member write a Parliamentary tract on that model, and give for their learning and edification the history of the wicked obstructive Member who blocked all Bills, who divided on all clauses, who counted the House when 400 Members were present, and ended by being suspended for the Session. Such a tract by the hon. Member would be far more useful than all the New Rules of Procedure.

MR. CALLAN supported the Amendment, considering that every possible offence was included in a disregard of the authority of the Chair and abuse of the Rules of the House by persistent and wilful Obstruction.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, they ought to know distinctly what they were to be punished for. Let them have every offence specified, and then they would vote for them with pleasure.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, that if the words "or otherwise" were adopted, he should, having regard to the Attorney General's explanation, move to substitute for "otherwise" the words "in some other such manner."

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 90; Noes 48: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 387.)

MR. STUART-WORTLEY rose to move the insertion in line 5, after "otherwise," of the words "in like manner," so that the Rule should read—

"That whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House as disregarding the authority of the Chair, or abusing the Rules of the House by wilfully obstructing the Business of the House or otherwise in like manner."

This alteration or addition of the words "in like manner" would have the effect of expressing the intention of the Attorney General, as explained by him in the remarks he had just addressed to the House. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) might say that they (the Opposition) did not see what form of abuse there was that a Member was likely to be guilty of, and that the ancient usages and Rules of Procedure already passed would not meet. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), during his speech, did not mention any offence that could not be dealt with under the Rules they had passed; and therefore it was why they wished to have those words inserted after the word "otherwise."

Amendment proposed, in line 5, after the word "otherwise," to insert the words "in like manner."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE observed that, of course, it might be said that every offence came under the head of disregard of the authority of the Chair when once it was noticed by the Chair; but the House did not proceed on that principle, but had thought fit to make certain indications. It had likewise felt that if it made an indication, it was not enough to indicate wilful Obstruction alone; and the Attorney General had shown that the other acts of abuse of the Rules of the House contemplated by the Resolution should be in the same rank and degree. But the words "in like manner" now proposed by the hon. and learned Member opposite were words of hopeless ambiguity, and he must object to their insertion. How could it be said that gross misconduct—for example, entering the House in a state not of perfect self-possession, through the use of articles to which the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) objected, or 20 other things which might be named were it not too offensive to mention them, were "in like manner" with wilful Obstruction? It was intended that the other offences coming within the Rule must be in the same rank or degree.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, they had heard much of the deterioration of the House of Commons, and the idea must have taken a strong hold of the Prime Minister's mind, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman insisted on retaining the words "or otherwise" and objected to the words "in like manner," because, in future, Members were to come to the House in a state of intoxication, and the words "or otherwise" were to prevent their escaping unpunished for that offence.

Mr. WARTON supported the Amendment. He thought the Prime Minister believed in the supremacy of his own intellect, and had such a contempt for his own supporters that his action was directed to show how subservient they were to him.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, he thought the illustration given by the Prime Minister in support of his argument was not a very happy one. If the offences which the right hon. Gentleman indicated were committed, the culprit must have brought himself conspicuously to the notice of the Speaker; and some of the Rules already passed, or the ancient usages of the House, could be easily applied to the case. However, it was clear that the decision of the House had been taken on the whole question upon the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and his hon. and learned Friend would do well to content himself with having made a vigorous attempt to make the meaning and language of the Attorney General clear.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) felt it to be rather hard that it should be sought to fix upon him words for which the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners) and his Colleagues in the late Government were originally responsible, as they appeared in their own Resolution. He now objected, however, to the insertion of the words "in like manner," because they would mean that the Obstruction must not only be of a similar kind, but that the mode of carrying it on must be similar.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON admitted that the late Government were responsible for the terms of their Resolution; but pointed out that action had been taken under it such as they had never contemplated, and that it was, therefore, now desirable to guard against the recurrence of such a state of things.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought it would be sufficient punishment if the doorkeepers were instructed to remove an hon. Member under the circumstances described, and the House would be thoroughly justified in dividing upon such a matter. The point raised by the Attorney General, that these words were used by a Member of a former Government, was a very small one, and he would support the Amendment if a division was taken.

MR. PEMBERTON expressed the opinion that no lawyer could have drawn the clause in any other way. It was perfectly clear that the words would be confined, as the Attorney General stated, to cases *ejusdem generis.*

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, in proposing to insert in line 5, after the word "then," the words—

> "After the nature of the offence and the grounds upon which such Member has been named shall have been stated and entered upon the Journals of the House,"

regretted that the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was prevented by indisposition from moving the Amendment which stood in his name. Unless the Government were in an unusually captious frame of mind they would be disposed to agree with it. On the celebrated occasion when the 27 Members were expelled, the circumstances were entered at great length upon the Journals of the House; he found that three columns were occupied by that incident. But when the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) was suspended, on March 8, for disregarding the authority of the Chair, that was the only entry he could find relative to the event, though the question was subsequently brought forward by the hon. Member himself and a lengthy debate took place. The necessity of some such Amendment was, moreover, increased by the fact that the penalties for such disregard were now enormously increased.

Amendment proposed,

> In line 5, after the word "then," to insert the words "after the nature of the offence and the grounds upon which such Member has been named shall have been stated and entered upon the Journals of the House."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the Government felt some sympathy with the purpose of the noble Lord, and certainly were not aware of being in any unusually captious humour.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL explained that he had said the Government would be in a captious frame of mind if they did not agree with the Amendment.

MR. GLADSTONE: Exactly, if they did not accept the Amendment of the noble Lord. But if they were in such a frame of mind they would rather seek to find verbal difficulties than loyally support the Rule introduced by the late Government. It would, however, be making an entirely new precedent if they were to fix a form to be entered in the Journals of the House; it would also be unnecessary, for if there was one thing more than another in which the officers of the House under the superintendence of the Speaker were to be trusted, it was in framing the Records of the House. A vast number of acts of importance were recorded in the Votes under the responsibility of the Speaker; and, although the process was necessarily a hasty one, all would agree that the record was, on the whole, admirably made. He was glad, however, the noble Lord had mentioned the subject, though, at the same time, he must point out that it was not to be supposed that they could arrest the Business of the House in order that the entry might be made.

COLONEL STANLEY said, he was glad to hear that the act resulting in the suspension of a Member would in future be noticed in the Journals of the House. He thought the noble Lord had done good service in drawing attention to the matter.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Speaker whether he would direct the officers of the House to record more fully the nature of the offences committed when Members were suspended?

MR. SPEAKER: The entries in the Journals have hitherto been made according to precedent; but, as my attention has been called to the matter, I will consider the desirability of the change suggested, but I will enter into no engagement.

Mr. CALLAN said, it was desirable that the facts as disclosed in *Hansard* should be placed upon the Journals of the House, in order that the official record might give fully the true grounds of suspension.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, in line 5, by inserting, after the word "committed," the words "by such Member."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved the insertion of the words "except a statement from the Member so named;" the object of the Amendment being to enable a Member before his suspension to make a statement of his case, and, if he pleased, to apologize to the House. A Member might have used language in a moment of passion which he would at once withdraw, and offer an ample apology; and he thought that provision should be made for such cases. He did not expect that this Rule would be used against the Conservative Party, or against the Liberal Party; but it was likely to be applied against Members of the Irish Party, who often used language to which they did not attach the same importance as their audience. He contended that such a *locus pœnitentiæ* ought to be afforded to an offending Member, especially as the penalties involved by suspension were to be considerably increased.

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "except a statement from a Member so named."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would not commit himself to the opinion that in any form this proposal could be adopted; but it could not be adopted in its present form. The word "statement" by no means pointed to apology or withdrawal, and naturally meant an argument by the Member in his own defence. That argument would obviously be directed against the decision of the Presiding Officer; while the Speaker, whose decision was impugned, would have no opportunity of replying.

Mr. Speaker

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he was not suprised that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had not himself appeared in his place to move this Amendment, because it would be found that when this Standing Order was first proposed in 1880, an Amendment was moved by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) very much to the same effect as the present Amendment, and amongst those who voted against it was the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. He hoped that the House would on no account agree to the Amendment. The principal objection to it had been clearly stated by the Prime Minister—that any explanation or statement would naturally take the form of a statement in opposition to the ruling of the Chair, and the Chair would be precluded by the custom of the House from making a reply.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would suggest the introduction of words allowing a Member to withdraw or apologize.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought the Amendment was entitled to a more favourable reception than it had received. Unquestionably the Amendment struck a very grave defect and exposed a very grave injustice in the Resolution of the Government. The Amendment simply pleaded for the right of being heard in self-defence. That was a privilege accorded to the lowest criminals, and yet the Members of the highest Court in the Realm were to be deprived of it. He should like to know for what reason the Government had withdrawn from a more oppressive Resolution a privilege which had been accorded under a Resolution of a less stringent character? It was a great hardship that a constituency should be disfranchised, possibly at the beginning of a Session, because of some momentary or pardonable lapse, perhaps, of temper on the part of hon. Members. He remembered an instance in which an hon. Member was suspended for endeavouring to explain to the Speaker. This was likely to occur, especially in the case of new Members who had no experience of the Rules of the House. If the principle of the Amendment were adopted, he felt sure that in the majority of cases the House would escape a division and the Member be saved the extreme penalty. At the same time he did not think that the Amendment proposed was he most suitable; but he thought it would be easy to find some words which would remove this great blot and defect in the Resolution, and save a good deal of heartburning.

MR. GORST supported the Amendment. A Member ought certainly to have the opportunity of being heard before the House decided to inflict a penalty on him. If the Amendment were withdrawn, he hoped that words would be brought up allowing a Member to make an explanation or apology to the House. He did not anticipate that there would be any abuse of the privilege, and it was contrary to justice to condemn anyone unheard.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, that the hon. and learned Member now contended that it was contrary to justice to condemn any hon. Member for an offence unheard. As had been already pointed out, a precisely similar proposal to this was discussed in the time of the late Parliament, and the hon. and learned Member then took exactly the opposite view to that which he now advocated. [Mr. GORST: No, no!] He (Mr. Chamberlain) had in his hand the Division List for that occasion, and he found the Amendment then moved was to permit any Member who had been Named to offer such explanation, defence, or apology as he should think fit, for a time not exceeding 10 minutes. Against that proposal, which he now supported, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham then voted.

MR. GORST: I am very sorry for it. I must have voted in that way quite inadvertently.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was glad to hear the explanation of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and what was true of the hon. and learned Gentleman was, perhaps, true of the whole Conservative Party, because the whole Conservative Party voted on the occasion in question against the Amendment. No doubt they also voted inadvertently, like the hon. and learned Gentleman. With reference to the observations of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), he would point out that under the Rule, as it was proposed to be amended by the Government, there were three penalties for three different offences. There was suspension for a week, for a month, and for the remainder of the Session. After suffering the first and second penalties, a Member would be able, as contemplated by the existing Rule, to raise his case and have a debate by putting down a Motion calling the decision in question. It was true that he could not debate it at the time of his suspension; but there was nothing to prevent his doing so subsequently. The hon. Member urged that it was desirable that in all cases the person suspended should be permitted to make a statement or apology. But those two things were different. The objection to allowing a Member to make a statement was very well put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote), in the debate to which reference had been made. He said that he did not think it would be reasonable to make a statement without allowing the Speaker or the Chairman to reply to such statements, or perhaps misrepresentations, as were made. It was absolutely impossible to allow a Member to make a statement, which might be an accusation against the Presiding Officer of the House, without allowing him to reply. Then the suggestion of the hon. Member was that, at least, a Member might be allowed to withdraw any statement or expression which his excitement might have betrayed him into making. The answer to that was that he would be allowed to withdraw. It was impossible but that he should be, in the first instance, called upon to withdraw. In the case of the hon. Member who was last suspended by the House, no less than 11 distinct opportunities were given him to withdraw the objectionable words. If the object of hon. Members was only to permit an apology which was not to extend into a general statement, he had to say that that object was amply provided for by the existing Rules.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that if Conservative Members voted against this proposal in the last Parliament, Liberal Members must have voted for it, and the right hon. Gentleman was now opposing what he then supported. ["No, no!"] If the minority was not composed of Liberals, he was at a loss to know who was in that Lobby. He wished to point out that the Rule was now proposed to be made much more severe than formerly. Under the existing Rule, the first suspension was for the Sitting, the second for the Sitting, and the third for a week, with a right to a Member to be heard in his place if a Motion were made to continue his suspension. But, under the Rule as proposed to be amended, the first suspension was to be for a week, the second for a month, and the third for the remainder of the Session; and a Member was not given the opportunity of speaking in his own defence at all. He did not think that the House ought to pass the Resolution unless the Government expressed some intention to modify that part of it denying a Member suspended for a third time the right to be heard.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he contended that a Member Named by the Chair ought to be allowed to make a statement. In several cases of Irish Members being suspended, notably in that of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), who was prevented from finishing his sentence, five minutes' explanation would have prevented any suspension taking place.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, that he had an Amendment to enable Members before suspension for a longer period than one Sitting to make an explanation or apology. The Amendment he proposed would deal with the question more comprehensively than the Amendment before before the House.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 7, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "except a statement from the Member named, strictly confined to explanation or apology."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DODSON said, the Government could not accept the Amendment. It would have the effect of opening the door to an indefinite width, and of practically defeating the object of the Rule.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he rose to move the Amendment to which he had just referred. Its object was to allow a Member Named an opportunity of apologizing before the penalty of suspension for any considerable time was imposed upon him. He explained that the Amendment, while providing that the Member should be suspended during the remainder of the Sitting at which the offence was committed, suspension for a prolonged period should not be inflicted upon him until the House had had time to consider the matter, and the Member had had time to reflect upon the advisability of offering an apology. In the heat of debate Members often used language which they afterwards considered unjustifiable, and it was to give such Members an opportunity of apologizing that he moved the Amendment. He could look at this question from a thoroughly disinterested point of view. He was one of the few Irish Members who had never been suspended. He had never felt it to be his duty to incur the censure of the House; but while saying that he felt in no way entitled to use a word of condemnation against other Irish Members who took a different view of their duty. He was aware at the time that the censure of the House was incurred by many Members that that censure would have been invaluable to him at some future time; for there was nothing so popular in Ireland as to commit some kind of outrage upon the House of Commons; but he had never felt it incumbent for electioneering or any other advantages to incur that censure. He had seen the greatest injustice done to hon. Members who were suspended, and it was to avert that injustice in future that he moved the Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER pointed out that there was a difficulty in putting the Amendment, because it did not fit in with the context. In no preceding part of the Rule was the word "suspension" spoken of.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he made a mistake. He ought to have been placed a few lines lower down in the Resolution.

Mr. NEWDEGATE, in rising to move the following Amendment:—In line 8, leave out all after "service of the House," and insert—

"If such Question, thus put by Mr. Speaker, shall be decided by the House in the affirmative, the suspension of such Member shall continue until the House has further considered it; and Mr. Speaker shall, immediately after such Question has been decided in the affirmative, cause a Notice to be placed on the Notice Paper, to the effect, that at the next Sitting of the House but one, before any other business is taken, Mr. Speaker will put a Question to the House, as to whether such Member be relieved from such suspension, or whether such suspension shall be continued for a further time, or whether any other judgment of the House with respect to such Member shall be pronounced.

A Motion may thereupon be made; not more than two Amendments to such Motion shall be permitted; not more than three Members shall be allowed to speak either upon the Original Motion, or upon any Amendment proposed thereto; and no Member shall be allowed to speak in any such Debate during more than fifteen minutes.

Not more than one Motion for Adjournment shall be permitted while the conduct of the Member, who has been suspended, is under the consideration of the House; not more than two Members shall be allowed to speak upon such Motion for Adjournment, and not longer than during ten minutes.

Should no Motion be made after Mr. Speaker has put the Original Question, the suspension of a Member, to whom Mr. Speaker's Notice relates shall be held to have been terminated.

If notice be taken in a Committee of the Whole House by the Chairman, that a Member has been guilty of persistent obstruction to the business of such Committee, or otherwise, the Chairman may name such Member and put a Question to Report Progress and ask leave to sit again, which Question shall be decided without Debate, Amendment, or Adjournment. If such Question shall be decided in the affirmative, when the House resumes, the Chairman shall forthwith Report to the Speaker, that notice had been taken, that such Member had been guilty of Obstruction, or otherwise, and a Question, that such Member be suspended may be put, as if such offence had been committed in the House itself,"

said, he wished, at the outset, to express his thorough concurrence in the object with which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had proposed the Resolution before the House. He (Mr. Newdegate) had been a Member of the Select Committee on Public Business in 1878: and after having provided that Committee with the statistics which showed the grossly obstructive, and he might say destructive course, pursued by some 20 or 30 hon. Members from Ireland in derogation of the order and efficiency of the House, he (Mr. Newdegate) witnessed the scenes of last year and of the present year. He, therefore, made up his mind that the House ought to revert to the enforcement of its ancient usages and penalties upon disorder. The Standing Order which was adopted at the instance of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), on the 28th of February, 1880, appeared to him from its inception quite inadequate, for it imposed suspension for one night only as the penalty upon the gravest disorder, a penalty which experience had proved totally inadequate. He hoped that the hon. Members who were sitting near him—the Irish section of Home Rulers—would not think that he imputed to them, as individuals, a desire to destroy the efficiency of the House. The hon. Member, who had just addressed the House (Mr. Macfarlane), said, that he had not joined in that unfortunate enterprize; and he (Mr. Newdegate) was convinced the other hon. Members to whom he alluded had entered upon that rash enterprize under influences outside the House, which directed their constituents, and inspired them with a mistaken feeling of outraged patriotism and nationality. The fact of the House being in Session at that period of the year for the purpose of considering what might be done to recover the efficiency of the House afforded evidence enough that the subject was one of importance to the whole United Kingdom. He desired to call attention to this circumstance that both in the Standing Order of the 28th of February, 1880, framed by his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon, whose absence from the House on that occasion he greatly deplored, for he knew that his right hon. Friend concurred generally in the opinion he (Mr. Newdegate) entertained.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. NEWDEGATE, resuming, said, that he was much indebted to the hon. Member for Cavan for having recalled from other occupations so many Members of the House, for it happened to be the hour when Members were necessarily refreshing themselves. He would revert to what he was saying when this interruption took place. Both in the Standing Order framed by his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon, and in the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had proposed, the following words occurred—indeed, the proposals of both the right hon. Gentlemen concluded with the words—

> "Provided always, that nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages."

He (Mr. Newdegate) rejoiced at this testimony to the justice and to the efficiency of the Common Law, which pervaded the usages of the House, and which, in fact, formed the very basis of its discipline. But he had strongly felt, when Notice of this 9th Resolution was given, that it might form the commencement of a different system in the enforcement of the Regulations of the House. Whilst the Standing Order extended only to the suspension of a Member for one night, however serious might be his offence, the principle involved was not worth cavilling about. But now, when it was proposed enormously to increase the penalties which would be imposed by this summary and arbitrary process, he thought it was time that the House should consider whether some adequate notice ought not to be given to hon. Members generally of the intention to inflict these penalties, and not upon hon. Members, but upon constituencies. Suspension for a night was one thing, but suspension for a Session would be a serious deprivation of their representation to any constituency. When, therefore, he remembered in the days gone by, before that coverslut of the ballot had been adopted, how great had been the determination manifested by the House to secure the purity of elections, it was difficult to imagine that the House would abrogate, without due notice and without due deliberation, the representation of any constituency for a Session on account of the action, however reprehensible, of its Representative. Some hon. Members said his Amendment was long. But why was it so long? Because it summarized in outline the ancient usages of the House with respect to its internal discipline, which both the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon, in framing the Standing Order, and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in framing his Amendment, had expressed their desire to retain. His (Mr. Newdegate's) object had been to retain effectual means for enforcing the ancient discipline, and to do this without giving opportunity for Obstruction. When the House came to the infliction of severer penalties upon Members and upon constituencies through their Members, he asked himself, and he asked the House, why should this necessary disciplinary action be an exception from the general system which had long prevailed in the House? Why should those penalties be enforced upon a system alien to that by which the discipline of the House had hitherto been maintained? He was aware that these considerations might not have occurred to many Members of the House; but the senior Members knew the system upon which the internal discipline of the House was founded—that it was founded upon the Common Law of England, and that the same kind of securities for notice, analogous securities for deliberate trial pervaded the ancient usages of the House that pervaded the administration in the highest Common Law Courts. Whilst the penalty was only suspension for one night from the service of the House, there was less reason for objecting to such suspension not being inflicted in a manner that was abrupt and summary. But he asked whether greater precautions for the administration of justice by the giving of due notice and the like were not provided in the higher Courts of Judicature in this country than were deemed necessary in Police Courts and before Justices in Petty Sessions? And why was this? Because the Police Magistrates and the Justices in Petty Sessions could only entertain minor offences and inflict minor penalties; but in proportion as the crimes to be adjudicated upon increased in gravity and the penalties attached to them in weight, so proportionately were the securities and precautions for fairness of trial increased in the higher Courts of Judicature, which hence far outnumbered and outweighed those of the Police Courts and other inferior tribunals. While, then, he concurred in the object of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in providing sufficient means for repressing — aye, for crushing — rebellion in the House, he deprecated the adoption of this drumhead court martial system of administration, this arbitrary infliction of increased penalties. He (Mr. Newdegate) had himself been engaged as a Justice of the Peace in the repression of disturbances in the year 1841, and again in 1848, and had been under the necessity of observing the difference between the Common Law and Military Law. He had had to seek advice and to learn this difference before he engaged in suppressing riot. What was the object in view under the Common Law, and what the system of procedure? The police magistrate or justice acting under the Common Law, when called upon to quell a riot, found that it was their first duty to detect and to arrest the ringleaders; in other words, their duty was to deal with and to repress violence—to detect and repress individual violence or crime. Then, if they failed in this duty, and found that the riot was so serious that measures must be taken against large numbers of rioters, what became their duty? The police magistrate, or two Justices of the Peace present, were bound to give notice that the Riot Act would be read. They were bound to give public notice, so that the mob could hear. And why were they bound to do that? Because the reading of the Riot Act meant this—the suppression of the Common Law by Military Law, and that the responsibility of action was transferred from the civil magistrate to the officer commanding the troops. By proposing that this summary process, this drumhead court-martial process, under which suspension for one night had been inflicted upon Members of the House under the Standing Order, should extend to the greater penalties of suspension for a week, a month, or a Session, they travelled into a different sphere, and were bound to take the same precautions that the higher Courts observed, not unduly to infringe the liberty of the subject. When inflicting heavier penalties the House ought not to dispense with precautions like those observed in the higher Courts; they had no right, in dealing with grave offences, and in meting out enlarged penalties, to adopt the summary jurisdiction exercised by the Police Courts and the Justices in Petty Sessions. He observed, however, with regret, that there was a growing disposition to adopt an arbitrary system of procedure in the House; and it was shown in the Notice which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to deal penally with the Members of the House by sections, and not individually. That betokened the importation of a different Code. It meant the substitution of a system analogous to that of military law, and was totally alien to the system of Common Law, in strict analogy with which the whole of the ancient usages of the House had for centuries provided for the preservation of order in that House. He wished that House to understand that his one chief object in having given Notice of his Amendment was to have the opportunity of expressing these convictions. He feared that the House were on the verge of travelling out of their ancient system. It appeared to him that it was proposed to supersede the foundation of their ancient usages in treating offences of great gravity, by the adoption of another system, an arbitrary and an alien system, which was identified in this country with that of military law. He would ask the House to view the matter in yet another aspect; when he said that a section of Irish Members had brought the House into this difficulty, he meant no offence to the Members from Ireland who were sitting near him, and who, however they might differ from him in opinion, had no reason to doubt his love of fair play. When Mr. Smith O'Brien was to be expelled from the House, Lord Inchiquin, his brother, came and sat by him (Mr. Newdegate). Lord Inchiquin and his brother were now both dead, so he felt he was justified in relating this incident; but Lord Inchiquin said—"I come to sit next you, Newdegate, because I know you will see fair play." These words had left a deep impression on him (Mr. Newdegate). He was afraid that the House was on the verge of giving up the system which had secured fair play, of changing the character of the discipline of the House, and, by doing that, of changing the character of the House itself. That was what he dreaded. Whence had these disturbances arisen? Whence came this rebellion—for he must call it a rebellion—with the representation of which they had had to contend. ["Oh, oh!"] Surely it was a rebellion, when in February, 1881, 36 Members of the House refused to obey the authority of the Speaker in the maintenance of order in the House. That was a rebellion, he repeated—a rebellion which those Members had declared to be an Irish national rebellion, the representation of which those Members had declared that they had imported into that House. He had heard it said that such excesses would never be repeated; he had little or no confidence in these assurances. He put it to the House, what would the Members for England and Scotland have said to anyone who proposed to extend to either or both of these countries the provisions of the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act?

Would they not have found a voice to remonstrate and protest against such an iniquitous, such a dangerous proposal? This drumhead court martial system of imposing penalties was introduced into the House solely to meet the difficulties which the Irish Members, to whom he had adverted, had created; and was it reasonable or just to supersede the Common Law of the ancient usages of this House, which represents the whole of the United Kingdom because they had to deal with a rebellion, he did not speak of it with contempt, which had prevailed only in one section, one province of the United Kingdom; was it right to adopt Rules, the object of which was to change the character of the ancient usages and discipline of the whole House because they had to deal with an exclusively Irish difficulty? They had not done so in their legislation. Why, then, should they do so in their internal discipline? Their Predecessors in the House had respected the dignity of the House not from merely coxcombical feeling or vanity, but because they knew that if the House did not maintain the dignity of its Procedure, forming, as it did, one branch of the highest Court known within the United Kingdom, it could not permanently sustain the free but just exercise of its privileges and authority. He contended, then, that this drumhead court martial system of inflicting heavy penalties without notice for words spoken perhaps at 3 o'clock in the morning and in an excited House was unworthy of the dignity and character of the House, especially as the penalties now proposed were to be sufficient to affect the rights of constituencies. The House had always respected its own dignity as a National Court, because that dignity gave force to its judgments and in treating an individual Member of the House they ought to remember the maxim, that, although each hon. Member was returned for a particular constituency, yet as soon as he entered the House he was Member of the United Kingdom, and in that respect they were all equal. He, for one, then, rebelled against the introduction of this drumhead court martial system. He felt it to be his duty to rebel; and he rebelled by proposing the Amendment now before the House, which, on the part of the House, was a recital and summary of the system and practice under the ancient usages of the House in the penal treatment of its Members. He asked the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to this Amendment on the ground that its object was not to invalidate the action which the right hon. Gentleman proposed, but to give it greater force by maintaining the dignity of the House in action. He would read a passage from *Hatsell's Precedents*, to show how former Houses had acted in the matter of imposing penalties. It was as follows:—

> "When any person is brought to the bar, as a delinquent, to receive judgment of commitment, or any other punishment, or to be discharged out of custody, the Mace must be at the bar, and till the Standing Order of 1772, such person must, of course, have received the Orders of the House upon his knees. The alteration made by that Order was adopted upon the humanity of the House, which often has occasion to inflict punishment on persons, who would be more sensibly affected by this ignominious manner of receiving their sentence than by the severest species of penalty the House can impose. On the 17th and 18th of May, 1614, this Rule is dispensed with in favour of Mr. Martyn, who was reprimanded for an improper speech he had made at the bar, as counsel in a cause; he had been a Member in a former Parliament."

He (Mr. Newdegate) had cited this case, in order to show the House that their Predecessors, who had created and maintained the great position and authority of the House, not merely as a part of the Legislature, but as a part of the highest Court of the Realm, felt deeply the necessity of imposing penalties especially for attacks on the House itself, whether from without or from within, in a manner that was becoming the dignity and the authority of the House when enforcing the penalties they had a right to impose. Thanking the House cordially for permitting him thus to explain his long Amendment, which he had hoped was not only long enough, but clear enough to explain itself to every Member who was at all acquainted with the ancient practice and discipline of Parliament, he begged to move it as it stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "House," to insert the words "if such Question, thus put by Mr. Speaker, shall be decided by the House in the affirmative, the suspension of such Member shall continue until the House has further considered it; and Mr. Speaker shall, immediately after such Question has been decided in the affirmative, cause a Notice to be placed on the Notice Paper, to the effect, that at the nex

Sitting of the House but one, before any other business is taken, Mr. Speaker will put a Question to the House, as to whether such Member be relieved from such suspension, or whether such suspension shall be continued for a further time, or whether any other judgment of the House with respect to such Member shall be pronounced."—(*Mr. Newdegate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had great sympathy with the hon. Member's fidelity to Constitutional principles, with the sincerity with which he entertained those principles, and the candour and fairness which he manifested on many occasions. The hon. Member's regard for those principles had earned him respect in all quarters of the House for the championship of liberty, as he understood it. He (Mr. Gladstone) was no idolator of any of the restraints on their proceedings which had been introduced from time to time during the last 50 years; and he should be happy if they could go back to the Rules of the House as they were when he entered it in 1832. But it had been all along a choice of evils. They had been compelled either to introduce restraints on the liberty which then prevailed, or else to abandon the idea of performing their duty to the country. That was really the key to the proposals which were now made. The objections to the Amendment were insurmountable; it would in itself provide a new instrument of Obstruction more powerful than any the House had at present to contend with. After the suspension was passed, the suspension itself would become a most formidable menace to the carrying on of the Business of the House; because the House was to be involved in a discussion which, in spite of the limitations in the Amendment as to the number of their speakers and the length of their speeches, would occupy two hours and a quarter, and probably longer, from the impossibility of limiting the number of Amendments when the question was opened, so that the House—if in any case it would be so imprudent as to suspend a Member—would in this way itself pay a penalty far more severe than anything proposed to be inflicted upon any offending Member. He did not see how, under the Amendment, a reconsideration of the whole question might not take place which would not be subject to the limitations proposed for the first consideration.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the Premier intended to adhere tenaciously to the scale of penalties laid down in the Resolution? He ventured to hope the Prime Minister would devise some method by which the constituency should not be punished as well as the offending Member.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he was pleased to hear the well-deserved compliment which the Prime Minister had paid to his hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), which had found an echo in every quarter of the House. At the same time, although he quite sympathized with his hon. Friend in the wish to diminish some of the penalties proposed by the Resolution of the Government, he found himself unable to support the Amendment, in view of the inconveniences arising from it which had been pointed out by the Prime Minister.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. GORST moved to insert the words—

"Provided, That, if more than one Member is named in such Resolution, Amendments to omit the name of any such Member shall be allowed."

He desired that the House should have the opportunity, when several Members were suspended, of distinguishing between those who were guilty and those who were innocent. In the early part of the Session, when several Members were suspended together, a right hon. and gallant Friend of his (Sir John Hay) desired to move the omission of the name of the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum), believing, as many other hon. Members believed, that that hon. Member was not concerned in the Obstruction for which his fellow-Members had been suspended. No Motion, however, to that effect was allowed; and his right hon. and gallant Friend was obliged, in his perplexity, to leave the House without voting. When this Rule was proposed by the late Goverment it applied to a single Member, and not to several Members at a time, and the Proviso now submitted was not then necessary; but now that it applied to more than one Member the proposed safeguard seemed only reasonable.

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "House," to insert the words "Provided, That, if more than one

Member is named in such Resolution, Amendments to omit the name of any of such Members shall be allowed."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought it was quite possible to try this question fairly with reference to the past. The hon. and learned Gentleman founded his argument for the Amendment on the allegation of a case that actually happened in which injustice, as the hon. and learned Member thought, was done, because there was not such a power as he now proposed to give. A large number of Members were proscribed, and there was a great difference of opinion in the House as to the relative positions in which the persons Named in that list might be supposed to stand. His answer was that Her Majesty's Government had engaged themselves to provide against the recurrence of such a case. They had engaged to propose words by which constructive or collective Obstruction, in the sense of Obstruction extending over a long period, should be excluded from the operation of the Resolution. Therefore, the argument of the hon. and learned Member on the case of last year fell to the ground. The hon. and learned Member modestly proposed that when Members had been collectively Named there should be a power of moving Amendments. Last year it was deemed to be of the utmost importance by the Government and by nine-tenths of the House of Commons that a certain measure should be passed; and it was found impossible, under the ordinary Rules, to pass it. Rules of Urgency were accordingly devised, and they were to be debated on a particular night. On that night a body of about 34 Gentlemen opposed them resolutely by availing themselves of all the Forms of the House for what they, no doubt, considered imperative reasons. Twenty-seven of them involved themselves in a common act, and were brought into common notice by the Speaker and disposed of by a single vote. In consequence of that single vote the House was able—he thought before 10 o'clock —to get to the Rules of Urgency and to dispose of them, and to bring into operation a system under which, by restraint of individual Members, a Bill of two pages was disposed of in 16 further nights. What would have happened if the present Amendment had been in force? In the case of every one of those 27 Members, a separate Amendment would have been moved to omit his name. Thus, there would have been 27 divisions on 27 different names. Those divisions would have occupied, on the average, at least a quarter of an hour each. Supposing, therefore, that the operation began at 9 o'clock, the House at 4 o'clock in the morning would have found itself ready to proceed with the consideration of the Rules of Urgency. If the House were to retain some authority, it must be on its guard against proposals of this kind, however plausible they might be. Rather than adopt this Amendment, it would be far better to give up trying to deal with collective Obstruction altogether. Supposing that half-a-dozen Members united in violent interruptions and disorderly interruptions to the proceedings of the House, why was the House to be put to the torture and to the loss of public time by dividing on the name of each Member. Constructive Obstruction, going back over the past, the Government were willing and even anxious to abandon; but they were desirous of saving the time of the House, and this they would be unable to do if the Amendment were passed.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he objected to a great deal that had fallen from the Prime Minister, because whatever their desire to hasten Business, there was one thing they ought to put before everything, and that was—they ought to be just. If they were unjust, the result would be to cause angry feelings to arise, which would tend to anything rather than the despatch of Business. The Speaker might accidentally be in error in regard to some of the Members he had Named, and why should not the House have the power of saying so? If such a power were not given, why should any appeal be given to the House at all from the decision of the Speaker. In the case suggested of a disturbance in the House, he might not see who was engaged in it, and might Name someone who had nothing to do with the disturbance. He would not commit a mistake as to the fact of the disturbance; but he might be in error as to whether A, B, and C took part in it. The Chairman, who did not occupy so elevated a position as the

Speaker, was still more liable to make a mistake of that kind. Then, as to the arguments of the Prime Minister that it would take too much time to divide the House, it would take no more time than to divide upon the nomination of a Committee. If an hon. Member objected to a particular name on a Committee he was at liberty to divide the House upon it. It was surely far safer for the House to be at the trouble of going to a division than to allow a man to remain under an unjust accusation. For these reasons, he should vote for the Amendment.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he thought the whole fallacy lay in supposing that upon the occasion of the suspension of a Member the House would be in the same calm state as it was at present. It was quite possible for the Chairman, after having been goaded into action by the comments of the newspapers, to make a sudden display of vigour by rushing into violent extremities and suspend a Member even for voting. On the former occasion so much referred to, when he was about to vote in one of the divisions, a communication reached him from the Table asking him whether he wished to be suspended; and he believed that he would have been suspended by the present Chairman for voting had he not first taken the precaution of consulting the late Chairman (Mr. Raikes) in the Lobby as to whether he could be suspended merely for voting, when the right hon. Member advised him that it would be perfectly safe for him to vote, and had he not communicated that opinion to the authorities of the House. He believed himself that under no circumstances whatever could a Member be suspended for voting. The House ought to be very careful how it passed a Rule of this kind, for to suspend a Member who was innocent of Obstruction would be a very serious matter.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he thought that, having regard to the language of the Rule, it must mean one Member; for if it had meant more than one it would have said "Member or Members." They ought, however, to have a distinct understanding from the Government whether, under this Standing Order, more than one Member could be suspended at a time by the decision of the Speaker or Chairman, or whether under it there could be a recurrence of what took place last Session, when the hon. Member for Kilkenny was suspended with others at the particular moment that he happened to be in a railway train travelling to Ireland. If that was the case, he should vote for the Amendment. If, on the other hand, the Rule meant the suspension of an individual Member, he would be satisfied, and would not go into the Lobby against the Government.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, it was sometimes a difficult matter for the Chair to distinguish between positive Obstruction and mere noise, and this might lead to Members being suspended by mistake. He thought, therefore, there ought to be some means of reviewing the decision of the Chair as to any particular Member or Members affected by it. He was very averse to collective suspension being put in force under this Rule, and he thought the expenditure of a little time to remedy any injustice that might arise from a suspension of that kind ought to be allowed.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had cast a ghastly glare on the proceedings connected with the passing of the Coercion Bill through the House, and had, moreover, afforded a remarkable argument in favour of the Motion of his hon. and learned Friend. Many accusations had been made against the present Chairman of Committees; but if the charge made by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway was correct, he defied anyone to point to anything more serious than this. Surely the Prime Minister, if he heard these charges, could not sit still under them.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not catch what the hon. and gallant Member said.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, then he would repeat it. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway had stated that he had consulted his right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes) as to whether he could be suspended for voting. The right hon. Gentleman informed him that he believed he would be perfectly safe. But the hon. and gallant Member went on to say that, even under those circumstances, if he had not fortified himself by the opinion of Mr. Raikes and communicated with the authorities of the House he would have been suspended;

and he made the further startling statement that he received a communication from the Chair to know whether he wished to be suspended. [An hon. MEMBER: From the Table.] Well, from the Table was from the Chair. They knew that those who sat at the Table were the advisers of the Chairman, and were the channels of communication between the Chairman and Members of the House. And positively that was the way in which the present Chairman of Committees interpreted the Rule of the right hon. Member for North Devon; he sent messages to hon. Members to know whether they wished to be suspended. Now, he wanted to know why the Chairman of Committees, in face of the serious criticisms passed on his actions by almost every independent Member, did not come forward in the House and explain his conduct instead of hovering about the Lobby? Was it that the Prime Minister had forbidden him to speak? If, after that statement of the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Galway, the Chairman of Committees did not come to the Table and flatly deny that he had ever made such a communication, he had proved himself totally incapacitated and unfit to discharge with impartiality and fair play the high duties intrusted to him; and if the Chairman persistently abstained from meeting those charges, he defied the House and the Government, with any appearance of justice or reason, to refuse to accede to the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend.

MR. DODSON said, he had heard with considerable astonishment and no little regret the tone and language in which the noble Lord had thought fit to reflect on the conduct of the Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means, not on the strength of anything which the noble Lord knew himself, but of something which he had heard from someone else.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: It was based on a statement made in this House.

MR. DODSON repeated, that it was not founded on anything known to the noble Lord himself, but on what he had heard from someone else; and the story had probably lost nothing in intensity in its repetition by the noble Lord. The Prime Minister had already pointed out that the danger apprehended by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) would not occur, because the Resolution, as amended and proposed to be amended, did not apply to that which was understood as constructive Obstruction, but only to an act committed at the time and immediately noticed by the Speaker, whether it was committed by one Member or by several Members. The case mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) could not possibly arise under the Rule as amended or proposed to be amended. It was said that the Speaker or Chairman might make a mistake as to the action of a Member or a certain number of Members; and, therefore, there ought to be a power of moving Amendments to the Naming of more than one Member. Now, the occupant of the Chair was better placed for seeing and observing than the vast majority of Members in the House could be, because he occupied a central position. But the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham would go to render the proposed Rule absolutely nugatory, if it was to apply at all to collective action. It was asked what kind of collective action could there be by which an act contrary to the Rules was committed jointly by several Members present together. Now, the refusal of a certain number of Members to leave the House and take part in a division would be an act coming within the Rule. Again, if several Members rose tumultuously in their places and interrupted the Business by disorderly words or exclamations, that would come under the amended Rule. Under the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham there might not only be a division on each name, but, as he read it, there might also be a debate. ["No!"] The hon. and learned Member shook his head; but there were no words in his Amendment which would exclude a debate and a division on each name, and its effect would be to render the Rule, as far as collective action went, entirely nugatory.

MR. PARNELL said, he was not easy in his mind as to the effect of the Rule even when altered in the way proposed by the Prime Minister. Further on he should be very glad to know the ruling of the Chair as to whether Members rising in their places for the purpose of supporting the claim for a division upon what might be considered a dilatory Motion could be in any case held to be guilty of an act of Obstruction, either as regarded the particular act of so rising in their places, or as regarded any previous act of theirs which might be taken in connection with it. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had informed the House that he only escaped suspension on a certain night because he was able to communicate to the Chair the opinion of a Gentleman who had been a high authority (Mr. Raikes), and that he had every reason to believe that if the Chair had not been fortified, or, at all events, prevented by the communication of that opinion, he would have been suspended on the occasion in question because he had taken part in a particular division, though not in the debate. For himself, looking to the fact that there was only one occasion—a very remarkable occasion—when, under very exceptional circumstances, the Government would have desired to use that Rule to suspend a batch of Members, and that they now proposed so largely to extend the period of suspension, and remembering also that they had a number of new Rules to which the Government attached great value, he thought it might be better to dispense altogether with the power of suspending Members collectively. If once the power of suspending large numbers of men was granted, that power might easily be abused. Were Members who rose in their seats to demand a division on a Motion relative to the suspension of an Obstructive Member, or who voted on the Motion, to be guilty of Obstruction? If the Government would give up their claim to suspend Members collectively, there would be no risk; and, in his opinion, it would have been better to have occupied the time that the separate divisions would have taken on that well-known occasion than to have strained the existing Rule, and given rise to all the debate that had subsequently taken place upon it.

MR. COURTNEY said, that, with reference to the statement of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway, as he understood it, it came to this. The hon. and gallant Member was afraid on a certain occasion that if he voted he would be suspended, and, being in doubt, he got a communication in the Lobby.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: From the Table.

MR. COURTNEY: In the Lobby.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: It came from the Table.

MR. COURTNEY: The hon. and gallant Member can correct me. He said he received a communication in the Lobby—[*Cries of* "Table!"]—from the Table from someone, I do not know who——

COLONEL NOLAN: What I said was that I got a communication from the Table. I have no objection to give the name; but I think it is unnecessary. A Clerk at the Table came up to me in the Lobby—there was nothing in it of the nature of a private interview—and spoke to me, and the impression left on my mind was that if I gave that vote I should be suspended.

MR. COURTNEY said, he was quite willing to accept the correction for what it was worth. It did not matter in the least. The important point was this. The noble Lord said the Chairman communicated the opinion to the hon. Member——

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said the communication came through the ordinary channels of communication between the Chair and hon. Members.

MR. COURTNEY said, that, whatever the importance of the matter was, his right hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair)—who was in the House in the early part of the evening—not being in a good state of health, had left the House an hour and a-half since, knowing nothing about this matter being brought up; but, as a matter of course, his attention would be directed to it, and at the earliest opportunity he would explain what share he had had in such an extraordinary transaction. For the present, he appealed to the House to regard this as a story to be received with caution; he did not mean to say anything of an unpleasant character to the hon. and gallant Member until the Chairman of Committees had made his statement. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had stated a good many inconveniences which would result from the Rule; but he had fairly admitted there were some arguments in its favour. In his own opinion, the reasons which had been adduced against the Speaker or the Chairman having the right to Name any number of Members collectively were not sufficient to justify the House in refusing to accord the power.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER, as one who formed one of the majority on the occasion to which reference had been made, when a number of hon. Members had been suspended, wished to state that he was present all night, and believed at the time that the Chairman took the proper course. He believed that was also the feeling of nearly all hon. Members present on the occasion.

Mr. RYLANDS felt it was inconvenient to pursue this matter further in the absence of the Chairman of Committees. With regard to the Amendment, he thought it was objectionable. He appealed to the Government to give up the power of Naming Members collectively. The exercise of the power would lead to great inconvenience. If six or eight Members were Named, and one were included whom an hon. Member believed to be innocent, he ought to vote in favour of permitting all to escape rather than that one innocent man should be punished. It would be turning a judicial act of the House into a farce if the House were to be called upon to decide upon a collective number of Members, some of whom a Member called upon to vote believed to be innocent, and some guilty.

Mr. W. H. SMITH joined in the appeal of the hon. Member for Burnley. On behalf of the framers of the Rule of 1880, he might say that it never was intended to be applied collectively. Many of them, no doubt, supported the application of the Rule when it was so applied; but they did so because they felt it their duty to support the Chair in the maintenance of order. If it was necessary that there should be the power of Naming Members collectively, it ought to be in the power of the House to object to the suspension of an individual Member, who, in their opinion, ought not to be punished. No doubt the Speaker or Chairman had a far better means of judging of the action of hon. Members than hon. Gentlemen in other parts of the House; but no one could deny that the Speaker or Chairman was, like others, liable to be mistaken.

Mr. GLADSTONE rose to point out what would be the convenient course to pursue. The Government were of opinion, and the House would be of opinion, that the fair question to raise was the question whether there should be collective action or not. It was undeniable that under the Amendment not only would there be, or might be, an Amendment upon every name, but a debate on every Amendment, and they would be involved in confusion worse confounded. He had upon the Paper a Notice of the following Proviso, which he intended to move later on:—

> "Provided, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly committed an act for which they are named."

It would be open to any hon. Member to move that the words from "useless" to the end of that Proviso be omitted. If this were done the question of whether there should be collective action might be raised, and the present discussion could terminate.

Mr. O'DONNELL remarked, that the whole of the Government argument was in favour of saving the time of the House at the expense of justice to individual Members. As an Irish Member he was not very much afraid of the collective suspension, for he believed there might be many circumstances in the history of Ireland when one of the best things that could possibly happen for the Irish national cause would be for the whole of the Irish National Party to be expelled from the House *en bloc.* He thought that the question of the suspension of Members collectively could only be properly investigated by a Committee. He himself had been wrongfully suspended for simply calling attention to the disturbance going on on the other side of the House. If that were so, how much greater was the risk of improper suspension where that suspension was collective?

Mr. GREGORY said, he felt that there was great force in what had been urged in respect of the individual Naming of Members; and he felt considerable difficulty in regard to the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), because it appeared to him that it was a contradiction in terms of what had already been done. They had already passed that part of the Standing Order which declared that no Amendment, Adjournment, or Debate should be allowed; and they were now asked to insert a Proviso which was in express contradiction to that, because it would allow a debate on the Naming of any Member declared to be guilty of an offence. Therefore, if the Amendment were passed, it would be necessary to amend the preceding part of the Standing Order in that respect. It appeared to him that, as the Amendment stood, a debate might be raised upon the name of every individual Member. He quite concurred in what had been said as to the propriety of the House having an opportunity of carrying to a division the case of an individual Member if it was thought that a mistake had been made. He thought that was a proper right to reserve for the House; but he also thought that it would be a source of great inconvenience if any debate were to be allowed upon a Motion of that kind, and they ought carefully to guard against anything which would permit a discussion to be raised in that respect. What he would suggest to his hon. and learned Friend was that he should adopt the suggestion of the Prime Minister and reserve the Amendment for a future part of the Resolution. He was not quite sure that the discussion would come on regularly, as the Prime Minister had suggested, upon his own Resolution; but he thought it would be better to reserve it until they reached the end of the Resolution. It would then be regular to move, after passing a Resolution requiring the Presiding Authority to Name Members *seriatim*, that the decision might be challenged on each name without discussion or debate. That would be analogous to what happened in the case of the nomination of Select Committees. Such an alteration of the Resolution would prevent anything in the nature of undue discussion or undue delay; and he hoped the suggestion he threw out would meet the assent of his hon. and learned Friend.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that all the House needed in that discussion was some clear definition from the Government of the difference between the terms "constructive Obstruction" and "collective Obstruction." Constructive Obstruction, in the language of the Prime Minister, was the kind of Obstruction dealt with by the Chairman of Committees in the case which had been referred to that evening; whereas collective Obstruction was a new kind of Obstruction proposed to be dealt with by this Rule. But the only definition yet given by the Prime Minister of collective Obstruction was that it was to be a "common act committed in the presence of the House." That was precisely the reason on which the Chairman of Committees and the Ministry based their defence of the suspension of the 23 Members early in this Session, and it was very important that the matter should be elucidated by Her Majesty's Government. With regard to the suggestions which had fallen from the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), in criticizing the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he certainly could not agree with the hon. Gentleman that the suspension of a Member was not a fitting subject for debate. Suspension was now proposed to be a much more serious affair than it had ever been before; and, having regard to the effect of this suspension upon Members themselves, and also upon the constituencies they represented, which might be for a week or a month, or even longer, deprived of representation, he thought there could not be a more fitting subject for debate by the House than a Motion for the suspension of a Member. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that the better course would be for the Government to withdraw the collective proposition, and leave only the power of suspending Members individually, if, in the opinion of the House, they had committed the offence with which they were charged. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke from the Front Bench on that side of the House (Sir R. Assheton Cross) very forcibly stated that there was one consideration even more important than the time of the House, and that was the claims of justice. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in that view, and he was of opinion that that was a point which required the consideration of the Government. The deposition of Members under the New Rules might be a very serious matter indeed; and the saving of a little time, which was the main reason given by the Prime Minister why Members should be suspended *en masse*, without debate or consideration, seemed to leave out of sight all the more important elements of the case. He should like to hear from the Government, before the House came to a decision upon the question, whether some attempt at least would be made to define the real difference between collective and obstructive opposition.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had only one word to say with regard to the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory). He thought that it was a very pertinent suggestion indeed; but he thought his hon. Friend had omitted one thing when he said there should be no debate. There must be a debate in order to show why one man should not be suspended, and why another should. If there was collective action, and five or six hon. Members were to be suspended, and the House thought that one of those Members had been unjustly Named, surely it ought to be in the power of an hon. Member to state the reason why he thought such Member had not been properly Named. If no such opportunity were afforded, the Division Bell would ring, Members would come into the House from the Lobbies, the Government Whips would tell them that a Member had been Named by the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, and they would have no opportunity of knowing why such particular Member had been singled out for suspension, and why another should not be suspended. He ventured to say that this question of collective action required far more consideration than it had hitherto received. The House was certainly not in a position, at this moment, to come to any decision upon the matter. The only decision they could come to was, whether the Government were prepared to withdraw that part of the Amendment which provided that there should not be collective action, but single action against Members individually. He believed there was not a single man in that House who would not agree that when an hon. Member offended against the ruling of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees he ought to be severely punished; but when they came to the question of collective action they ought to give a decision upon so momentous a question that should neither be hastily arrived at nor involve the alteration of the Rule before it had been long in operation. He would therefore appeal to the Government, even at the last moment, to reconsider their position. The House had now been engaged upon this question throughout the whole of yesterday and to-day; and he gathered that the general opinion of the House was in favour of continuing that which had been effectively tried before. It was certainly not the intention of the existing Rule that collective action should be taken; and the Rule as it was now framed had hitherto prevented, to a great extent, that Obstruction of which there had been so many and such loud complaints. He ventured to hope that the House would maintain the intention with which the Standing Order was first framed, and would decide upon dealing with Members individually instead of collectively.

Mr. NEWDEGATE expressed a hope that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) would not divide the House upon this question, and for this reason—that if he divided the House, the House would affirm the principle of collective punishment even before it had been proposed by the Government. Now, what was the idea of collective punishment? For his own part, he had a great aversion to collective punishment. He did not know how they managed in the Birmingham Caucus, but in North Warwickshire they were apt to treat individuals according to their merits; and he thought it was not too much to state, even for Members of that House who represented the people of the United Kingdom, that they ought to be treated, and treat each other, according to their individual merits or demerits, and that they should not be treated collectively as if they were hodfuls or spadefuls of criminal mortar. He thought they ought to enjoy the privilege of limited liability.

Mr. WARTON wished to point out to the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) that it seemed to him the principle of constructive Obstruction had gone, because the words which had been used by the Government upon the proposition of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) had immediately given the death-blow to constructive Obstruction. In regard to collective Obstruction, he thought there was great force in the recommendations which had been made by several hon. Members. He did not entirely agree with the Proviso of the

Prime Minister; but he did think that that Proviso, if modified in the manner proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), would effect what the House desired. He hoped the hon. and learned Member would withdraw the Amendment for the present, because he thought it would be far better to discuss it upon the proposition of the Government when they came to line 22 of the Standing Order.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, the matter was one of so serious a nature that at that late hour he thought they ought to adjourn the debate in order that the question might be further considered. The present Resolution was being obtained very much in the same manner as the 1st Resolution. The Government were anxious to keep in their hands the power of suspending Members collectively, in order that they might be able to hold it *in terrorem* over the heads of a small minority, in the same manner as they introduced the 1st Rule of the *clôture* to enable them to enforce their will over a larger minority. No argument had been adduced by the Government that in any way tended to elucidate the mode in which they contemplated the application of the Resolution; and, under these circumstances, without going into detail upon the question, which had already been ventilated thoroughly and at some length on the Conservative side of the House, he would move the adjournment of the debate, in order to give the Government an opportunity of reconsidering the matter, and of urging any arguments they might have to put forward in support of their views.

Mr. BIGGAR seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Baron Henry de Worms.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had endeavoured last night to make it perfectly clear to the House that the Government had abandoned all idea of setting up in the future any doctrine of constructive Obstruction, and he felt that he had been successful in that endeavour. He certainly regarded the action of the hon. Member who had just sat down, in moving the adjournment of the debate, as some evidence of constructive Obstruction to the progress of Business, which might, under other circumstances, have been brought before the House. He failed to understand upon what special ground the hon. Member asked for further delay. What was the Question before the House? No doubt there were two issues of considerable importance; one was whether they would abandon altogether all idea of constructive Obstruction, although retaining in the Standing Order the power of dealing with collective Obstruction; and the second question was, whether collective Obstruction or a collective offence against the Standing Order, was to be retained in the Order, and the penalties applied individually by a separate division in each case. No doubt those were questions of very considerable importance; but what the Government were arguing now was that they should be taken in their proper place. It was recently suggested by the Prime Minister, and the suggestion was accepted by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), that the only convenient way of raising this important question would be to allow the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) to be withdrawn, and to take the first question, whether there should be any collective offence at all, when they came to line 22 of the Resolution. If the House saw fit to adopt the proposal of the Prime Minister, and to retain the idea of a collective offence, then the further question would be raised whether or not there should be a separate division on each name. He failed to understand how the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) could reasonably ask for further delay; and it certainly seemed to him that there could be no excuse for proposing to the House the postponement of the further progress of the Resolution.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) had moved the adjournment of the House on an extremely intelligible principle—namely, for the purpose of resisting, and he (Lord Randolph Churchill) hoped of resisting successfully, for the third or fourth time, these continued attempts on the part of the Government to mystify the House of Commons on these points. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had proposed an Amendment which directly raised the question of collective suspension. [" Order! "] He believed that he was perfectly in Order in answering the remarks of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), who had called in question the position taken up by several Members of the House. Her Majesty's Government refused to tell the House what was in their minds in regard to their own Amendment, which was to be proposed by the Prime Minister later on; and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) asked the Government to proceed with the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) without having the slightest knowledge of what the intentions of the Government were, or what the Government were likely to do. Now, he ventured to say that that was altogether an extravagant demand, and he did not think the House ought to agree to it. The Motion of his hon. Friend was intended as a protest against the continued refusal on the part of the Government, on a Rule of this kind, to take the House of Commons as a body into their confidence, and tell them exactly what their intentions were. [" Order! "] When he was out of Order, he had no doubt the Speaker would remind him of the fact. He was dealing directly with the answer of the right hon. Member for Birmingham to the Motion of his hon. Friend (Baron Henry de Worms). He also wished to urge in support of the Motion for Adjournment that, in consequence of the extraordinary disclosure made that night by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), the House was not really in a position to come to a decision on the point now raised by his hon. and learned Friend until they should have heard an explanation, if such could be given, by the Chairman of Committees. On these two grounds —namely, the refusal of the Government to state their intentions, notwithstanding the numerous appeals which had been made to them, and the absence of any explanation from the Chairman of Committees, he should support the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the noble Lord was so habitually rash and reckless in the statements and charges he made that he would take no notice whatever of the imputation that the Government were continually trying to mystify the House. The noble Lord, in making such charges, appeared to aim at establishing for himself the reputation of a privileged person, and he should not attempt to compete with the noble Lord in that respect. He would therefore pass by all imputations of that kind. But the noble Lord said that they ought to adjourn the debate, because the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees was not present. Now, the matter with respect to the Chairman of Committees was that he had been directly or indirectly, seriously or partially, accused with respect to his conduct in the Chair; but that was a matter which could not possibly affect the Resolution or the conduct of the House, if they should accede to the proposal to shut out entirely the idea of constructive Obstruction; and the reason given by the noble Lord was not applicable to the matter. The noble Lord made another great charge against the Government. He said that they would not take the House into their confidence about the Amendment which they intended to propose at the close of the Resolution. The noble Lord talked about mystifying the House, because the Government would not, on one Amendment to the Standing Order, discuss every other Amendment likely to be brought forward, and because they would not consent to discuss matters that were altogether irrelevant. He (Mr. Gladstone) had stated as plainly as possible upon the question of constructive Obstruction that although it was a question upon which Her Majesty's Government had an opinion, they had no idea of dealing with it in the Resolution. He did not think that it was by penal Resolutions that a matter of that kind could be dealt with satisfactorily. He was no believer in penal Resolutions, but it was to other means he looked for vindicating the power of the House. Still it was the opinion of the Government that the Resolution was necessary, and they were prepared to state their opinions and abide by the judgment of the House. At any rate, do not let the House adopt this Amendment, which provided a plan which, whether in regard to single Obstruction or collective Obstruction, they ought not to adopt, because it would only make the matter a good deal worse than either of the two plans before the House. All they said was, let the House discuss the question apart from collateral issues which introduced elements of confusion and indirectly affected the question of constructive Obstruction. Let them, by all means, proceed to discuss the question at once, and not be obstructed by the Motion for Adjournment which had been moved by the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms).

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, the House was occupied for some time last night in discussing the question whether constructive Obstruction should be recognized and punished or not. After the debate had gone on for some time, and the feeling of the House was manifest against that proposition, Her Majesty's Government wisely and properly gave way. The result was that constructive Obstruction ceased to be a matter for consideration. They had now been engaged for a long time that evening upon the question of collective Obstruction; and he was very sanguine indeed that if they did not precipitate matters, if they did not excite the two sides of the House to a serious conflict, they would before very long find that collective Obstruction would follow the fate of constructive Obstruction. He was very anxious, therefore, that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) should withdraw his Amendment, which he thought his hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) had conclusively shown was only calculated to prejudice that full and free and amicable discussion upon collective Obstruction which it was desirable they should enter upon. He thought there could be no doubt that if they adopted the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham they would really prejudge the case. He, therefore, ventured to appeal to his hon. and learned Friend to take that stumbling-block out of their path in order that they might come to the consideration of the real question at issue. Then his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) had moved the adjournment of the debate. He feared that such a Motion would not tend to that calm and judicial consideration of the question which was so desirable; and, therefore, he would simply suggest to his hon. Friend that the House would be a great gainer if he were to withdraw his Motion.

Mr. GORST said, he was afraid that the Speaker would not allow to him the same indulgence which he had accorded to the Leaders on both Benches, of discussing the merits of his Amendment on the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. He would, therefore, modestly confine himself to the Question before the House—namely, the question of the adjournment of the debate; and he would state why he thought the adjournment of the debate would be extremely convenient. If they adjourned the debate, when the House met to-morrow, it was possible that Her Majesty's Government might have made up their minds whether they would or would not adhere to collective Obstruction. He had been asked in the course of the evening to withdraw his Amendment, on the ground that the Government were going to give way. His answer to that was that, when they did give way, then he would withdraw his Amendment. He thought if they had an adjournment of the debate, so that when the House met again to-morrow the Government would be in a position to announce whether they adhered to collective Obstruction or not, there would be no difficulty in knowing what to do with the Amendment, because if the Government gave up collective Obstruction to-morrow he would at once withdraw the Amendment; whereas, if, on the other hand, when the House met to-morrow, the Government still adhered to their proposal in regard to collective Obstruction, then, to use the language of his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), it would be necessary in the interests of justice, inconvenient as it might be, that his Amendment should be submitted to the House. Upon these grounds, it seemed to him very desirable that they should have an adjournment, so that when they met to-morrow they might know exactly what the intentions of the Government were.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 24; Noes 132: Majority 108.—(Div. List, No. 388.)

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 55; Noes 103: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 389.)

[*Twenty-sixth Night.*]

Mr. GLADSTONE said, with regard to the important question of penalties which they were now approaching, that although he did not expect the House to give judgment on the whole question that night, he hoped they would be able to come to a conclusion on the first Amendment he should move, which would merely effect an alteration in the structure of the Standing Order, without committing hon. Members to any subsequent alteration. While upon this subject he thought it would be for the convenience of the House that he should state what were the opinions of Her Majesty's Government in connection with it. On making the first preliminary Motion he said that, in their opinion, taking the Rule as it stood, it was of vital consequence, in order to make it consistent and effective, that they should strengthen the penalties employed, and that there was a total absence of equality between the machinery put in action and the trouble entailed upon the House by the hon. Member who was the object of it, he having to suffer a few hours' suspension, and the House having to go through the confusion consequent upon the interruption of its proceedings. He said also that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, there should be an ascending scale of penalties. Those were the two fundamental propositions he had laid down. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said—"See how effective this Rule has really been, for no one has ever committed a third offence." But, for his part, he used that fact in a sense exactly the reverse of its application by the right hon. Gentleman. The third offence did entail a substantive and sensible punishment, and in that sense it might be said that this portion of the Rule had been effective, because Members had avoided coming within it. But the punishment of going home an hour or two earlier than usual was no punishment at all; and, accordingly, it was found that the first offence was committed frequently, and the second by no means rarely. Her Majesty's Government therefore thought it right to propose the introduction of a substantial punishment for the first offence. He would say nothing in regard to collective Obstruction, which had virtually passed from the view of the House. They had secured that whatever was done should be done upon the committal of the offence. But for the Obstruction which the House should deem to be a fit subject of punishment, the Government contended that there ought to be a substantive punishment, which would produce its effect, and they did not think that less than a week could be named as fulfilling that idea. With regard to the second and third offences, he thought it would probably meet the judgment of the House if they proposed a fortnight's suspension for the former, and for the latter a suspension of one month.

Amendment proposed, in line 8, to leave out the words "during the remainder of that day's sitting."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he accepted the proposed amendment of the Standing Order on the understanding that it involved a mere matter of drafting. As far as he was personally concerned, he agreed that it was better that all these punishments should proceed upon a scale; and he expressed his great gratification that the Government had taken into their consideration the recommendations made a few days ago, and modified the scale of penalties, although he desired to reserve any further opinion until the subject of the wording of the Rule was brought forward. He wished to point out that the Prime Minister had failed to draw a correct inference from an argument used by him on a former occasion, with reference to the third offence, which it was his intention to show had not been committed, notwithstanding the mildness of the penalty which it entailed.

Mr. ONSLOW asked what was the real meaning of the term "service of the House?" An hon. Member, sitting on a Committee upstairs, might say on a Wednesday, when the House met at 12—"Come down, and at 2 o'clock be ruled by Mr. Speaker to have obstructed the Business of the House, and suspended from that time from the service of the House." But it might be that the Committee upstairs wanted his vote, and that without him a quorum could not be formed, as a consequence of which important Business might fall through. Therefore, he asked whether the suspension of a Member from the service of the House included his suspension also from service on Committee upstairs? If he were allowed to vote on such Committee, it appeared to him anomalous that he should not also be allowed to record his vote downstairs.

MR. SPEAKER: I apprehend that the suspension of a Member from the service of the House would also include his suspension from service on Committee.

MR. SEXTON regarded the Amendment as something more than a mere matter of construction of the Rule. It was the first of a series of Amendments involving an increase of penalties; however, in view of the statement of the Prime Minister, he did not propose to offer any objection.

MR. WARTON considered the announcement of the Prime Minister a fair and just one, but, at the same time, reserved to himself the right of future judgment in this matter.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *omitted*.

Further Consideration of the Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, as amended, *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 22nd November, 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 22nd November, 1882.

QUESTIONS.

NAVY—THE NAVAL RESERVES.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Amiralty, If it is intended to lay upon the Table of the House a Report of the condition of the Naval Reserves while under the command of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh; if so, when he anticipates being able to place the same in the hands of Members?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, it is only to-day that His Royal Highness has handed over his duties to his successor, and submitted his Report to the Board of Admiralty, and I cannot give an answer to this Question until there has been time to consider the Report.

MR. GOURLEY said, he would repeat his Question next week.

THE EGYPTIAN WAR FUND—COMMITTEE.

MR. GOURLEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been called to a circular issued by the Egyptian War Fund Committee asking for public subscriptions for the support of the families of the killed and wounded in the late Egyptian War; and, if he would take into consideration whether provision should not be made with this object rather out of public funds than out of private charity?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, it is rather difficult to answer this Question, especially in the absence of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, with whom I have not had an opportunity of consulting. The State has certain rules of service and of remuneration for those who serve the Queen in the Army; and, with regard to cases of wounds and deaths in action, all these things are dealt with regularly and by fixed rules; and I own it appears to me, speaking for myself, to be of the greatest importance that they should be dealt with by fixed rules. I do not know much of the scheme which has been published for a public subscription in support of families; but I am by no means prepared to say, if there be occasion for such a public scheme, that it ought to be superseded by public grants. Whatever is done ought to be done by proper system and method; and unless proper system and method are provided, I do not think the State ought to interfere. The hon. Gentleman will recollect that where many lives have been lost—as, for instance, in the Crimean War—very large sums of money have been raised by public subscription for the purpose of meeting the necessities of the case; and that is a system which has been established by abundant precedents in this country.

Mr. GORST asked whether the Royal Patriotic Fund was not administered by a Royal Commission, and whether it ought not to be so administered as to make provision for the cases contemplated in the Question of the hon. Member?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, it was certainly the case that the fund was administered by a Commission created by the Crown. To the other part of the hon. and learned Member's Question, he should prefer not to give a precise answer until he should have had an opportunity of examining into the matter. He suggested that the hon. and learned Member should repeat the Question on a future day.

NOTICE.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—SPECIAL GRANTS TO SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AND SIR BEAUCHAMP SEYMOUR.

Mr. GOURLEY gave Notice that when the Government moved the special grants to Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Beauchamp Seymour, he would call attention to the subjects of these grants.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he had already stated that the Government had under consideration what should be done in regard to the Forces generally employed in the way of recognition of their services.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: Sir, I trust the House will allow me to make an explanation with reference to an incident in the debate last night. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) has used very strong expressions about my continued absence for some time from the House during these discussions. That I have been absent is quite true; but I have been suffering from very severe illness, and I am only convalescent now. Yesterday I was in the House from 4 till 10. I did not sit on the Front Bench, but remained behind, where I could more conveniently rest. At 10 o'clock I felt very much exhausted, and, knowing that I could not take part either in the discussion or in the divisions, I went home. After my departure the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) stated that on some occasion he received a message from the Clerk of the House to the effect that if he should vote he would incur the risk of suspension. ["No!"] My source of information is the report in *The Times* this morning. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway assumed, and, I believe, asserted that the message on the occasion to which he referred was a message from the Chair. Now, I wish to state, in the most emphatic language that I can use, that I never heard of the incident until I read the hon. and gallant Member's speech in *The Times* this morning. It is not the practice of the Chair to send messages by the Clerks to any individual Members. They would not take such messages. If the Chairman has to communicate with any hon. Member, he always communicates by note, which is sent through the hands of a messenger. Therefore, I do not understand the story at all. I have no doubt that the hon. and gallant Member for Galway is under the impression that he received some communication from a Clerk at the Table. I cannot question his belief. It is not my duty to defend the Clerks at the Table; but knowing as I do the great ability with which they discharge the duties of their office, and their knowledge of the Rules of the House, I do not in the least comprehend the story. I can only say most emphatically that I had no participation in or knowledge of the matter. I cannot conceive any human being—much more anyone acquainted with the Rules of the House—who could by any possibility look upon voting as in any degree an act of Obstruction. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock has censured me because I have not taken part in these discussions. Now, I have abstained from speaking with a set purpose, and I know, Sir, that you entirely approve my reserve. Hon. Members have a right to pass criticisms upon the conduct of the Chair; but we think that it would not be proper for the Chairman to engage in any general discussion containing criticisms upon his Office. I should, however, like to refer to a speech delivered last Thursday, during my enforced absence from the House. I should like to make another personal explanation with reference to that speech, the question involved being a question of fact and not an opinion. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) stated that on some occasion I was heard by someone in the Lobby to say that I would have called to Order or suspended —I do not exactly know which—the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) if he had not been a Member of such great influence and connected with *The Times* newspaper. I should like to assure the hon. Member for Birkenhead—I am quite certain that it is not necessary that I should assure the House—that there is not a particle of foundation for such a statement. I have nothing further to say except that, if I have not given a sufficiently emphatic denial to both stories, I should be very glad to find other words by which to express with still greater strength that there is not the smallest shred or atom of foundation for such statements.

COLONEL NOLAN: Sir, unfortunately the Chairman of Ways and Means was absent from the House last evening. I had only recently returned from Ireland, and I was not aware whether he was in or out of the House, and I think it right to point out that the incident referred to was only a portion of a short speech I made—perhaps one-fourth, at most, of the speech I made. I by no means brought forward the incident as a charge against anybody, but simply as an argument or illustration. The House last night went solely upon that portion of my speech, and the papers have reported nothing else. It is only fair that I should state this in order to show the House, and incidentally the public, how important this bears upon the incident, and how it was brought forward. There are portions of the speech of the Chairman of Ways and Means which I must correct, and which he said was based upon the report in *The Times* newspaper. I never said the Clerk at the Table, but I said a clerk. The right hon. Gentleman says I connected the message sent to me with the vote I was about to give. I did not connect it in that way. I did not connect it with the voting in my original statement; but the Secretary to the Treasury put me in rather a difficult position. In attempting to repeat what I had said he emphasized words which I had not emphasized. He fell into one or two mistakes, and I got up to correct him. I then said that the impression left in my mind at the time was that the message was connected with the vote I was about to give. Having made this qualification and explanation, let me remark how much more extraordinary and important the incident becomes. A Clerk at the Table—the third Clerk — comes to me officially—one paper says privately and unofficially—the other papers report what I did exactly say—namely, that it was clear to my mind it was official and could not possibly be construed into a private and unofficial action. I was standing in the Division Lobby, where the names were being taken. He walked up the whole length of the Lobby, and brought me, I did not say a message, but a communication from the Table, and we all know there are more advisers at the Table than the Chairman. The Clerk came up to me and asked me clearly whether I wished to get suspended or not. Now, I knew that since the first batch of suspensions I had done nothing except to vote. It may be that the Clerk wished to communicate to the Chair whether I wished to be suspended, and the Chairman would oblige me. ["Oh! oh!"] Now, that was actually suggested to me by several Members last night and I only state it for the purpose of repudiating it. The only other possible explanation, and the one which struck me at the time, is that if I persisted and continued to vote I should to a certain extent identify myself with the Party who were moving repeated adjournments, and would probably be suspended. That is the natural interpretation, and the one which presented itself to my mind; and though I did not say so in my original statement, I feel bound after the speech of the Secretary to the Treasury to state the facts as they occurred. The Chairman has said that he did not defend the Clerks at the Table, and I say the incident remains wholly unexplained as to why a Clerk at the Table should come up to me as he did. That requires some explanation, and I think the Chairman is responsible for the Clerks at the Table, and as Chairman——

Mr. SPEAKER: It is right that I should point out to the House and the hon. and gallant Member that he is now referring to a communication of an informal kind, I apprehend, which passed between him and the Clerk at the Table outside the House. I do not understand the hon. and gallant Member to assert that the Clerk at the Table brought formally a communication from the Chairman to himself. If that were so the matter would assume a serious aspect indeed.

Colonel NOLAN: Sir, when you say outside the House, I ought to explain that it was in the Division Lobby, and during a division, and when the bells were being rung for a division. I do not know whether that spot is outside the precincts of the House or not, but, at the same time, I wish to state the exact circumstances. I certainly looked upon it as an official communication, and would no more have thought it an unofficial communication than if an adjutant on parade came up to an officer, and, having come direct from the Colonel, gave him an order. I cannot look upon it in any other way. But we have now got the disclaimer of the Chairman of Ways and Means. I, however, did not mean to assert, and did not assert, that the communication came from the Chairman. Still, the circumstance is, as I have already said, very extraordinary, and I am very glad I brought it before the House, as it required explanation, and I am very glad that it has brought forth the statement from the Chairman of Committees that no vote can subject a Member to the penalties of Obstruction. There is only one other point to which I wish to refer. I see that my conversation with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) is reported tolerably correctly in the papers, and I think it only fair to him to say how it occurred. I saw him in the outside Lobby some time before this incident, and, knowing him to be one of the highest authorities on the subject, I went up to him and said—"Mr. Raikes, may I ask you for an opinion?" When he gave it to me he laughed, and said—"I am no authority in the House, and I have no right to give you an opinion; but certainly, if I were Chairman, I should never dream of suspending a Member for mere voting." The Chairman of Ways and Means has given the same opinion to-day; but I think it is only right I should state what the right hon. Gentleman said, and that he did not volunteer an opinion. After having said this, I think the House will agree with me that the facts, as I stated them in my original speech, are the true facts.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the little I have to say I say subject entirely to your authority; but you have signified from the Chair that this is a matter of importance, and I only suggest that it appears to me that there is a most important gap in the explanation which has just been made to the House by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway, which it is very material should be supplied. What I expected to have heard from the hon. and gallant Gentleman was whether the Clerk at the Table, who seems to have conveyed some words to him, did or did not state that those words were a communication from the Chairman of Committees.

Colonel NOLAN: I thought, Sir, I had already stated most distinctly that the Clerk at the Table did not make such a statement, and I have never for one moment asserted that he did so. On the contrary, I carefully guarded against it being supposed that he had made such an assertion, and the moment an hon. Member interpreted the words in that sense, I rose in my place and said—"No, not from the Chair, but the Table." If, however, the Prime Minister wishes to know what my impression was at the time, it was that the message had been sent by the Chairman of Committees; but I am quite sure now that the communication did not come from the Chair. Of course, I was in fault for not inquiring upon the point.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—NINTH RULE (ORDER IN DEBATE).

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TWENTY-SEVENTH NIGHT.]

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, *further considered.*

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that, with the permission of the House, he wished to ask the Prime Minister whether the fact of a Member being suspended from the service of the House would also suspend him from service on Committees on Private Bills?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the Speaker had last night given a very clear opinion upon this point. For his own part, he had not considered this point; but he would consult the authorities of the House as to whether it was necessary for any special provision to be made in reference to it.

Mr. DODDS said, he thought that no difficulty would arise in reference to this branch of the subject, because immediately a Member was suspended from service in Committees another Member would be appointed to take his place.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must draw attention to the fact that there was no Question before the House.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, in order to afford an opportunity for discussing the point, he would move to omit the word "and" in line 15.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot move an Amendment which, if carried, will not be consistent with sense.

Amendment proposed, in line 16, to leave out the words "three times in one Session."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution."

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, it was very important that it should be known whether the fact of an hon. Member being suspended would prevent him from serving on Private Bill Committees.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would consider the matter. He was given to understand that even unsworn Members might serve on Private Bill Committees.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *omitted.*

Mr. GLADSTONE rose to substitute the word "first" for "third," in line 17. This was an Amendment of substance, involving the first step in the scale of punishment to which he had referred last night. This was a Rule which he hoped and expected would be only rarely applied, and then under very peculiar circumstances only. It appeared to the Government, however, that when a Member deliberately defied the authority of the Chair, a substantial, and not a merely nominal, penalty should be inflicted upon him.

Amendment proposed, in line 17, to leave out the word "third," and insert the word "first."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question, "That the word 'third' stand part of the Resolution," put, and *negatived.*

Word *inserted.*

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he rose for the purpose of taking the sense of the House as to the propriety of altering the Standing Order which had been moved in 1880 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon. His chief objection to the alteration was that no case had been put forward by the Government to warrant any increase in the severity of the Rule. That Rule had been in operation for two years—that was to say during three Sessions—in the course of which it had done excellent service, and on two occasions it had extricated the House from the gravest dilemmas. The first case was that in which the Irish Party had refused to leave the House in order to divide, and had disregarded the authority of the Chair. The effect of this Rule on that occasion had not only been to suspend the offending Members, but to enable the House to agree that night to the Rules of Urgency, without which the Irish Coercion Act could not have been passed. Then he came to the occasion when the Chairman of Committees suspended the whole of the Irish Members *en bloc*, or rather in two blocks. Had that not been done the second Coercion Bill could not have been passed without a very great expenditure of time. But what difficulty was there in dealing with individual instances of Obstruction? The truth was that the existing Rule had proved itself to be effectual, and, that being undoubtedly the case, the House had the strongest reason for not increasing the penalties of suspension. It mattered little, from the point of view of those who desired the punishment of offending Members, whether the period of suspension was short or long, seeing that the sting of the punishment consisted in the publication of the disgraceful fact that such and such a Member had been suspended. The penalty was already severe enough, and the House was entitled to know why the Government proposed to increase it. If they were to have this savage and ferocious Resolution, it would greatly interfere with and modify very unfortunately one of the greatest qualities of the House of Commons—namely, its inexhaustable patience, the exercise of which had formerly the effect of taming and subduing Members who at first were inclined to be obstreperous, and gradually reducing them to the level of respectable Members of Parliament. The Resolution was evidently aimed at ths Irish Party; but what would have been the result if it had been in force during the last two years? The Irish Members would, by its operation, have been compulsorily absent from the House for a considerable length of time, and their absence would have deprived both the Coercion Bill and the Land Act of much of their authority. If such a Rule as this had been in force in the Session of 1877 the first person to be suspended under its operations would have been the present Secretary to the Treasury; and it was possible, too, that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India might have been subjected to a similar penalty for the course which he took with regard to the Education Bill. They knew very well, however, that the Rule was never intended to apply to the Front Benches. He trusted that the House would refuse to arm itself with the dangerous weapon provided by the Resolution; and he would therefore move to substitute for the word "week" the words "during that sitting of the House."

Amendment proposed, in line 18, to leave out the words "for one week," and insert the words "during that sitting of the House,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'for one week' stand part of the said Standing Order."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that the noble Lord had spoken of the inexhaustible patience of the House; but the fact was that they were sitting there in the month of November because that patience had been exhausted. He did not desire to refer to the causes or the persons who had led to that exhaustion; but he was sorry to hear from the noble Lord, who might be considered an authority on the subject, that persons who were disposed to try the patience of the House of Commons were not likely to submit to this Rule, but would become worse. No doubt, that was a most unpleasant and desperate prospect. The noble Lord said that, under the former inexhaustible patience of the House, persons were reduced to the level of respectable Members of Parliament; but he submitted, without taking the noble Lord's unfavourable view of the general body of Members, that inexhaustible patience was not a satisfactory remedy for Parliamentary misconduct. His own opinion had been, when hon. Members opposite had brought forward this Rule originally, that it was a matter of regret that its provisions were not more stringent than they were. He did not think much of the noble Lord's arguments — indeed, argument appeared to be thrown away in that quarter. It was the evident sense of the House that when a Member defied the authority of the Chair over and over again, he ought to be subjected to a substantial penalty. The noble Lord asked for proof that the Rule had been ineffective in its operation. The proof the noble Lord asked for was to be found in the history of the House during the last three Sessions. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Where?] Everybody knew it. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No.] Well, if the noble Lord did not know it, he would not argue with him, but would appeal to the experience of the House itself, and of those outside its walls. The noble Lord talked of the disgrace of being suspended being sufficient punishment; but Members had boasted of having been suspended, and had even challenged the authorities of the House to suspend them before they had been suspended. He denied that the question was one of Irish Members merely. Obstruction, he thought, had not proceeded exclusively from Irish Members. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Your Colleagues.] In spite of the elaborate arguments of the noble Lord, it was the opinion of the majority of the House that the Rule, which had worked well, could be advantageously strengthened, inasmuch as it had not prevented five Members from being twice suspended last year, and two being twice suspended during the present year.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the Home Secretary, as usual, had sought to introduce an element into the discussion which had happily been absent from it hitherto. The noble Lord had made his statement in very temperate language; but the Home Secretary had at once introduced a tone and a temper into the discussion which certainly would not conduce to the calm consideration of the point before the House. He thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman last night had almost given up the whole case himself, because the Prime Minister said he did not rely so much at all upon penalties for preserving the Order of the House. If he did not rely upon penalties for preserving the Order of the House, what was the gist of the reason for increasing the penalties which he himself proposed? He challenged the right hon. and learned Gentleman to name a single case in which an hon. Member challenged the Chairman to suspend him before they were suspended. But the Home Secretary was never at a loss for facts so long as he had such a lively imagination as Nature had endowed him with. He submitted to the House that it was altogether a complete fallacy with regard to this whole case to make this Rule dependent upon the amount of the penalty. The punishment of suspension was the act of being suspended, and not the time for which a Member was suspended. He could not imagine how any Member could glory in being suspended. He had been suspended in gross, and whenever he was suspended he felt very much like a fool; and if it had been his unfortunate lot to be suspended individually, he would feel very much like an imbecile. Suspension was a disgrace —it was a humiliation. But it was rather a reward and a relief for a Member to be sent away from his Parliamentary labours for a week, so that the punishment would not fall upon the Member, but upon the constituency, which was deprived for a week of the services which that Member might render. It was impossible to say what beneficial effect the services of a Member might have upon even the smallest portion of legislation. He therefore trusted the right hon. Gentleman had not altogether made up his mind upon this matter. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman showed any case at all in favour of a change of this Rule, and he did not think that the Rule had broken down.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government thought that the existing Rule had failed in the sense of having been insufficient for its purpose, and, in support of that contention, he might point to the number of suspensions that had occurred. In the opinion of the Government these suspensions ought to be extremely rare, and they believed that had the Rule been sufficiently severe, and had its deterrent power been stronger, such cases would have been much fewer than they were. He admitted that last Session was a Session of great excitement and trouble, and, notwithstanding the fact that between 30 and 40 Members were suspended once, and five suspended twice—once for a collective act and once for a sole act, but both acts equally distinct and pronounced in their character—was, in his judgment, proof that there was a great deal too much faction under the Rule; and to have less faction he wanted to have the deterrent power increased. The hon. Member who had just spoken said a Member's suspension was a punishment inflicted on his constituency. He did not deny that the constituencies suffered, but he did not admit that the hon. Member profited. He was inclined to doubt the proposition that dismissal from the House for a week was a relief and enjoyment to an hon. Member. If the hon. Member chose the week in which he was to go away it might be a relief and an enjoyment to him, but not if the week was chosen for him by the House. That was an inconvenience to the constituencies he did not doubt at all; but the question was whether the constituencies were not bound by the acts of the Members whom they chose to send to the House. If the constituencies found it inconvenient that a Member should be suspended for a week or for a longer period he foresaw this salutary effect, that the constituencies would themselves assist the House in the maintenance of order, and would convey hints and suggestions to the hon. Member that, while they were very sensible of his zeal, they wished it to be exercised with greater restraint of his judgment. If the arguments of the hon. Member opposite were good as against suspensions for one week, they would be equally good as against all suspensions. But what other method of proceeding was there besides suspension? None that he knew, as imprisonment was not to be thought of. There certainly was the plan of calling upon the Speaker to reprimand an offending Member, but it was quite unavailing. He had himself seen in the case of Mr. O'Connell the miserable failure of that instrument. He recollected O'Connell, who was extremely cautious in regard to the Rules of the House, and as clever as cautious, after receiving the reprimand of the Speaker, repeating in other language every sentiment for the expression of which he had been reprimanded. In many cases, therefore, the instrument to which he was referring would be quite unavailing, and the attempt to use it might expose the Chair and the House to contempt. He knew of no better punishment than suspension imposed in such a manner as to exercise a sensibly deterrent power.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that if the preceding Rules had not been passed he would have voted with the Government; but he would now support the noble Lord if he went to a division, because the House had already gagged freedom of discussion by means of the *clôture*, and had imposed severe penalties upon Members who unnecessarily moved the adjournment of the House at Question time. Having passed such severe Resolutions, they might well leave the penalties for Obstruction unchanged. The Irish Members, he thought, had learnt Obstruction chiefly from Gentlemen who now sat on the same Bench as the Home Secretary, for they could recall that two Gentlemen, who were now in the Government, had, to employ a common expression, "put up the Irish Members" to obstruct the Business of the House. He supposed that such penalties would never be imposed upon the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain); but they ought not to forget that Irish Members had the same right as the Representatives of other parts of the United Kingdom. If they aimed at Obstruction proceeding only from a particular portion of the House, they would be doing a great injustice. The Government ought to aim at quelling all Obstruction, no matter from what quarter of the House it might come. If the noble Lord should divide the House he should vote with him.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the Prime Minister had expressed an opinion that if a constituency should choose to send an objectionable person to Parliament, they would be to blame if he were to be suspended; but he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) would remind hon. Members that an argument of that kind had been scouted by the Government in the debates on the question whether they should admit into the House a certain Member who was not at present allowed to take his seat. He did not know whether, when that question again came up, the Government would stand by the position which the right hon. Gentleman now assumed. He contended that the right hon. Gentleman had failed to show that the existing penalties for Obstruction were insufficient. It should be remembered that recent times had been times of unusual political heat and passion The Session in which the principal suspensions had taken place reminded him of the last Congress in America that met before the Southern Rebellion. Had Ireland been a strong country there might during the passing of the Coercion Act have been an armed rebellion. Representatives of a country so distracted could hardly be expected to remain always cool, and that there were only five different suspensions during the Session to which he was referring, showed that the Irish Members must have restrained themselves as much as possible. With regard to the question of the duration of the punishment of suspension, he asked what Member in the heat of the moment would care whether a week or a month's suspension would be the penalty for his ebullition of temper? The Prime Minister had insisted on the inefficacy of reprimands. There might well be times when men, smarting under a sense of injustice, should fail for once to pay sufficient respect to the monitions from the Chair. How little did Mr. Burke care for a censure on his conduct with regard to Warren Hastings. The fact was, the system of penalties was absolutely inefficient for any useful purpose. The House had fenced itself against Motions for Adjournment, against irrelevant talk, and all that led to heat of temper, and there was, therefore, no excuse for increasing penalties which, however appropriate at other times, were now positively useless.

Mr. GORST said, that he always listened with interest to the speeches of the Prime Minister; but the right hon.

Gentleman ought not to allow the Home Secretary, though it afforded much gratification to the faithful Members behind him, to intervene in the debates, because his intervention did not assist in expediting the Business of the House. The Prime Minister met argument by argument; but the Home Secretary never argued, but only denounced. The only contribution to the debate on the part of the Home Secretary was a rather insulting hint that this penal Rule was not intended for Irish Members only. How unjust was such an insinuation. During the whole time that this penal Rule had been in operation not a single instance occurred of its being enforced against any but Irish Members. No such thing had ever been dreamt of by others as disregarding the authority of the Chair. Therefore, the insinuation of the Home Secretary was wholly useless; it was absolutely incorrect, and could serve no other purpose than to create personal feeling and animosity. The Prime Minister argued that it was necessary to increase the severity of the penalties, because of the inefficiency of the Rule in times past. But, then, the right hon. Gentleman ought to consider the very exceptional circumstances of the last and the present Session. The Rule had been enforced against Members from Ireland, because legislation was under the consideration of the House which created the most intense irritation, not only in Members representing Irish constituencies, but in the Irish constituencies themselves. The reason why no English or Scotch Member ever incurred the penalty of suspension was because he knew his constituents would be extremely angry if he did. But that was not the case with the Irish constituencies, because, if the the House went so far as to expel one of their Members, they would be sure to re-elect him. Then, the re-arrest of Davitt, and the manner in which the Home Secretary answered the Questions put to him on the subject, so excited the passion of Irish Members that they committed an act which they now regretted, and which there was not the slightest danger of their repeating, unless, indeed, the Home Secretary continued to make speeches. The Prime Minister made light of the penalty inflicted upon the constituency by the suspension of its Representative. It was the disgrace of suspension, and not merely the time during which the suspension was to last that they should look to as a deterrent on the Member. But the injustice to the constituency was very much enhanced if the suspension was to last. On this point the opinion of the Prime Minister was very different now from what it had been in 1880, when the late Government proposed the Rule. On the Question whether suspension from the service of the House should include voting by the Member suspended, the right hon. Gentleman said that if this was a question of the amount or sufficiency of the punishment inflicted upon the Member he would give him a larger punishment, if necessary, but he was reluctant to punish the constituency; there were many cases in which the constituency might have a strong and special interest in particular measures, and in which they might suffer from the suspension of their Member. And the right hon. Gentleman added that he was "at present" so strongly under the distinct impression that the disablity of voting was in a large degree a punishment inflicted on the constituency for an offence for which they were not responsible, that he hoped the subject might receive the careful consideration of the Government.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he was very much disposed to agree with his noble Friend as to its being unnecessary to alter the Standing Order at all; but, as the Government had taken a different view and the House had so far approved it, he thought they ought to consider the question before them. The Home Secretary had a little underrated the value and strength of the Standing Order as originally framed. It was clear that suspension for a week, and the possibility of further suspension had had a very deterrent effect, for it had been admitted that under the operation of the Standing Order no Member had been suspended a third time. On the other hand, it was also admitted that Members had been suspended twice, and it appeared that suspension for the remainder of the Sitting was not sufficient, as there had been an instance of a Member who was suspended five different times. Therefore, the proposal of the Government for suspending offenders for a week had something to be said in its favour. But beyond that they ought to remember that the concessions made by the Government in the course of these discussions had been considerable. They had already struck out possible constructive Obstruction, and he was not without hope that collective Obstruction would also be got rid of, and in that way safeguards might be inserted in the Standing Order which would go far to reconcile him to the proposed extension of the penalty of suspension from one Sitting to a week. He had to regard the whole of the concessions suggested by the Government, and, looking at them from the beginning to the end, he thought them very considerable indeed. His noble Friend admitted that these concessions had received a cordial recognition at the hands of the House. His noble Friend admitted that cordial recognition in words, but not in acts. He was disposed to go a step further, and to give them a cordial recognition in acts by accepting the change in the first instance. The alteration of what he might call the code of penalties was not overstrained, and they might hope that the deterrent effect to which the Prime Minister had referred would be observable in the future, as they had seen it observed in the past, with reference to suspension for a week. It was from these motives, though reluctantly, that he must oppose the Amendment.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he was suspended on one occasion on the recommendation of the Speaker, and, to a certain extent, he felt a personal punishment in consequence, because, in the course he had taken, he exhibited a want of judgment with regard to the line of argument he ought to pursue. On the other hand, if, instead of being reprimanded by the Chairman and the House for conduct which deserved the reprobation of the House, he had been suspended, as a large number of Members had been during the present Session as they and he believed without any cause whatever, he believed he would not have felt the slightest degradation, or considered himself punished by the decision of the House. He believed that under the existing Rules there had been nothing during the last two Sessions of Parliament which could be properly termed Obstruction. The whole of the opposition to the Government measures was justified by the facts of the case. It was conducted by a number of Irish Members, who really knew the facts, whereas the great majority knew literally nothing of the subject. If collective suspensions were allowed the effect would be to give the Government the power to silence a small Opposition such as they witnessed recently in the cases of the South African and Flogging in the Army Bills, and by that means to pass through the House obnoxious measures. He held that what was called Obstruction was not substantially Obstruction at all, and that instead of making the Member incur penal consequences, he should get the thanks of the House for his exertions and zeal in favour of what he considered he was convinced was right.

Mr. WARTON said, he thought the House might speedily approach the end of the discussion if the Government would only intimate their intention of giving up the attempt to deal with collective Obstruction as they had already abandoned that regarding the constructive action of Members. If the Resolution was designed to apply to individual punishment only he did not think the penalties were too severe.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 101; Noes 24: Majority 77.—(Div. List, No. 390.)

Mr. GLADSTONE, in proposing the omission of the words after the word "week" to the word "place," and the substitution of the following:—"On the second occasion for a fortnight, and on the third or any subsequent occasion, for a month," said, that the words "or any subsequent occasion" were adopted from an Amendment of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan).

Amendment proposed,

In line 18, to leave out the words after the word "week" to the word "place," in line 22, inclusive, in order to insert the words "on the second occasion for a fortnight, and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, for a month,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. PARNELL said, it was very desirable to know what action the Government intended to take with regard to an Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), because it was important that the House should at once see what the ultimate shape of the Resolution would be. Certain hon. Members had, from the beginning of these debates, regarded as a vital question, upon which the whole of the Resolution must turn, whether when it became a Standing Order it could be used against a body of Members, or section of the House, or only against a single Member, as originally contemplated. It was not unreasonable that a Member who deliberately and wilfully obstructed the Business of the House, when notice was taken of his conduct by the Speaker or Chairman, should be suspended for a week; but the case was altogether different when it was made possible that, not a single Member, but a whole Party, should be suspended for a week because it might happen that a suspension of a Party *en bloc* might take place when an important measure in which they were especially interested was under the consideration of the House; a Coercion Bill might be before the House, though he hoped they had seen the last of Coercion Bills. He feared, however, they had not heard the last of such measures. If a Coercion Bill were before the House, during the suspension of the Irish Party, the arguments of these Representatives might have no chance of materially influencing the opinion of Parliament and the country. They therefore viewed with jealousy any power which might enable the Prime Minister to deprive Ireland of such representation. If the Government were going to give up this power of collective suspension, the abuse of which Irish Members feared so much, he, for one, would be much indisposed to vote against any proposal of the Prime Minister.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was willing to acknowledge that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had made an extremely fair speech. He admitted that there was a connection between the Amendment before the House and the subject of collective suspension. The Government had carefully considered the suggestion made last night by the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) about collective Naming. That suggestion was made in such a spirit that the Government felt bound to give it a careful and impartial consideration. He was bound, however, to state that the Government did not see its way to giving up absolutely the power of collective Naming. It would be out of Order to discuss the reasons for that conclusion, as the question was not before the House. But he felt sure that the House, and even the hon. Member for the City of Cork, would see the force of those reasons when they came to be stated. But the Goverment thought they could make an important step in that direction by adopting a suggestion which he understood to have been thrown out by the hon. Member for the City of Cork in a speech of his a day or two ago, to the effect that disregard of the authority of the Chair should be put upon a different footing from abuse of the Rules of the House by Obstruction or otherwise, and that collective Naming should be confined altogether to cases of disregard of the authority of the Chair. That was an important change, and the utmost change to which the Government could consent. He did not mean to strike out any words of the Proviso of which he had given Notice, but to introduce into that Proviso words confining its operation to cases of disregard of the authority of the Chair.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was very glad to acknowledge on his own part, and also, he thought, for other Members, the concessions of the Government on the subject of penalties, the excessive nature of which had formerly elicited from him somewhat strong language. He rejoiced that the Government had listened to the suggestions made, not only from the Opposition side, but, he believed, from all parts of the House, upon several points of this Resolution. First of all, constructive Obstruction was gone altogether. He also rejoiced to find that the Government had found it absolutely impossible, consonant with justice, to insist upon collective Naming, except in particular cases where the authority of the Chair was distinctly disregarded. He was very grateful to the Government for having considered that part of the Resolution which related to the suspension of a Member after a third offence for the remainder of the Session, and had materially mitigated that severe penalty. He was quite content with the scale now proposed by the Government—namely, a week, a fortnight, and a month; and his belief was that this concession, made in the interests of justice, would meet the general wishes of the House.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. GORST said, that, on behalf of his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill), he rose to move the insertion of words which would enable suspended Members to vote in divisions, although they were debarred in other respects from taking part in the Business of the House. The Secretary to the Treasury and the Prime Minister himself, in 1880, expressed opinions in favour of his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided always, That the words 'service of the House' in this Resolution shall not be construed as excluding any such Member from voting in any Division."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he thought in 1880, and still thought, there was a great deal to be said in favour of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, and he had referred the question to the consideration of the Government. He had pressed the topic on the late Government, though he did not then move an Amendment. But he wished the hon. and learned Gentleman had imitated his conduct as well as adopted his opinions. The Government had desired to adopt the Amendment; but after careful consideration they found they could not adopt it. It was a practical question. Voting was so mixed up with other matters that they could not sever them. A Member must go out of the House in voting, and he must re-enter the House after voting; and if he were in the House, and in his seat in the House, it was manifest that there were many modes of influencing the proceedings of the House in which he might take part without speaking in a debate. They could, for instance, join in those manifestations of opinion and feeling which were necessary incidents of the existence of a deliberative Assembly like the House of Commons; and he might, even in conjunction with others, materially resist the authority of the Chair. Thus a state of things would be brought about which would be intolerable. Hon. Members would therefore see that the Amendment was impracticable, and broke down, in its spirit and effect, the operation of this Rule, and that the conclusion to which the Government had arrived was just and reasonable.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he would remind the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that he had once more moved an Amendment exactly contrary to that which he moved in 1880. He supposed the hon. and learned Member would say, as he had said the previous night, that he voted inadvertently; but he was going to quote, as against that theory, the speech he made on that occasion. The hon. Member then said—

> "He was going to vote for the Government, not because they were in a majority, for during the time he had sat in the House of Commons he had always expressed his independent opinions; but he was going to support them because on this occasion he believed the Government were entirely right."

Mr. GORST: That speech was not made in support of this proposition.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, it illustrated the motive on which he gave what he called an inadvertent vote.

Mr. ONSLOW suggested that a suspended Member should not be prevented from serving on a Private Bill Committee.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would accept the suggestion.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he was opposed to allowing a suspended Member to vote, believing that such a deprivation might bring home to his constituents the conduct of their Member, and make them more careful in future in the selection of their Representatives.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), although he had been only one Session in the House, had more than once interposed in these debates with an assurance that even the Prime Minister, after having sat in the House for 50 years, had scarcely exceeded. If the hon. Member had studied the question of Procedure with any care he would have discovered a radical difference between the Standing Order before the House and that proposed by the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). Whatever might have been the value of such an Amendment as this proposed in 1880, it was considerably increased now that the penalties had been increased. With regard to the present Amendment, it was not in the least necessary that a Member should enter the House in order to vote.

MR. GLADSTONE: He must hear the Question read.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: He might hear the Question read standing below the Bar, and so not be within the House. Recollecting what the Prime Minister had stated in March, 1880, and knowing what celebrity he had obtained for adhering to every opinion he had expressed at that period, he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have receded from his opinion as expressed in 1880.

Question put.

The House *divided* :— Ayes 17; Noes 138: Majority 121.—(Div. List, No. 391.)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he now proposed to move the insertion of a Proviso in order to give effect to a feeling justly entertained with respect to the service of a suspended Member on a Private Bill Committee. It was evident that they ought not to run the risk of breaking up a Private Bill Committee, and that risk could not be satisfactorily avoided by appointing a new Member to serve on the Committee, because that new Member when called upon to do a judicial act would only hear a part of the evidence. It should also be remembered that as service on a Private Bill Committee could hardly be regarded as in the nature of a privilege, it could not be said to weaken the force of the instrument which the House had put in operation for checking any refractory Member. He therefore moved the insertion of the following Proviso to meet the case:—

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided always, That discharge from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so discharged from serving on any Committee for the Consideration of a Private Bill, to which he may have been appointed before his suspension." — (*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked what would happen if a suspended Member were charged, as Chairman, with the duty of bringing up the Report of a Private Bill Committee?

MR. DODSON said, in that case another Member of the Committee would bring up the Report.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he was satisfied with the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. WARTON suggested that the word "suspension" should be substituted for "discharge" in the proposed Proviso, the latter being too strong a word, and not the exact equivalent of the former.

COLONEL STANLEY begged to support the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was willing to agree to the suggestion.

MR. PARNELL asked whether the exemption should not be extended to all Select Committees as well as to those on Private Bills?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he could not accede to that. There was a positive reason for retaining a particular Member on a Private Bill Committee — namely, that without him injury would be inflicted on private interests, and great inconvenience would ensue.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment made, by adding, at the end of the foregoing Amendment, the words—

"Provided always, That suspension from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so suspended from serving on any Committee for the Consideration of a Private Bill, to which he may have been appointed before his suspension."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. PEEL said, he rose to move an additional Proviso of which he had given Notice—namely,

"That if the Session closes before the term of such suspension has expired, the Member so suspended shall not be re-admitted to the House unless by a Vote of the House in the following Session."

His desire, he said, was not to aggravate the punishment of an offending Member, but to take care that the Rule, which the noble Lord opposite had described as a tremendous Rule, should not be a mere *brutum fulmen.* The Prime Minister had indicated the possibility of many new forms of disobedience to the Chair being developed; and the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) had hinted at the unexplored regions yet unoccupied by the pioneers of Obstruction. For himself, he thought that the happy hunting ground of the future Obstructor would lie in the stages of the Appropriation Act near the close of the Session. They had had numerous instances of Members being suspended within a few days of the end of the Session. The penalties proposed to be inflicted under that Rule were graduated—for a first offence, the suspension was to be for a week; for the second, a fortnight; and for the third, a month. His contention was that a Member who had been repeatedly suspended, and had at last incurred the final penalty of a month's suspension, ought not to be released from the sentence passed upon him by the House simply by the accident of the Session terminating, perhaps, within three days after the sentence had been awarded. He knew that precedents told much the other way; but he wanted the House to create precedents for the maintenance of its own internal discipline. Towards the close of the Session Members were apt to lose their temper, and to indulge in abuse of other Members or Ministers, or in other irregularities which were a growing scandal to the House. He wished to stop that as much as possible; and he thought it would have a deterrent effect if an offending Member knew that the sentence passed upon him would not necessarily terminate with the expiration of the Session, but that at the commencement of the following Session he should not be re-admitted to the service of the House without a formal vote of the House being obtained for that purpose. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Proviso.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided, That if the Session closes before the term of such suspension has expired, the Member so suspended shall not be re-admitted to the House unless by a Vote of the House in the following Session."—(*Mr. Peel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Colonel STANLEY said, he hoped that the Government would not accept an Amendment for which there was no necessity. Even the culprits in the Clock Tower, whenever there were any, were liberated at the end of the Session. He thought there was some danger that, in its anxiety to remove Obstruction and maintain its own dignity, the House would become vindictive in its punishments. This Amendment, he thought, would make the Rule of that character, and would create a state of things which would not be creditable to those concerned. The Amendment could not be fairly argued on any ground of necessity.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he would suggest, if the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Peel) were agreed to, that a Proviso should be inserted to the effect that during the Recess the hon. Members so suspended should also be placed under police supervision.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, while appreciating the motives with which the Amendment was brought forward—namely, to give efficacy to the Rule, it was one which the Government could not accept. If they adopted the Amendment, they would come across a great principle of Parliamentary practice—namely, the lapse of all proceedings of a Session. With the exception of personal appointments and Standing Orders, nothing whatever in the Procedure of one Session was carried over to another Session; and he should not like to propose that the suspension of hon. Members, which was a minor matter, should be an exception. Besides, all through these Rules their object had been to substitute definite for indefinite terms of suspensions; and he was not disposed, on a minor matter, to make a precedent for continuing the action of the House from one Session to another. He hoped his hon. Friend would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. GLADSTONE then moved to add to the Resolution the words—

"Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless for disregarding the authority of the Chair, nor unless several Members, present together, have jointly committed the act for which they are named."

This Proviso would, he hoped, show that the Government had endeavoured impartially to meet the views of those who objected to collective Naming. The chief objection to collective Naming was that mistakes might be made, and that an innocent, and perhaps even an absent, Member might be Named. The Government felt the force of the objection; but they thought that, among other things, their Proviso that there should be a disregard of the authority of the Chair would effectually preclude the possibility of such a mistake. The introduction of these words would be equivalent, in a case of collective Naming, to previous warning. Hon. Members might be abusing the Rules of the House, but yet not disregarding the authority of the Chair; and if the Speaker or Chairman had to give directions or admonitions to those particular Gentlemen in the first instance, those directions would enable anyone to say whether a Member was guilty or not. Then they would fix the mind and eye of the Speaker or Chairman on the individuals, and remove, humanly speaking. all possibility of error in designation. But, it might be urged, why not abandon collective Naming altogether? That he was not prepared to do, for, though there was but one instance conspicuously on record of collective misconduct, the Government were not willing to stimulate the ingenuity of those who might desire in future to contrive disorderly joint action with impunity. And he need not say that offences which, if committed by individuals, would be punished could not be allowed to pass unnoticed merely because several Members were the joint offenders. On the night when 27 Members were suspended it had been his fate to begin the same sentence seven times, and as often to be interrupted at the same point. The interruption was disorderly, and was punished by suspension in each case; but if three or four Members were to interrupt simultaneously a still grosser disorder would have to be allowed, unless resort was had to collective Naming. Besides, if collective Naming were abolished, how would it be possible to conform to the terms of the Resolution already adopted that every Member should be Named immediately after the commission of the offence? On the occasion of the suspension of 27 Members there would have been 27 separate divisions in the Committee, followed by 27 more in the House, making 54 divisions in all. It would be difficult, he believed, to introduce a clause which would make it clear in what sense the 53rd or 54th of those divisions corresponded with or fulfilled the Rule which they had justly and wisely laid down that a Member should be Named immediately after the commission of the offence. Again, he would ask, was the 27th or any other Member bound to remain in the House while all the others were being punished? They had no means of making him remain, and he believed that if they did not retain collective Naming in those particular cases they would get into hopeless confusion. In fact, it would practically come to this—that one would be punished for the collective act and the others would go free. They would thus be placed in the difficulty of selecting a Member to punish, which would be a most invidious task, especially as the Members who had taken part had probably equally offended against the Rules of the House. Looking at the matter practically, they had felt it their duty to meet, as far as possible, the desire which existed, and which they themselves shared, to reduce to the very lowest point this collective Naming; but they could not be responsible for withdrawing from the House the opportunity of saying whether it was willing to run the risks of allowing not only collective disorder, but collective disregard of the authority of the Chair, to pass with impunity. He therefore begged to submit this Amendment to the House.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to add the words "Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless for disregarding the authority of the Chair, nor unless several Members, present together, have jointly committed the act for which they are named."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD moved, as an Amendment, to leave out all the words after the word "time." He considered that the punishing of Members collectively would act unjustly to Members, and, at the same time, would be disrespectful to the constituencies which those Members might represent. Even if the consumption of time were as great as the Prime Minister represented it would be, it would not be so great an evil as the disfranchising of constituencies in the wholesale way that was proposed.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out all the words after the word "time," in line 2, to the end of the proposed Amendment.—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'unless' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the Prime Minister had endeavoured to minimize the proposal of the Government to a very great extent, and he was very grateful for the points he had already yielded. He felt bound, however, to look beyond the present moment and estimate what might happen in the future. The 1st Resolution then proposed gave to a majority the right of silencing a minority; but that proposal had been modified, and he must look at what was likely to happen in the future under that Rule. In 1872 he remembered an occasion when the Turnpike Acts Continuance Bill was before the House of Commons. The Select Committee on the Bill, with Lord George Cavendish in the Chair, proposed an Instruction that highway districts should be made compulsory throughout the whole of England. Many who sat on this side of the House thought the proposal such an innovation, and so opposed to the wishes of the agriculturist community generally, that they used every Form of the House to defeat the proposal, and the result was that one day at 4 o'clock the noble Lord withdrew his proposal. He believed that the Prime Minister, who was at the time also Prime Minister, raised his powerful voice against the noble Lord's proposal. In the hands of a future Speaker and Chairman, with the Government proposal before them, such a Bill as the one he had referred to would have been passed, though strongly opposed by many Members of the House. ["No!"] He heard some hon. Members say "No!" but did they forget what had taken place with regard to the flogging proposals in the Army Discipline Bill and on the Public Works Loan Bill, when the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) so strongly opposed his Predecessor in Office? Believing that the proposal of the Government would prevent hon. Members from doing their duty, and that it would hamper minorities greatly in their stand against bad legislation, he should support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS observed, that the only argument of the Prime Minister in favour of collective suspension was that it would save time. But the right hon. Gentleman did not venture to assert that great injustice might not be done under the Rule. In his opinion, there was no objection to Naming Members collectively; but he could not see why the vote for their suspension should not be taken separately. He supposed it was of no use to appeal to the House; but with the exception of the question of time, he knew no reason why they should not show some deference to the strong feeling on this subject which undoubtedly existed below the Gangway.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not want to have any more wrangling with the Government on this point—he had had about enough already—but he wished to make a suggestion to the Prime Minister. He had some little fear whether the second part of the right hon. Gentleman's Proviso would not make collective suspension possible without the whole of the Members Named having disregarded the authority of the Chair. He therefore suggested that that part should be omitted, and that other words should be inserted, so that the Proviso should run simply—

"Provided that not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members present together have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair."

MR. GLADSTONE said, that if the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) would withdraw his Amendment, he would be happy to accept the suggestion of the noble Lord.

MR. ONSLOW understood the object of the Resolution to be to punish a Member or Members for offences committed at some one Sitting of the House. He feared that that was left in some ambiguity by the present phraseology of the Rule; and in order to prevent some future occupant of the Chair from punishing a Member at one Sitting for an offence committed on a previous occasion, he thought the words "during that Sitting of the House" should be inserted in the Resolution.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not think that there was any fear of the Resolution being construed in the way suggested by the hon. Member for

Guildford (Mr. Onslow). He was glad that the Government had accepted the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, which would remove a latent ambiguity in the Resolution. He would suggest that the hon. Member for Salford should withdraw his Amendment in order that it might be accepted. The hon. Member would again be able to raise the question now under debate. With regard to that question, he still retained the opinion that there was danger in permitting a number of Members to be Named collectively.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK suggested that the Proviso might be simplified by the omission of the words "present together."

MR. WALTER said, it seemed to him that there were two kinds of Obstruction —one negative and the other positive— and that they required different treatment. When a number of Members, whether few or many, sat in their places when the Speaker called for a division, it was clearly a case of negative Obstruction, and there could be no mistake whatever in dealing with a case of that kind. But when positive Obstruction took place, as would happen if the Prime Minister were interrupted in his speech, there was a possible danger of mistake. In such cases there might be a difficulty in identifying the guilty Members amid the disturbance. He thought that these two different cases of Obstruction required to be dealt with in a totally different manner. Negative collective Obstruction, as where a Member or Members refused to leave the House on a division, he should like to see dealt with collectively; but, in his opinion, there still remained some ground for doubting the expediency of including in a collective vote several Members alleged to be guilty of positive Obstruction.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford. In his opinion, there was much force in the argument that by taking a collective vote an independent, conscientious Member might be compelled to allow the guilty to escape in order that the innocent should not be punished. He thought there was some fear also that a doctrine of constructive Obstruction might be set up by which a Member would be punished at one Sitting for his conduct on former occasions. The objections to the Amendment were serious, and he wished the Prime Minister would see his way to relieve the House from the difficulty.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he did not think the words proposed by the Prime Minister really expressed his views, and regarded the instance furnished by the Secretary to the Treasury of a number of Members pulling the Chairman or the Speaker out of the Chair as the only instance yet given of joint or collective action. The instances relied on by the Prime Minister of Members not rising in their places, or sitting in the House when ordered to leave, were really separate actions, unless they could show that the Members were acting in concert. He hoped the Proviso would not be adopted without considerable modification.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS, as they must choose between two evils, thought that the lesser was to be found in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford. It was admitted on all sides that there was a possibility of mistake arising out of the question of collective Naming. It was surely not unreasonable to ask that the same Rule should apply to the suspension of Members as applied to criminal trials. A memorable case had just concluded in Ireland; but the prisoners had not been tried together. Why should Members of Parliament be placed at a greater disadvantage? The Amendment, however, looked as though the Government wanted to whitewash the proceedings of last Session.

MR. J. HOLLOND said, the House was placed in a very awkward position from the fact that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford proposed to omit some very valuable words. If Members offended jointly, he could not see why they should not be punished jointly; but there was no reason why a joint vote should be taken. He was prepared, if the Amendment of the hon. Member was negatived, to move some such words as these at the end of the Prime Minister's Amendment—

> "In such case the names of such Members should be put from the Chair separately, and the provisions of the fourth Resolution as to the taking of divisions should apply."

MR. NEWDEGATE observed, that the time might come when the House would have to decide the most important issues, one way or the other, by majoities of 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10. He was unwilling to believe in abuses; at the same time, this House should guard its action against the suspicion of abuse, and he thought that the whole system of collective punishment would be liable to the imputation that collective punishment had been inflicted for Party and political purposes. The loss of time, under the present Rule, in Naming individuals guilty of offences against the authority of the Speaker or the good order of the House, would be infinitesimal when compared with the possible discredit which might follow upon abuse in the collective punishment of Members. He most sincerely hoped, therefore, that, whether modified or not according to the suggestions of the hon. Member (Mr. Hollond), the offences of Members would be treated individually as offences were brought before the tribunal of a Court of Law, and the punishment individually awarded.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was sorry that the discussion had been kept up so long; but it was one of vital importance to Members from Ireland. The only valid reason which the Prime Minister had suggested for the views of the Government—namely, the saving of time—was disposed of by the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Hollond), who suggested a method by which delay would be almost entirely prevented. The Prime Minister was, in reality, fighting a shadow when he attempted seriously to make such a state of things as the Speaker being pulled from the Chair by a number of hon. Members the basis for legislation. If this proposal were accepted it would be in the power of the Chairman or the Speaker practically to disfranchise a large number of the constituencies of Ireland. By the proposal of the Government a number of Irish Members might be suspended and their constituencies disfranchised for a week, a month, or for the remainder of the Session, while important Irish Business was being transacted. Why should the Government persist in their present course, in spite of the almost unanimous opinion of Members on that (the Opposition) side, and the opinion of very many of their own supporters?

Mr. WARTON said, it was quite evident that the House did not want for the future to vote for such a thing as the collective suspension of 16 Members, some of whom might be innocent, while it was admitted that there might be a necessity for the joint Naming of several Members. The suggestion of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Hollond) was, therefore, a good one, and might be added with advantage to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken had recommended the Government to make further concessions by adopting the suggestion of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Hollond). But what assurance had the Government, if they did accept that suggestion, that the House would support them after all? It appeared to him the Government in this matter had accepted suggestions from the House in a most conciliatory spirit, and had gone from point to point to meet the views of the House; but it would appear that was of no avail with hon. Gentlemen opposite. ["No, no!"] He meant as regarded what the Prime Minister thought necessary for maintaining the authority of the Chair. They must remember that the Government, in proposing this Resolution, had a very difficult and disagreeable task to perform. It could not be agreeable to the Government to insist upon these stringent Rules, which, nevertheless, they believed to be necessary for maintaining the authority of the Chair. If there was a feeling in the House with regard to the danger that might arise from abuse of the proposed Rule, they must not forget the danger also from continued disregard of the authority of the Chair, a danger of which they had had experience. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) said that it was only Members below the Gangway, and an hon. Member opposite said that it was only Irish Members who would fall under the Rule. Now, if he sat below the Gangway he would repudiate the suggestion that it was only Members in that quarter who would disregard the authority of the Chair.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY observed that the proposal of the Government involved this manifest inconvenience—that the House would have no alternative but to find all guilty or to acquit all. That was a principle which would not be found to exist in any country in the world.

MR. PARNELL said that the right hon. Gentleman had lectured the Government for having given concessions to that side of the House.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he did not for a moment censure or criticize the Government for the concessions they had made. His argument was that the concessions of the Government entitled them to consideration. He shared the view of the Government with regard to these concessions.

MR. PARNELL said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the Government were entitled to consideration on account of the concessions they had made. But what he contended was that so little remained of the objectionable features of the Rule, and they were so liable to misconception, that they ought to be got rid of altogether. The only example which had been given by the Prime Minister as to the necessity for this Rule was the occasion of the suspension of a large number of Members last Session for refusing to leave the House when a division was called. He admitted that if it were apprehended that such a case as that were likely to occur again, the House would be justified in arming the Speaker with power to suspend the Members in question collectively; but he put it to the Government whether it was worth while to retain in the Rule a provision of this kind, which was liable to abuse and misconstruction, in order to guard against such a remote contingency as that? These Rules had been brought forward for the purpose of enabling the House to transact its Business, not for the purpose of enabling the Government of the day to get rid of a minority of its opponents summarily; and even if such an occurrence as that recited were to take place again, it would form a very small impediment to the transaction of Business in comparison with the amount of time which had been wasted in the discussion of this Rule, and the heat which had been evoked in this discussion. He therefore appealed to the Government to reconsider whether they could not give this further concession in response to an opposition to the Rule which he submitted had not exceeded the bounds of fairness, and which had been conducted with good taste? He regarded the Rule as now amended with the greatest possible suspicion and misgiving; and he feared very much that some day or other the Chairman of Committees would be tempted to use it in a manner never contemplated by Parliament.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 127; Noes 73: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 392.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 2 of the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "for disregarding the authority of the Chair, nor unless."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 2 of the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "committed the act for which they are named," in order to insert the words "disregarded the authority of the Chair."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment," put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, to add, at the end of the proposed Amendment, the words "disregard the authority of the Chair."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

MR. ONSLOW proposed, after the word "disregarded," to insert the words "during that sitting of the House." It appeared evident from the Speaker's ruling on a previous occasion, as well as by an answer given by the Speaker to a Question put by him on July 3, that it was possible for Members, when there was an evident combination for the purpose of obstructing debate, to come within the Rule. Under those circumstances a distinct limitation should be put upon it. It was impossible to say that some future Speaker might not think that offences which had been continuing for some time had culminated on a certain occasion, although that offence had been committed on several days previously. The same objection applied to the Chairman of Ways and Means, who might again entertain that view.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to insert after the word "disregarded," the words "during that sitting."—(*Mr. Onslow.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'during that sitting' be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the speech of the hon. Member was one of those which almost made him despair of transacting the Business of the House, for he had made a long citation which had not the slightest reference to the question. They had no concern with Obstruction in the Proviso they were discussing, because from the first they had separated Obstruction from disregard of the authority of the Chair; and the mixture of these things existed only in the mind of the hon. Member. He entirely agreed with the object of the hon. Member; but his Amendment was fatal to his object. It would introduce the mischievous principle that one act in disregard of the authority of the Chair might be considered with reference to previous acts of disregard, and this would be a total innovation, as each act of disregard must be considered independently and at once dealt with.

Amendment to the said proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words 'disregarded the authority of the Chair' be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the words 'Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair' be added at the end of the foregoing Amendment," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. GORST proposed to add words giving the House power to revoke a suspension by a Resolution.

Amendment proposed, to add, at the end of the Standing Order, the words "or of revoking any such suspension by a Resolution."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he was most distinctly under the impression that the Amendment was unnecessary, as it would be setting forth in terms a matter that was altogether indisputable. Being reluctant to introduce a matter that would be a re-enactment of a power that the House already possessed, he appealed to the Speaker for his ruling upon the point.

Mr. SPEAKER replied, that the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham was superfluous, as the House already had the power it was proposed to confer by the Amendment.

Mr. GORST: After your statement, Sir, I ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL moved to add to the Resolution a Proviso that if any Member so suspended should thereafter vacate his seat and be re-elected a Member of the House, such order of suspension should not be deemed to be in force against him. The noble Lord referred to the case of Mr. Bradlaugh as showing that when a Member was re-elected he became a new person altogether, and was freed from previous disabilities.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought the Amendment was unnecessary, as it was clear that a Member on ceasing to be a Member of the House passed out of its jurisdiction altogether. On returning to the House he entered it as a new man.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the case referred to by the noble Lord was quite in point.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, "That the Standing Order, as amended, be agreed to."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 161; Noes 19: Majority 142.—(Div. List, No. 393.)

(9.) *Resolved*, That, whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair, or of abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed by such Member in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate, being allowed, "That such Member be suspended from the service of the House;" and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and if the Motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee and report the circumstance to the House; and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended under this Order, his suspension on the first occasion shall continue for one week, on the second occasion for a fortnight, and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, for a month: Provided always, That suspension from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so suspended from serving on any Committee for the consideration of a Private Bill to which he may have been appointed before his suspension: Provided also, That not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair: Provided always, That nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 23rd November, 1882.

Their Lordships met this day at Eleven of the clock for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 23rd November, 1882.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* the borough of Wigan, *v.* Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to void.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—WIGAN NEW WRIT.

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void."—(*Mr. Winn.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that before the Motion was acceded to, he was very anxious to state publicly that the suspension of the Writ for Wigan for nearly two years had not been the result of any arrangement whatever between political Parties in that House, but that all had been done in the matter had been done openly and publicly before the House. In opposing a Motion made some time ago by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), the view he expressed, that further time ought to elapse before the Writ was issued, was expressed only in the House, and had been acted upon until the present time. Now that the present Motion was made, he thought it right to rise and protest against its being supposed that the suspension of Writs by the House without due inquiry before a proper tribunal was a course that ought to be encouraged; and he thought the House ought in some way to mark its opinion that the practice should not be made a precedent. His own view was that the vote by which the House, in August, 1881, refused to assent to an inquiry being instituted upon the Report of the learned Judge that corrupt practices had extensively prevailed at Wigan, was much to be regretted. Up to that time it had always been held that an inquiry should follow such a Report from the learned Judge who tried an Election Petition; and the suspension of Writs without a further inquiry was only a rough-and-ready method of doing justice, and a substitute for the more proper method of a regular investigation. He hoped that the House would mark the course followed in that case as one which ought not to be pursued again in like circumstances, and that the refusal of an inquiry would not be drawn into a precedent.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Attorney General was quite right in stating that all that had been done on the one side or the other in regard to that Writ took place openly in the House, and that there was no concealment or arrangement in connection with it. Personally, he was not a party to the vote, having been absent from London at the time; and there was no reason, therefore, why he should say whether he considered it right or wrong. He entirely agreed that, although that Writ had been suspended by the action of the House in consequence of the Motion which had been referred to, it was a matter which certainly ought not to be drawn into a precedent, because in ordinary circumstances, where action was taken against a constituency, it was taken, not by a vote of the House, but by an Act of Parliament; and it would not be Constitutional for the House to make that case a precedent for itself. Nevertheless, he felt that it would be most unjust that the issue of the Writ should be again refused, as this Writ had been suspended for two years, and the borough could not be included in any Bill which might be introduced to deal with other boroughs which had been found guilty of corrupt practices. It seemed to him, therefore, that the time had come when it would be right to issue the Writ; and he joined the hon. and learned Attorney General in entering a protest against that case being drawn into a precedent for their future action.

Mr. GORST said, he was glad that the Attorney General and the right hon. Gentleman were now ashamed of the unconstitutional course which had been followed in regard to that Writ. He had himself always understood that the representation in that House could only be suspended by an Act of Parliament; and while agreeing that that case ought not to be drawn into a precedent, he went further and asserted that such a case ought not to have occurred at all. It was right to suspend the Writ when it was intended to issue a Royal Commission of Inquiry; but in August, 1881, the House refused to address the Crown for a Royal Commission; and it seemed to him that at the beginning of the Session, if the Government did not intend to renew their proposal of a Royal Commission, there was no Constitutional reason why the Writ for Wigan should not then have issued.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it seemed to him there was very little need for apology for not having issued a Writ; but he thought there was very great need of apologizing for issuing one in the case of a borough in which a learned Judge had deliberately reported that in his belief exceedingly corrupt practices had prevailed, and yet no subsequent inquiry had been made upon that Report. He hoped that before they had any case of this kind again they should have a more efficient Corrupt Practices Bill; but he wished that this should not pass without a protest against the scandal which it seemed to him was involved in the issuing of a Writ of this kind without any inquiry whatever.

Mr. LEWIS said, he had heard the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General with the utmost astonishment. For the sake of public decency and public justice the House ought to be reminded of what had happened. In May last, acting on the principle now so tardily acknowledged by the hon. and learned Gentleman, he submitted to the House a Resolution that the Writ for Wigan should issue; and the Attorney General had to-day admitted by implication that the state of circumstances which existed in May were exactly the same as existed now. But the hon. and learned Gentleman then took a totally different course; he did not produce any precedent for the course the Government then pursued; he remained obdurate, constituting himself judge of the amount of punishment he would inflict, through the Ministry, on the constituency of Wigan; and, by a majority, they succeeded in intercepting the Writ. It was then proposed, indeed, that no Writ for certain constituencies should be issued during the present Parliament; but now the Attorney General said—"I venture to protest against the issue of the Writ now being made into a precedent." Who made it a precedent? Why, the Attorney General, who invoked all the power of the Government to suspend the Constitutional rights of the constituency; and the hon. and learned Gentleman now protested that nobody else should follow his vicious example. Why, if the hon. and learned Gentleman had appeared in the white robe of penitence and walked from the Bar to the Table, he could not have done more to show that he stigmatized his own conduct.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) explained that what he protested against was the course taken of not issuing a Commission upon the Report of the learned Judge that corrupt practices prevailed, and which rendered it necessary for the House to take the subsequent course, which, he trusted, would not be repeated.

Mr. LEWIS said, he was sorry if he failed to understand the hon. and learned Gentleman. If the hon. and learned

Gentleman had said he had made a mistake and regretted what he had done, that would be a different matter; but the Government were not sinners in this matter alone, for there were other boroughs besides Wigan that were existing politically between life and death. Last year, instead of dealing with them, they introduced their Corrupt Practices Bill; and, by a curious coincidence, it was not until the Liberal Party had at last found a candidate that the Writ was issued. He congratulated them upon the coincidence. The consequence would be that what with the *clôture* and the new method of issuing Writs the Government would not only shut the mouths of the Opposition, but take away their seats also by waiting until it was convenient to fill up a vacancy. He had no doubt that hon. Members opposite, who were secure in their seats, thought it of no importance that other constituencies should be represented; but he trusted the electors of Wigan would not easily forget the way in which they had been treated by the Attorney General, but would recollect that through this impropriety of conduct they had remained for six months without a Representative. He would like to ask any Constitutional lawyer in that House, what excuse was there for delaying the issue of the Writ for one hour when the House had once decided against the issue of a Commission? They were entitled to the issue of their Writ immediately; but the Motion was opposed by the whole force of the Government. 220 Members formed the majority in the division that was taken, and they were all the supporters of the Government. [Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I did not.] He (Mr. Lewis) was very glad to find that the hon. Gentleman was the one virtuous Member, and supposed that the propinquity of the borough of Salford to that of Wigan exerted a favourable influence upon his conduct. What he wished to point out was this—These proceedings were carried on in the name of purity of election, and in order to exercise a favourable influence upon constituencies; but their only result would be to contribute to the corruption which had previously existed. He was happy to find, however, that although the Attorney General had not confessed his sin, he had at least owned that the ray of justice and duty had penetrated his conscience and was contented at last to allow the Writ to be issued.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the speech they had just listened to would have been a very suitable one for an election meeting; but it compared very unfavourably with the tone and spirit of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), whose constituency, in point of propinquity, was somewhat nearer to Wigan than Derry. But he would not have risen to take part in the debate had not the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) misunderstood, and therefore misstated, what fell from his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General. His hon. and learned Friend said that he regretted that upon the Report having been made by the Judges who tried the Petition the invariable custom of issuing a Commission had not been followed; and he added that that was a circumstance that he trusted would never be repeated. He distinctly stated that he hoped the method adopted in the case of Wigan would never in the future be drawn into a precedent; and he referred to the method then adopted as an inconvenient practice. The House adopted a course less penal than the issue of a Commission in suspending the Writ. At the beginning of the Session, when it was proposed by the hon. Member for Londonderry to issue a new Writ, the House declined to do so; but it was publicly stated in the House, and with the acquiescence, he thought, of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that at the end of the Session the time would come when it was thought that the Writ might properly be issued. Therefore the course was one thoroughly well understood and straightforward from the first; and as to there being any connection between the finding of the Liberal candidate and the issue of the Writ, he did not suppose that any Member except the hon. Member for Londonderry would suggest anything of the kind. He would only add that he joined with his hon. and learned Friend in hoping that the course—which was adopted in leniency towards the constituency, and was not according to the regular rule—would not be followed in future as a precedent, and that whenever Judges made a Report, a Commission for a proper judicial inquiry should issue.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that the Home Secretary had made one remark which ought not to pass unobserved. It was that this course, which had been stigmatized by the Attorney General as an inconvenient one, had been adopted with the concurrence of Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: What I said was that after the refusal to issue the Writ was determined by the House, the intimation that at the end of the Session the Writ would be issued was received with the concurrence of the other side.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that he entered his emphatic protest at the time against the unconstitutional doctrine founded by the Attorney General, under which he took upon himself, on his own fiat, to inflict a punishment upon a constituency contrary to all precedent, and in the teeth of what would be, under ordinary circumstances, the will of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman stated that the course pursued was most inconvenient; but he (Mr. J. Lowther) reminded the House that when the Writ was moved for the Attorney General opposed it, and the Opposition urged that the Writ should issue unless the Government were prepared to ask Parliament to deal by means of Statute with the question. The hon. and learned Gentleman declined to introduce a Bill, or to do anything beyond suspending the Writ on his own fiat. It might not be the fact that the coincidence of finding a Liberal candidate was in any way connected with the mysterious decision of the Government in favour of the issuing of the Writ, as the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) suggested; but it was quite clear that the practice ought not to be drawn into a precedent.

Mr. WARTON said, he would not use any hard words in respect to the Attorney General, because he had told them when the Writ should be allowed to issue—namely, at the end of the Session, and he had kept his word. But he wanted to call attention to the unconstitutional doctrine that the House had the power to punish by suspending a Writ. It was not the case of a Judge who had the power to inflict a penalty; it was the case of a wronged man acting as Judge. The Attorney General was not the person to regulate how long a constituency should be deprived of its Members. He (Mr. Warton) wished to call attention to the serious development of this principle. In 1881 the House passed an Act suspending the elections of a number of seats. All those cases were adjourned for consideration early in 1882. The Government had again done the same thing, and adjourned these cases by an Act, and the cases had therefore not been considered by Parliament. How did the Government avoid their consideration—by putting forward the Corrupt Practices Bill, which might be a good Bill or it might not be; but certainly, by its enormous length and by its containing a great number of novelties, it was not likely to pass quietly through the House. The result was that some half-dozen places were all deprived of their Members. Delighted as he was to find that the unconstitutional doctrine that places could be deprived of their seats was abandoned, he was sorry to see another doctrine set forth by the Attorney General and the Home Secretary, following upon a suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), that the construction of the Act of Parliament did not render it imperative upon the House to issue a Writ. He (Mr. Warton) was not going to be a party to the House abandoning its Privileges. There was the case of a Commission issued in respect of the election at Northallerton, which was one of the purest elections that ever took place. These things were a lesson to the House to be cautious. The Government had not answered his question when they were going to fill up the other vacant seats? He supposed some other great Bill was to be brought forward. He protested, however, against the unconstitutional doctrine that the issue of a Commission would justify delay in issuing a Writ; at the same time, he was delighted that another unconstitutional doctrine had been abandoned.

Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void.

QUESTIONS.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS —RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the diversity of the provisions for the constitution and punishment of Police offences in the Private Police Acts in force in the various towns in Scotland, the different powers of sanitary supervision and administration, and the different rules as to the levying of local assessments enacted under them; whether he contemplates, during next Session, the introduction of a general Police Bill for Scotland, laying down general principles on those and other points, and granting powers to be adopted by local authorities in whole or in part; and, if so, whether his intention will be made known to town councils and other local authorities in Scotland in time to prevent them incurring the expense of introducing Private Bills dealing with questions proposed to be dealt with in a general measure?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I am aware that there is much diversity in the provisions of the Private Police Acts in force in different towns in Scotland—a diversity which sometimes proves unsatisfactory. I hope to be able during next Session to introduce a general Police Bill for Scotland of the nature indicated in the Question, and before doing so I shall communicate with the local authorities referred to.

MR. M'LAREN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will take into consideration the recommendations of the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations of this Session; and, whether, in order to give effect to their Report, and to put a stop to the recent practice of altering the general Law of the three Kingdoms by unsystematic and anomalous provisions in Private Police Acts, he will, next Session, after conferring with the Local Government Board, either introduce a General Police and Sanitary Clauses Bill for the United Kingdom on the lines suggested by the honourable Member for Glasgow, or propose that such Standing Orders shall be adopted with regard to the introduction of Private Police Bills as will give effect to the same Report?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not quite sure that I understand the Question of my hon. and learned Friend. I imagine this matter was sufficiently dealt with by the Standing Order which was passed and came into force on the 11th of August. If the hon. and learned Member wishes anything further in the matter, I shall be happy to communicate with him.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — RETIRED RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland, Whether the Government have yet assigned pensions to Major Percy and other lately retired Resident Magistrates; if not, what is the cause of the delay, and, when will the matter be settled; are those gentlemen, since their compulsory retirement, in receipt of any public money; and, is it intended to take into account, in settling their pensions, that, but for the reorganisation of the Service, they would probably have held their situations for life?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Treasury Minute assigning pensions to Major Percy and all the other retiring Resident Magistrates, except two, went over to Dublin yesterday. These gentlemen have remained on full salary until about the 4th of October, and their pensions will run from the day following the cessation of their salary. A delay in the award of a pension makes no difference in the date of its commencement. They are being pensioned on the special terms allowed on abolition of office; but it is erroneous to suppose that a Civil servant has any right to look forward to holding his situation for life, and such an assumption is specially unwarrantable in the case of Resident Magistrates, whose duties are of a more active nature than those of ordinary Civil servants.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Could the right hon. Gentleman say who the exceptions are?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am not quite sure; but I think Mr. Dennehy and Mr. Byrne.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION— COURT VALUERS.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Memorandum or Recommendation of the Irish Land Commission submitted to the Irish Government relative to the appointment of official Court Valuers?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The recommendations of the Land Commissioners were made partly by private, partly by official Correspondence, and I do not think the documents ought to be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. GIBSON: Why?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I can give the right hon. and learned Gentleman a good instance. Last Session hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House took exception to certain Sub-Commissioners being employed in some districts. I corresponded with the Land Commissioners on these Questions, and I am bound to say—looking to the sort of semi-official Correspondence which this class of Questions necessitates—it will be quite impossible to lay the Correspondence on the Table of the House. The Correspondence between the Government and the Land Commissioners is extremely diversified.

Mr. GIBSON: Am I to understand, then, that the House and the country will not be given any document or Memorandum whatever to show what was the representation made by the independent Court of the Irish Land Commission to the Irish Executive?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

Mr. GIBSON: I will repeat the Question to-morrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACTS—THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION, BIRMINGHAM.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the report is correct that placards have been exhibited upon some of the Board Schools in Birmingham, soliciting votes for certain candidates in the forthcoming election for the School Board; and, whether he considers that to be a proper use for buildings erected and maintained out of the rates?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I have received no complaint from Birmingham on the subject of the hon. Member's Question; but an inquiry which I addressed to the Chairman of the School Board has elicited the following reply from Mr. George Dixon, who was for several years a highly-respected Member of this House:—

> "In reply to your note of yesterday, I have been told that placards of the kind referred to have been posted on one of our Board Schools; but it has been done without the knowledge or sanction of the Board, and the caretakers on a former similar occasion were told to have the placard washed off. I object to our walls being so made use of, and shall again bring the subject before the Buildings Committee, and hope that some remedy may be devised."

This entirely exonerates the Birmingham School Board; and I take this opportunity of expressing my opinion that all schools aided by Government grants should be held strictly neutral in election contests.

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS).

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board have any means of coping with exceptional distress, as far as the able-bodied poor are concerned, unless additional powers are conferred upon them?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Ample relief may be afforded to the able-bodied poor in the workhouses while there is room therein, and when the workhouses are full, they may legally be afforded outdoor relief.

Colonel COLTHURST asked if a single able-bodied person applied for outdoor relief in the last famine period?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—QUETTA AND CANDAHAR.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it has now been decided to extend the Railway from Sibi; and, whether any and, if so, what means will be taken to connect Quetta with the Indian Railway system?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: It has not been decided to extend the railway beyond Sibi towards Candahar; but a branch line has been made from Sibi to Pir Chowki, at the foot of the Bolan Pass. There is, therefore, no direct railway communication with Quetta; but Quetta is connected with the railway system of India by a road through the Bolan Pass.

TURKEY—SHEIKH OBEIDULLAH.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the recent statement of a letter having been written by the Sheikh Obeidullah, alleging that he had been offered assistance by the Russian Government, with a view to the establishment of a quasi-independent Principality?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We have not heard of any such letter having been written.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—REMITTANCES FROM INDIA, 1882-3.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Secretary of State for India, What was the total amount estimated in the Budget to be remitted from India for the service of the Home Government during the financial year 1882-3, and what amount has been so remitted up to the present time?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The amount estimated in the Budget to be remitted from India in 1882-3 was £15,342,000. Of this sum, however, about £900,000 was received before the 31st of March, 1882, in excess of the revised Estimate for the year 1881-2; and £400,000 received from the Southern Mahratta Railways Company, which will be expended in India this year, is also treated as a remittance by the Government of India. These sums reduce the requirements for 1882-3 to £14,042,000. The amount remitted up to the present time is £4,503,866.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—MOUNTED INFANTRY.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, after the past experiences of Mounted Infantry, it is contemplated to establish some permanent nucleus of such a Force, so as to avoid having again to improvise it in the face of the enemy?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (for Mr. Childers): On the 4th of May the Secretary of State for War answered a similar Question put by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Shropshire; but I presume his Question is directed to ascertain whether his views had been altered by the experience of the late war. In reply, I have to say that while it is intended to keep on record the organization requisite for such a force and to maintain the necessary equipment in store, it is not deemed advisable, with our limited establishments, to create the nucleus of a force of Mounted Infantry such as that to which the Question of the hon. Baronet would seem to point.

CRIMINAL LAW—JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

Mr. CARBUTT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the following case, reported in the "South Wales Daily Telegram," of November 15th, is correct:—

> "Tredegar Petty Sessions.—Margaret Jane Evans, aged 11, William Cochlin, aged 11, Bridget Murphy, aged 11, Margaret Fordham, aged 12, William Edwards, aged 8, John Price, aged 8, Howell Thomas, aged 14, and Ann Price, aged 10, were summoned by Constable Vaughan for stealing coal. The Bench sent them to the lock-up for one day, which will be recorded as a conviction against them. It is sad to see such sights as these. The dock being quite full of delinquents so young that two of them, aged 6, were ordered to stand down;"

whether it be the fact that convictions will be recorded in these cases; and, whether he can relieve these children from the stigma of having a conviction recorded against them?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the facts stated in the Report were probably correct. He, however, had no control over such cases. Everybody must regret that children of this tender age should be sent to prison; but those cases of coal stealing were connived at, if not instigated by, the parents, and some mode of repression must be provided. One of the arrears of legislation was a measure which he hoped to introduce, whereby he hoped to get at the parents and impose fines upon them, which he believed would have far more effect than sending the children to prison.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF CROWN WITNESSES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, at the meeting of the Drumcondra Town Commissioners on last Friday, a report was read from Mr. John Kelly, the Sanitary Officer of the Board, stating that he had recently visited the house, No. 19, Richmond Road, Dublin, which is occupied by

Crown witnesses; that, in this house of five small rooms and a kitchen, he had found twenty people lodged; that one small room, 18 feet by 9, was used as a sleeping apartment for seven persons, a father, three sons, and three daughters —the eldest daughter nineteen years of age, the eldest son fourteen—and only two beds for the whole family; that in another room, six brothers and sisters, the eldest boy thirteen, the eldest girl eleven, slept together on two mattresses placed side by side on the floor; that the earthen floor of the house was damp and dirty, the bedding filthy, and the most primitive sanitary necessities were disregarded; whether the Sub-Sanitary Officer of the Board was refused admission to another House, No. 15, Richmond Road, Dublin, also used for accommodation of Crown witnesses, and, whether this house has been inspected by a medical gentleman, Dr. Nedley, who reports that he found thirty persons lodged there; that he saw in front of the house "a mound composed of used up palliasses, over which are thrown the products of an adjoining pigstye, and a garnishing of potato peelings and decomposing cabbage stalks;" and that there was a total want of sewerage and drainage, and a gross defect in sanitary accommodation; whether the facts are as stated; whether one or both of these houses has been used by the Crown to lodge Crown witnesses since about the year 1848; whether policemen are in charge of the houses; whether adequate provision is made from the public funds for the housing and lodging of Crown witnesses in Dublin; and, if so, who receives the money, and how is it accounted for; and, what steps will now be taken to ascertain whether there has been embezzlement of the public money; to look after the condition of the inmates of those houses; and to punish such agents of the Crown as may be found responsible for a state of things so inimical both to decency and the public health?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am aware that a Report was read from the Sanitary Officer of the Drumcondra Town Commissioners to the effect that the Crown witnesses were most improperly accommodated. Dr. Nedley also reported to the same effect; but I have reason to believe that the sanitary state of the houses is not so bad as has been represented. Dr. Gibbs, who is the Medical Officer of Health for the district, is medical attendant at the houses in question, and he reported, on the 15th instant, that there was little ground for a reasonable complaint against their sanitary state; and Dr. Nedley added in his Report, with regard to the inmates—

> "Their food, I have reason to believe, was abundant and wholesome; they were comfortably clad, and looked contented."

One of the houses has been used by the Crown since 1848; the other was taken about two months ago, and is held from month to month. With regard to the refusal of admission to Mr. Kelly, the sanitary officer, the facts are that the constable in charge received orders not to admit any person unless authorized by his officer to do so. Mr. Kelly had no order, and was refused admission. He was subsequently informed by the Sub-Inspector that he would at any time accompany him to the house; but he had not availed himself of the offer.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS COURTS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a case was recently heard at the Murroe Petty Sessions, county Limerick, before the Resident Magistrate of the district, and three other local magistrates, where two caretakers of the Property Defence Association, named Parker and Eakins, were charged with entering houses at night and demanding arms and money; whether the charge against them was dismissed by the Bench; if it is true, as reported in the daily Dublin papers of 17th and 18th instant, that, notwithstanding such hearing and dismissal, the Lord Lieutenant sent down two other Resident Magistrates to rehear the case; if it is also true that these Resident Magistrates objected to the local magistrates taking part in the proceedings, and that the latter retired, protesting against the proceedings; whether these Resident Magistrates then committed the two men for trial without hearing the evidence for the defence; and, if he will state to the House under what statute the Lord Lieutenant has power to send Resident Magistrates to review and set aside the rulings of properly constituted Petty Sessions Courts?

MR. TREVELYAN: As this Question relates to a matter of law upon which the Government consulted the Attorney General as their Legal Officer, I must beg to refer the hon. Member to him. As far as policy is concerned, I cordially agree with what has been done, and it was done on the urgent representation of Mr. Clifford Lloyd.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am responsible for this, and the facts are these—Application was made at Murroe Petty Sessions that informations should be received against two men named Parker and Eakins, and that they should be returned for trial on a charge of entering houses armed at night and taking arms and money. These men are, I understand, in the employment of an Association called the Property Defence Association. The Bench, consisting of one Resident Magistrate and three local magistrates, by a majority, refused the application. This was without prejudice to a further application if the Crown was so advised. The matter being then brought under my attention, it was my duty, as Public Prosecutor in Ireland, to see that justice did not miscarry. Of course, the House will understand that I offer no opinion whatever either as to the guilt or innocence of these men; but I was, and am, of opinion that if the deponents were credible persons, a case was made out proper to be submitted for investigation by a jury, and, that being so, my duty was plain. I directed a fresh application to be made, and that was done. The Government directed two Resident Magistrates to attend; the same local magistrates also attended. The Resident Magistrates stated that if a case was established, proper in their opinion to go before a jury, they would, on their own responsibility, return the persons charged for trial. The local magistrates stated they did not contemplate taking part in the proceedings. The hearing proceeded; all evidence adduced was heard; and the solicitor for the accused reserved his defence. The men were returned for trial, and I have directed a prosecution at the Munster Winter Assize before a special jury. In reply to the last paragraph of this Question, the Lord Lieutenant did not send Resident Magistrates to review and set aside the rulings of properly constituted Petty Sessions Courts, and there is no Statute for that purpose.

MR. GIBSON assumed, as there was some confusion on the subject, that the Resident Magistrates who re-heard the case sat under the Petty Sessions Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I take it for granted that they were sitting under their ordinary jurisdiction, and under the Petty Sessions Act. I may be permitted to say that I used the words Property Defence Association, because the hon. Member used them in his Question. It is quite immaterial whether these men were employed by this Association or not; the sole question was, was there a case for a jury?

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE DROMOD PETTY SESSIONS CLERK.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state the result of the inquiry that has recently been held into the circumstances attending the election for clerk of Petty Sessions of the Dromod and Drumsna Districts, County Leitrim; and, if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Correspondence, and of the Report of the Inquiry?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have inquired very carefully into this case, and have found that there are two magistrates who support Mr. Ruthven's statement that he took part in the general business of the Petty Sessions on the days in dispute—the 9th of January and the 20th of March—which attendance would be necessary in order to qualify him to vote. On the other hand, there are two magistrates who maintain that on those occasions he took no part in the business. Under these circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that the original entry in the order-book must govern the case; and I have, therefore, recommended Mr. Ruthven's vote to be set aside, on the ground that it was not properly registered on the occasions in question.

STREET REGULATIONS (METROPOLIS) —CABMEN'S SHELTER IN THE HARROW ROAD.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it be true that the Vestry of Paddington have, by a majority of one, decided to give notice for the removal of the Cabmen's Shelter in the Harrow Road, the mover of the resolution giving as his reason for making the proposition that he had purchased a coffee shop, which was interfered with by the Shelter; and, whether he will use his influence with the Vestry to procure a reconsideration of the resolution, which will, if carried out, deprive the men of the Shelter just at the approach of winter?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was not sure that he had any authority in the case. The Question affected a class of people to whom they were all very much indebted, and he would direct the police to make inquiries and see what could be done.

PERU—TREATMENT OF CHINESE COOLIES.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any recent Reports have been received from Her Majesty's Minister at Lima regarding the condition and treatment of the Chinese in Peru; and, if not, whether he will give instructions that such Reports should be made?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The only recent Reports on the subject from Her Majesty's Minister in Peru relate to the kidnapping of free Chinese and their sale to the planters in the Northern Provinces for employment on their sugar estates. Her Majesty's Minister made official representations against this practice to the Commander of the Chilian Forces last year, and I am happy to state that measures were in consequence taken, which it is hoped have put an end to these proceedings. Admiral Stirling, commanding Her Majesty's Naval Force on the Pacific Station, assisted in the suppression of the traffic by sending officers to search the outgoing steamers, and warning British subjects against allowing these Coolies to be shipped under the British flag.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE X.—THE VARNA RAILWAY.

MR. ALDERMAN COTTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Why the stipulations of the Berlin Treaty with regard to the Varna Railway have not yet been carried out; what negotiations are now pending; and what the British Government proposes to do to bring about a speedy settlement of this question?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The claim of the Varna-Rustchuck Railway Company has not been settled, on account of differences between the Company and the Bulgarian Government as to the extent of the obligations of the latter under Article X. of the Treaty of Berlin. Her Majesty's Government have been for some time in negotiation with the Bulgarian Government for the settlement of this question, and it has been agreed to refer it to arbitration. The draft of an agreement for that purpose is at the present time under consideration.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE CENTRAL HALL.

MR. SCHREIBER asked the First Commissioner of Works, What steps he intends to take in the next Session of Parliament for completing the decoration of the Central Hall of the Houses?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, it was very improbable that any steps would be taken in that direction. So far as he could understand he believed the existing arrangements were fairly satisfactory, and that the House did not desire any change to be made.

MR. SCHREIBER gave Notice that early next Session, if the Rules of the House allowed, he would call attention to the continued exclusion of the three National Saints from their places in the Central Hall, and move a Resolution.

NAVY—THE "LONDON" HULK, ZANZIBAR.

MR. CROPPER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the hulk "London," stationed at Zanzibar, has been reported as insanitary by a competent surveyor, her timbers being rotten and leaky; and, whether there have been, since that Report, severe outbreaks of fever among the sailors who are stationed in the "London;" and, if so, whether some other system can be adopted at Zanzibar, or some other ship substituted for the "London?"

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is true that there was for sometime a good deal of sickness on board the *London*, at Zanzibar. Much, however, has been done to improve her condition, and the latest reports show a diminution in the amount of sickness. The whole

Question is under the consideration of the Admiralty; and Rear Admiral Sir William Hewett, the Commander-in-Chief on the Station, has been directed to proceed to Zanzibar to inquire fully into the subject.

INDIA (MADRAS)—GOLD MINING COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

MR. O'DONNELL, asked the Secretary of State for India, If the Government have received information showing that in 1880, certain officials in Madras, among whom were two Secretaries to the Government of Madras, the officiating Deputy Adjutant General Madras Army, and several heads of departments under the Madras Government, were promoters of a number of Gold Mining Companies with a capital of a million sterling; that these officials asked the sum of £245,000 as purchase money of a portion of one large block of land granted them free of price by Government; that in September 1880 these officials stood to receive in cash and shares from Mining Companies the following sums:—£55,000 from the Mysore Gold Mining Company; £50,000 from the Madras Gold Mining Company; £50,000 from the Ooregawm Gold Mining Company; £90,000 from the Colar Gold Mining Company; whether he authorised these proceedings; and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the amount and value of the lands belonging to the Native State of Mysore which were alienated by gift or purchase during the past seven years?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The India Office has not received any information to the effect indicated in this Question. I shall, however, cause inquiries to be made in India regarding the matters referred to by the hon. Member.

INDIA—CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE—SALEM RIOTERS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact that, at the trial of the prisoners accused of rioting at Salem, which ended in the infliction of sentences of penal servitude for long terms of years, both the native assessors of the presiding Judge declared that the evidence was insufficient to convict the prisoners; and, if the presiding Judge was alone in his judgment of guilty?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It appears from the reports in the Indian newspapers—from which alone I have any information on the subject—that it is a fact that at the trial referred to, the two Native assessors declared the evidence insufficient to convict the prisoners. As there was but one Judge there can be no doubt that he was alone in his judgment of "guilty." The cases were tried in the usual way by the Sessions Judge with the aid of two assessors. The assessors are not jurors, nor are their duties those of a jury. By law it is expressly enacted in the Criminal Procedure Code, and has for many years been the recognized practice, that the opinion of each assessor is to be given orally, and recorded in writing by the Court; but the decision is vested exclusively in the Judge; and the law directs that the Judge shall proceed to pass judgment of acquittal or conviction "having considered the opinions of the assessors, but not being bound to conform to them."

MR. O'DONNELL asked the noble Marquess if he would take care that the opinions of the assessors in future should be submitted to the Judges of the Supreme Court before the ratification of the sentences upon Hindoo prisoners?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that he had no power to deal with the question.

INDIA (BENGAL)—THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF CALCUTTA.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on the departure of Mr. Marsden, Chief Magistrate of Calcutta, on leave of absence, Mr. B. L. Gupta, the magistrate next in rank, was not appointed to act in Mr. Marsden's absence, but was passed over in favour of an English barrister, Mr. Henderson; whether it is true that Mr. B. L. Gupta was called to the Bar in 1871, is a civilian of eleven years' standing, and has been Presidency Magistrate for more than two years; whether it is true that Mr. Henderson was only called to the Bar in 1876, and was never in Government service; and, whether this appointment is in conformity with the Government undertaking towards the Native Indian Civil Servants of the Crown?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My attention has been called by the Question of the hon. Member to this appointment. The positions of Mr. Gupta and Mr. Henderson appear to be accurately stated in the Question; but I have no information as to the circumstances under which the appointment was made, and I have no reason to suppose that in making it any injury to the Native Indian Civil Servants of the Crown was either done or intended to be done. The appointment is one not of a class to which members of the Covenanted Civil Service have any special claim. The vacancy was only for three months, and for such a short period I am informed that there is always a difficulty in providing satisfactorily for carrying on the duties of the office. I have no reason to doubt that the Lieutenant Governor made the best arrangement he could under the circumstances.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is true that the Government have refused to afford Naval or Military aid to the landlords of the Skye Crofters in their proceedings against their tenantry?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The views of the Cabinet upon this question were conveyed to the authorities of the county of Inverness in a letter written to the Sheriff of that county by the Lord Advocate, and dated 3rd November of this year. It would be too long to read that letter to the House, and I would refer the hon. Member to that letter, in which, I think, he will find an answer to his Question.

MR. O'DONNELL: Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman have any objection to state the substance of that letter, and whether it is the fact that the Government have refused naval or military aid to the Skye landlords against their tenants?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think it would be very unwise to answer that Question "Yes" or "No," because the view of the Government on the subject is expressed very carefully in that letter. If the hon. Member will move for that letter he will have it; but to answer otherwise than in the way stated in that letter would not be wise.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would consent to lay that letter on the Table of the House?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes.

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—TORY ISLAND.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that a third of the population of Tory Island, on the coast of Donegal, are in destitution; that the main cause of the poverty of the people is due to the want of any harbour accommodation for fishery purposes; and, whether he will recommend the commencement of works of the kind required, which will, at the same time, afford immediate employment to the necessitous inhabitants? The hon. Member added that since he put this Question on the Paper he had received a letter from the Catholic clergyman in charge of the Island, stating that not only were one-third of the population totally destitute, but that the remaining two-thirds had not supplies sufficient to last them beyond Christmas, and that during most of the wintry weather, Tory Island, being nine miles from the mainland, was almost inaccessible, and consequently the danger of famine was imminent indeed.

MR. SEXTON wished, before the Question was answered, to read a telegram he had that day received from the Rev. W. P. Cosgrave, P.P., County Sligo, stating that on Tuesday no Indian meal could be had in Sligo for any price, and that the poor people from the rev. gentleman's district, which is 20 miles distant, came home empty and were in great distress. The telegram concluded by asking what would the Government do. Would the people starve?

MR. TREVELYAN: An Inspector of the Local Government Board has just been to Tory Island, and I have received his Report, which is dated the 18th instant, this morning. In that Report, he states that he has not found anything so exceptional in the condition of the Islanders as to lead him to fear that the Poor Law in its ordinary administration will prove insufficient to meet their wants. They gave him the impression of being a fairly thriving fishing population; they have as many boats as they can use or man; and passing steamers afford them facilities for selling fresh fish in Liverpool and Glasgow, and salted fish at Falcarra. Three steamers returning weekly from Sligo take whatever fish is ready for Liverpool or Glasgow, and bring back coals or provisions, or other necessaries, in return for the fish thus disposed of. They have plenty of seaweed thrown on the Island, from which they manufacture kelp. The Inspector was informed that the quantity made last year was sold for £600. The Census of 1881 gives the population as 140 males, and 192 females, and they have 30 boats, generally from 25 feet to 30 feet long. I therefore consider that, being within nine miles of land, they are in no great danger of starvation.

MR. O'DONNELL wished to ask, with regard to the statement of the Poor Law Inspector that the ordinary machinery of the Poor Law would be sufficient to meet the distress, how many miles was the nearest workhouse from Tory Island?

MR. TREVELYAN: With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Sligo, a definite telegram like that deserves a definite inquiry. Reports are constantly coming in from that district, and they have not foreshadowed any immediate necessity of the kind stated.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: There is one point in the Question of my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo to which I would like to direct the attention of the Chief Secretary. It is whether he is aware that Indian meal, which is the staple food of a large portion of this poor population, is very scarce and almost as dear as flour?

MR. TREVELYAN: That is a statement which, I think, deserves inquiry.

MR. CALLAN: May I ask what is the name of the Inspector who visited Tory Island, the date of his visit, and whether he saw the Catholic priest, the only educated person on the Island?

MR. TREVELYAN: The name of the Inspector is Mr. MacFarlane, and his Report is corroborated by information which has been received from the officer of the gun-boat. As I have received his Report this morning, I suppose he returned a few days ago.

MR. O'DONNELL: I beg to give Notice that to-morrow I will ask the Chief Secretary how many miles the nearest workhouse is to Tory Island?

NAVY—H.M.S. "POLYPHEMUS."

MR. O'SHEA asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the "Polyphemus" is a failure?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In reply to the brief but comprehensive inquiry of my hon. Friend, which involves a question rather of opinion than of fact, I have to say that, so far from the *Polyphemus* being considered a failure, the intentions of the designer have been fulfilled as regards the essential conditions of draught and stability. It has also been ascertained by trial that, with the stipulated horse-power, the estimated speed will be attained, and even exceeded. The experiment with a group of locomotive boilers has not proved so successful as was hoped; and boilers of a known and successful type are being constructed, which will, it is believed, give the stipulated horse-power.

PENAL SERVITUDE COMMISSION, 1879—IRISH CONVICT LABOUR.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the future employment of convict labour has yet reported upon the employment of Irish convict labour; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Penal Servitude of 1879 as regards the removal of convicts from Spike Island?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Report of the Committee is in type, and I have seen a copy of it; but it is not yet ready for public circulation. The question of how the convicts now confined in Spike Island Prison should be provided for is not dealt with in that Report, having been postponed until there has been time for the Government to give further attention to the subject.

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS)—ROSCOMMON.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any report has been received by the Local Government Board from Captain Spaight as to the failure of the crops and consequent impending distress in the county Roscommon?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board have not received any special Reports from their Inspector, Major Spaight, as to impending distress in the county Roscommon; but in some observations made by him respecting the Castlerea Union, he stated he believed there would be distress in consequence of the failure of the potato crop. He further stated, in reference to a representation from the Guardians of the Boyle Union, in the same county, that he thought they had taken an exaggerated view of the impending distress; but he has been directed to visit the Union to ascertain the facts.

INDIA—CONSULS AT THE NATIVE STATES—THE CASE OF MR. SILBIGER.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, with reference to the reply given by the British Government to the Austrian Ambassador's representations on the case of Silbiger versus the Maharaja of Jeypore, high English and Indian legal opinion has been submitted to the India Office to the effect that "the so called award, if judged by the standard and principles of English Law, is invalid;" and to the further effect that "the so called arbitration does not seem to have been conducted in a judicial mode;" and, if so, whether the British Government is still able to rely on the so called arbitration as a ground for refusing the inquiry asked for by the Austrian Ambassador?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Legal opinions to the effect stated by the hon. Member have been submitted to the India Office; but I have had no opportunity of seeing the statement of facts upon which they are based. All the facts connected with the arbitration were before the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in Council when the case was under consideration. I have, therefore, nothing to add to the answer which I gave to the Question of the hon. Member on the subject on the 31st of July last—namely, that I saw no reason for re-opening the case.

Mr. O'Kelly

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he has seen the following statement in the "Freeman's Journal" of 20th November:—

> "On Saturday a fleet of herring boats went out to fish, but, owing to the boisterous character of the weather, they were forced to relinquish the attempt. When returning all the vessels save two failed to take the bar, and two boats were wrecked. One boat was smashed to splinters, and, but for the assistance promptly rendered by a number of other boats, the men would, it is only too certain, have been lost. The crews of the boats that failed to take the bar put in at Wicklow, and they were compelled to walk home to Arklow, a distance of fourteen miles;"

and, if he will communicate with the Board of Works in Ireland with a view to having the Arklow Harbour works begun immediately?

Mr. COURTNEY: I stated the other day that there would be no avoidable delay in getting the Arklow Harbour works carried out, and I can only repeat that promise now. I learn by telegraph that the tenders have been opened and one selected; the successful competitor has been informed and requested to proceed with the least possible delay; and the formal contract will be completed as soon as possible.

IRELAND—SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM, DUBLIN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with regard to the project approved by the Treasury for the erection of the National Science and Art Museum in Dublin, Whether he is aware that the project in question was unanimously condemned, by men representing all sections of the community, at a meeting of the Municipal Council of Dublin, held on Monday last; that every public journal in Dublin, without distinction of political opinion, has joined in condemnation of the project; and that the Lord Mayor, by unanimous request of the Corporation, has convened a public meeting of citizens to consider and pronounce upon the scheme; and, whether the Treasury, before taking any further step in the matter, will be careful to inform themselves of the condition of Irish public opinion on the subject, and will have regard to the nature and weight of that opinion in deciding upon the course to be pursued?

MR. COURTNEY: When the period of exhibition of the designs has expired, the Treasury will obtain the collected results of any expressions of opinion which may have been given in Dublin on the proposed new Museum. If the hon. Member's description of local sentiment be correct, it has undergone a complete revolution in less than two years; and it is open to the remark that we heard nothing of any change until after it was discovered that the designs of no Irish architect had obtained a place among the selected designs.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF CROWN WITNESSES.

MR. SEXTON: Before I ask Question 27, which stands next on the Paper, I wish to say that in consequence of the unsatisfactory and evasive reply which I received to Question 12, which related to the accommodation of Crown witnesses in Dublin, I shall pursue the inquiry from day to day until I get a direct reply.

MR. TREVELYAN: I am sorry that the hon. Member thinks my answer evasive. Perhaps the hon. Member will tell me on what point it was evasive. If so, perhaps I have the information he requires.

MR. SEXTON: I shall question the right hon. Gentleman further as to what steps have been taken to stop the scandalous state of things in which seven persons are obliged to sleep on one palliasse; and also what steps are being taken to ascertain whether the public money has been embezzled; and what agents of the Crown are responsible for the indecency of the state of things described in my Question, and whether they will be punished?

MR. TREVELYAN: Several of these Questions are new.

MR. SEXTON: Not one of them.

MR. TREVELYAN: The agents of the Crown in this matter were the Constabulary, and there is no reason to suppose that any of the public money has been embezzled. The money grant for the maintenance of Crown witnesses is defrayed out of the Vote for Law Charges, and is disbursed through the Constabulary officers for the district. The two houses in which the witnesses were lodged were in charge of a constable, who himself lived in one of them; and, in point of fact, the arrangements made for the sleeping accommodation of the witnesses were made in accordance with the wishes of the heads of the families.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask whether it was in accordance with the wishes of the heads of the families that seven persons were put to sleep in one room; or was it because there was not another room in the house?

MR. TREVELYAN said that, as a matter of fact, there was another room in the house. The heads of the families were the father in one case, and the father and mother in another, and they made the arrangements for the sleeping. It was revealed at the trial that the people were accustomed to very miserable accommodation; and, as a matter of fact, it was in accordance with their wishes that they slept in one room.

MR. SEXTON: Is it contemplated that when a grant of money is given by the country for the maintenance of Crown witnesses seven witnesses should be obliged to sleep in one room; and, if not, how is the money expended?

MR. TREVELYAN: The answer to that is that there was another room.

IRELAND—GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS—PRINTING.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the rule or usage in force with regard to having the printing locally required by Irish Government Departments executed in Ireland?

MR. COURTNEY: Printing locally required by Irish Government Departments is almost invariably executed in Ireland—in fact, the only real exceptions to this rule in recent times have been cases where the matter to be printed has been of an especially confidential character, such as falls to be printed only at the confidential press in London.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the County Authority of Inverness-shire recently resolved to double the police force at a computed cost of £3,000 per annum; whether the Government has agreed to recognise the increase, and pay half costs; whether, before involving the ratepayers of the county and the community in this large increase, he satisfied himself of the justice and necessity of such a step; and, whether, in view of the dissatisfaction and discontent prevalent amongst considerable numbers of the rural and crofter population in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the desire expressed by many interested, including an influential portion of the Press in Inverness, Edinburgh, and London, for a Commission of Inquiry, Government will now accede to the request?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: In answer to the first Question, it is true that the authorities of the county of Inverness—that extensive county—have determined to increase the police force by 50 men. With reference to the second and third Questions, in the letter to which I have already referred the hon. Member will see that the Government did say—and it was their duty to say so—that they would sanction any force of police which the authorities of the county thought were necessary to vindicate and to execute the law. With reference to the last Question, it is one of so grave a character that I could not answer it now without consulting my Colleagues upon it.

MR. MACFARLANE: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he can state what are the facts that have caused this necessary increase in the police of Inverness-shire? Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman able to say whether or not it is a fact that this extra sum to be charged upon the county and the ratepayers of the United Kingdom arises solely and entirely from a dispute about £100 between a landlord and his tenant?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think the hon. Member will see it would not be at all wise to answer a Question of that kind. Everybody must feel that it is the duty of the Local Authority and the Government to see that the law is respected. As to the other Questions, they are very proper Questions for inquiry; but it would be entirely out of my power at this moment, in answer to a Question, to enter into so large a matter as that.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, with reference to his letter to the Sheriff of Inverness, dated the third instant, If he will be good enough to specify the statutes or statute whereby the county authority (the ordinary strength of its police force being annually reported as efficient) is bound to provide and maintain a police force, unlimited in number, for the due execution of writs issuing from the Supreme Civil Courts of Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The Act of 20 & 21 *Vict.* c. 72 is the leading Statute on this subject. It requires that a sufficient police force shall be established for each county; and by Section 5 it provides that it shall be lawful for the Commissioners of Supply, on the recommendation of the Police Committee of any county, from time to time, with the consent of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, to increase or diminish the number of constables appointed for such county. The number of constables annually required to constitute a sufficient police force must, of course, depend upon the condition of each county. One of the chief duties of such a force is to protect from violence persons exercising their lawful rights, or performing their duties within the county; and officers of the law executing writs or orders issuing from the Supreme Court are eminently entitled to be protected from violence in discharging this important duty.

STATE OF IRELAND (APPREHENDED DISTRESS) —CO. CLARE.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will order an experienced official of the Local Government Board to thoroughly investigate the state of the small farmers and labourers within the Unions of Kilrush, Ennistymon, and Corofin, county Clare; and, if so, whether he will lay the report furnished by that official before the House?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have already received Reports from the Local Government Board relative to the state of Ennistymon and Corofin Unions, and one of their most experienced Inspectors has been in County Clare making further inquiries. No allegations of any unusual distress in the Kilrush Union have reached me; but the Inspector will be instructed to make inquiries there also. There will be no objection to producing the Reports relating to Ennistymon and Corofin.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—ENNIS AND WEST CLARE RAILWAY.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received an answer from the Treasury to his communication respecting a guaranteed loan towards the construction of the Ennis and West Clare Railway; and, if not, whether, in view of the relief to the distress of the labouring classes in the district which employment on the works would afford, he will move the Treasury to speedily announce its decision?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have received an answer from the Treasury on this subject, in which they inform me that, having referred the matter to the Commissioners of Public Works in Dublin, they have received a Report from that Board stating that no application has yet been made by the Directors of the Railway Company to the Board for a loan, and that the conditions precedent to their borrowing, with regard to the subscriptions for and paying up of share capital, have not yet been fulfilled. Until the Directors are legally competent to contract a loan, and have applied for one to the Commissioners of Public Works, it is obvious that the Treasury cannot take any steps in the matter.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1872—SCHOOL BOARD ACCOUNTS.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, inasmuch as the Report for the year ending Whitsunday 1881 by the Accountant for Scotland to the Scotch Education Department has only been laid upon the Table on the 21st November 1882, he will take steps to have future Annual Reports presented at an earlier date?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The 49th section of the Education Act of 1872 directs that the accounts of the school boards in Scotland, for years ending Whitsunday, should be transmitted to the accountant on the 1st of January following. Very frequently they are not sent in for three or four months after this date, and sometimes without vouchers. These accounts, nearly 1,000 in number, have to be examined and reported on by the accountant, and in past years his Report has been presented to Parliament some 16 or 17 months after the date—January 1—at which they were due in Edinburgh. My attention was called to this delay in the early part of the Session by the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardine (Sir George Balfour), and a Circular was issued to the school boards requesting that their accounts might be sent in with greater punctuality. This year, by great exertion on the part of the acting accountant, the Report has been presented within 11 months, five or six months earlier than heretofore; and though every effort will be made to insure the appearance of these Reports at an earlier date, I cannot hold out much hope that the time required for a careful examination of the numerous and intricate accounts can, as the law now stands, be much reduced. The question of the audit of the accounts of Public Boards in Scotland has been, and is still, under consideration by the Government.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT—CASE OF ANTHONY GALEAGHER.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can yet state what decision the Land Commission has come to with respect to the declaration of General Tisdal (Investigator for Sligo under the Arrears Act), in the case of Anthony Galeagher, tenant, that, although the tenant had paid a half-year's rent after the first gale day in 1881, and another half-year's rent after the second gale day, it would be necessary for him to pay a third half-year's rent, in order to gain the benefit of the Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The case of Anthony Galeagher has not been brought judicially before the Land Commissioners. In cases where the question of the construction of Section 1, Sub-section 3 of the Arrears Act, appears to arise, the attention of solicitors of tenants was called to the advisability of bringing the cases before the Court for a judicial decision. As yet none have done so, although they have been informed that every facility would be given; and it was even indicated that, if the matter of costs and expenses stood in the way, the Land Commissioners would be prepared to make some arrangement whereby that objection would be obviated.

Mr. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the solicitor has been invited to bring the case before the Court of Land Commissioners?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I will look again at the letter, which I have here; but I have no doubt whatever that is the case.

SPAIN—INTERNATIONAL LAW—SURRENDER OF CUBAN REFUGEES.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government have received any assurances from the Spanish Government that the Cuban refugees will not be subjected to any penalty or maltreatment until the Commission of Inquiry have made their report, or until Her Majesty's Government are in a position to state their views upon the subject to the Government of Spain?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We feel sure that the prisoners will not be subjected to penalty or maltreatment pending inquiry into the rights of the case; and Her Majesty's Government think it would be unadvisable and scarcely courteous to make any representation or request which would imply a doubt on the subject.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT observed, that on Tuesday the Question that had just been answered was said by the hon. Baronet not to arise out of a Question on the same subject then on the Notice Paper. He doubted whether it fell within the hon. Baronet's province to make such a statement.

Mr. O'KELLY asked whether it was true that General Maceo had been deprived of the right of communicating freely with his friends?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am unable to answer that Question, as we have no information with regard to the treatment of the prisoner named by the hon. Member.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—MURDER OF PROFESSOR PALMER AND PARTY.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will state what steps have been taken to punish the murderers of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, R.E., and Lieutenant Charrington, R.N.?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In the interval that has elapsed since this Question was asked for the first time, we have received no additional information. We will take care to communicate without delay any news that may reach us on the subject of the unfortunate fate of these gentlemen.

CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE CROWN—LOCAL APPOINTMENTS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Treasury Minute of 27th March 1849, on the subject of the acceptance by Civil Servants of directorships of companies and the like, has been strictly enforced; whether the principles in regard to the same subject, more precisely set forth in the letter from the Treasury to the Home Department of 6th April 1878, have been put into practice in the Treasury and Home Offices, and in any other Departments; and, whether it is to be understood that before another Session of Parliament the whole subject of extra-official occupations of Civil Servants will be reconsidered with a view to the settlement of definite rules for the whole Civil Service?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The answer to the Question of the hon. Member is very simple. As to the first paragraph, it appears to me that in the Treasury the rule has been strictly observed; but in the other Departments I am not able to say that it has been observed with equal strictness; but I may refer my hon. Friend to a Return made in May, 1880, giving the names of certain Civil servants who are Directors of Trading Companies. With regard to the prospective part of the Question, in the third paragraph, I have already stated that this subject has had the very particular attention of the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, who happened, just before the question was raised, to have left London on his much-needed vacation; and I propose to wait until his return before taking any further steps in the matter.

IRELAND—SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM, DUBLIN.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the opposition to the Government plan for the proposed new Museum of Science and Art, Kildare Street, Dublin; and, whether he will authorise the Irish Local Administration to consult the wishes of the Irish people in this matter?

MR. COURTNEY: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question as relating to a subject with the details of which he is not conversant. Irish opinion has not been neglected in this matter. It was in deference to local Dublin feeling that the site was most reluctantly abandoned which seemed to the Lord President and other Members of the Government, as well as to their skilled advisers, most eligible; and it is in the interest of the people of Ireland that the Government are reluctant, on account of a sudden reversion of feeling stated to have occurred in Dublin, to postpone indefinitely the commencement of this important work.

INCOME TAX—INSOLVENT FIRMS.

MR. LEA asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is generally found that insolvent firms have paid Income Tax on fictitious profits up to the time of their failure, and for several years before; whether this arises from the inquisitorial zeal of Income Tax officials working upon the dread of the exposure of their accounts; and, if, having regard to the losses that are known to have occurred in some of the manufacturing districts during the last few years, Surveyors of Income Tax will be instructed to forbear from pressure which tends to compel the payment of Income Tax at the expense of the creditors of the estate?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): The Question has been put under some misapprehension as to the facts. It is not the fact that it has been found by the Government Department that insolvent firms had commonly paid Income Tax on fictitious profits. That being so, it follows that the second paragraph of the Question also must be answered in the negative. With regard to the third paragraph, I have to reply that pressure compelling the payment of Income Tax at the expense of creditors has not been exercised by the Surveyors. On the contrary, payment is frequently allowed to be deferred pending the result of an appeal at the end of the financial year, the 5th of April, when the true statement of accounts can be ascertained.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the statements in the "Freeman's Journal" and other Irish papers to the effect that the Arrears Act has proved a total failure; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in view of so deplorable a result?

COLONEL COLTHURST pointed out that now only a few days remained in which to make the payments required under the Act, and that it was to be feared that many people were holding back under the idea that the time might be extended. Under these circumstances, he hoped the Government would give the House an opportunity of discussing the whole subject that night.

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to my hon. and gallant Friend, and to the hon. Member opposite, I am bound to say that I have received information to the effect that many cases which might be brought under the operation of the Arrears Act are held back in consequence of the prevalence of an idea that Parliament may be asked to alter the provisions of the Act; and I agree with my hon. and gallant Friend that it is desirable that there should be no doubt of our intentions on this subject. With respect to the statements in *The Freeman's Journal*, I do not think it is necessary to refer to that paper in particular; but we do not agree that the Arrears Act has proved a total failure. The Land Commissioners and some of the highest authorities besides the Land Commissioners are of opinion, in the first place, that the full effect, or anything near the full effect, of the Arrears Act cannot possibly be estimated with any justice until after the expiration of the month of December. They also believe that the number of tenants who will be incapacitated by the limitation of date from using the Act for the purpose of getting the benefit of the Land Act is a small minority. That is the best judgment at which they can arrive. I may add, that the Commissioners learnt with some satisfaction that there has been a marked falling off in the number of evictions during the last three weeks—the diminution of evictions being the aim with which the Arrears Act was passed.

Mr. PARNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will introduce a Bill to amend the Arrears Act, so as to extend the period within which the year's rent in respect of 1881 may be paid for such time as may be necessary to enable the Court of the Land Commission to decide how much rent is payable in respect of that year on estates where the existence of a hanging gale is alleged by the landlord, and also to make provision for the payment out of the Church Fund to the landlord of the costs incurred in proceedings of ejectment, and for the recovery of arrears of rent which the tenant has proved his inability to pay?

Mr. GLADSTONE: My answer to this Question will, in effect, be a supplement to the answer which I gave just now to my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Colthurst). This Question inquires from the Government on two points—first of all, whether we are willing to introduce forthwith, during the present Sitting of Parliament, a Bill to amend the Arrears Act, so as to extend the period within which the year's rent in respect of 1881 may be paid; and, secondly, whether we will make provision for the payment, out of the Church Fund, to the landlord of the costs of proceedings in ejectment, and for the recovery of arrears in rent which the tenant has proved his inability to pay. We do not intend to make any proposal for the extension of the time limited for payment. To this extent the hon. Member will probably agree with me—that when that is our view it is best for all parties that it should be at once clearly and definitely understood. It is most desirable that there should be no uncertainty as to the date up to which the rent must be satisfied, and before application can be made to the Court. As far as we can gather from the opinion of the Land Commissioners, the advantage to any number of tenants concerned—which I have already stated we believe to be small—from an extension of the time would be very slight compared with the injurious results from any extension of the date. It is from that comparative advantage and disadvantage that we have come to this conclusion, and that we desire that this conclusion should be universally known. As regards the subject of costs, it is not a new point. It was raised when the Arrears Act was passing through this House, and the House decided not to make any provision to the effect stated by the hon. Member. We believe that very serious questions would be involved by any relaxation on this point; and it must be remembered that we have already gone to very great lengths in the Arrears Act for the benefit, not of the whole, but of a particular portion of the population. I know when extraordinary measures have been taken in a particular direction they are always made a reason for further legislation. It is not our business to admit that reason. On the contrary, we think ourselves bound not to admit it; and we cannot, therefore, recommend Parliament to adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member.

Mr. ONSLOW: I should like to ask the Prime Minister——[" Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER called on Mr. Parnell.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. PARNELL: Sir, I hold that this question of the failure, or partial failure, of the Arrears Act, in view of the very critical state of the country in Ireland, and the imminence of severe distress, with which the question of arrears is undoubtedly connected, is "a definite matter of urgent public importance." I wish to ask the leave of the House to move its adjournment, in order that I may bring this matter before them, and explain our views for thinking and supposing that the Prime Minister has received erroneous information from the Land Commissioners.

Mr. ONSLOW: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is not competent for me, or any other Member, to put a Question to the Prime Minister, or any other Member of Parliament, before the adjournment of the House is moved? I wish to put a Question, which is not on the Paper, to the Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member will look at the Resolution passed by the House in reference to the adjournment of the House, it says, in effect, that that course may be taken after the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of. Now, all the Questions on the Notice Paper having been disposed of, the Motion may be made. Does the hon. Member for the City of Cork propose to ask the leave of the House to make the Motion?

MR. PARNELL: I do, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it your pleasure that Mr. Parnell be now heard?

And there being many voices for and against—

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard negative voices on the matter, I must ask the hon. Member whether there are 40 Members prepared to support the Motion.

Whereupon, a large number of Members—not less than 40—rising in their places—

MR. SPEAKER called upon the hon. Member for the City of Cork to proceed.

MR. PARNELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to avail myself of the privilege which has been afforded to me of calling the attention of the House to this question of the failure, or partial failure, of the Arrears Act to fulfil the intentions of the Government, and the objects of those intentions. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has stated that, according to the information he has received from the Land Commissioners, only a comparatively small number of tenants will be shut out by the limitation of time at which the rent in respect of the year 1881 can be satisfied; but I think—in fact, I have every reason to believe—that the Court of the Land Commission is not in a position to know how many tenants are desirous of availing themselves of the provisions and benefits of this valuable Act, simply because they do not come into contact with the estate in arrears of rent until applications have been made to them by the tenants on those estates. Therefore, it follows that although the Land Commissioners may have accurate information with regard to the number of applications which have been made to themselves, and the number of such applications which may probably be granted, yet it is impossible for them to know anything about the vast number, as we think the many thousands, of small tenants in Ireland who, through want of time, or through other causes which I shall explain to the House, have not yet been able to apply under the provisions of this Act, or to satisfy the rent in respect of the year 1881. Now, Sir, after the last day of November it will be impossible for these tenants, either by the consent of the landlord or without his consent, to satisfy the rent in respect of the year 1881; and hence it will follow that, owing to the insertion in the Bill of an Amendment—against which the Irish Members protested strongly at the time it was introduced—in one of the last stages of the Bill, by this most pernicious and detrimental Amendment, the time in the Bill was limited to the end of this month, during which the tenants should pay a year's rent in respect of the year 1881, and owing to the fact that up to this moment no decision has been given by the Court of the Land Commissioners as to how much a tenant should pay in view of the operation of what is known as "the Hanging Gale Proviso" of the Act, many thousands of the tenants of Ireland are now in this position, that they do not absolutely know how much rent they ought to pay in respect of the year 1881, and there is no machinery provided by which they can lodge a sufficient amount of rent in Court to cover any amount which the Court hereafter may decide should be paid by them. Now, this is one of the points on which, I think, there has been a failure, or partial failure, of the Act. I do not propose to say that the Act has proved a total failure. That may depend very much upon the decision of the Land Commissioners with regard to the operation of the Proviso which is known as "the hanging gale;" but if that Hanging Gale Proviso, the nature of which I will shortly explain to the House, be interpreted against the views of the tenants, it will undoubtedly result in the total failure of the Arrears Act. I trust and hope that an interpretation may be given by the Land Commissioners Court in favour of the tenants; but if it be not so, I say that the Arrears Act of 1882 will be added to the long list of measures which the people of Ireland have received with high hopes from this Parliament, only to find themselves bitterly and disgracefully disappointed. With regard to the Hanging Gale Proviso under the Bill as it was originally drafted, and as it was read a second time in this House, it was necessary for the tenant to satisfy the landlord in respect of the rent payable for the year of the tenancy expiring on the last day of the last gale of 1881. Under the reading of the sub-section it was perfectly plain that if the tenant paid a half-year's rent on or at any time after the first gale day of 1881, he would be entitled to claim credit in respect of the rent payable for that half year; and if he made application on or after the second gale day, he would be able to claim credit in respect of the whole year's rent. But by the Proviso in the Bill the whole matter has been thrown into confusion, and it is not possible for any tenant in Ireland to know how much rent he ought to pay in respect of 1881, in order to be sure when the time has expired he may not, after he had made his payments, find he has been thrown outside the benefit of the Act. The Proviso was as follows:—

> "That where it appears that, according to the ordinary course of dealing between the landlord and tenant of the holding, the rent of such holding has usually been paid on some day after the day on which it became legally due, the usual day of payment shall be deemed, for the purposes of this sub-section, to be the time at which the rent accrued due."

So utterly incomprehensible a section as that has never, I venture to believe, been inserted in an Act of Parliament before. We protested against it, and moved Amendments against it; but it was all of no use—the Bill went through both Houses of Parliament with this Proviso inserted. Up to the present the balance of legal opinion in Ireland is quite divided in regard to the interpretation to be put upon this Proviso. The Court of the Land Commission has not ventured, up to the present moment, to give any authoritative decision with regard to it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant explained that a few days ago the Court had invited a case to be submitted to it upon this question; but of what use would the submission of such a case be now, unless we can get an extension of the time within which the tenant can make the necessary payment? If the Court of the Land Commission should decide that he has not paid sufficient, the decision of a case taken before the Court in response to the invitation of the Chief Secretary or the Commissioners would be too late to affect the question at all. It should have been given months, or at any rate weeks ago, in order to enable the smaller tenants, who are many of them extremely ignorant of everything, even in numerous cases of the English language, and who live in remote districts, to understand what their legal rights are as to this complicated section. The Commissioners do not appear to have given any definite instructions to their investigators. Many of these gentlemen have given the most contrary decisions as to this matter. Several decisions that have been given by the investigators have had such an effect with regard to this disputed point on large masses of the tenants in the West and North of Ireland, that the tenants have given up making applications under the Arrears Act at all, because they think the decisions given before their eyes in the Court by the investigators must necessarily be the law of the land, and it is no use making their applications. The landlords claim the benefit of the Proviso wherever the rent was usually paid at any time after the gale day; and as no rent is usually paid on the gale day it follows that in every disputed case the landlord claimed the benefit of the Proviso as to the hanging gale. The legal advisers of the tenants, on the other hand, had given it as their opinion that a usual fixed day or date subsequent to the gale day for paying the rents which exists on the estate must exist to entitle the landlord to claim the Proviso in his favour. In the absence of any decisions on the subject the tenants and all concerned are at sea. If the Proviso be interpreted according to the landlord's view, it will follow that the great majority of tenants who have applied to the Court will derive little benefit from their applications. In any case the decisions given by some of the investigators—some of which have been brought before the House—have had such a deterrent effect on the tenants that they have ceased on several estates with which I am acquainted registering their applications to benefit under the Arrears Act. If it were possible for the tenant to make a lodgment of money to pay the amount, he would have to pay in any case with the possibility of having it refunded to him. If he had paid too much the evil would be mitigated. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant says the Government asked the Land Commissioners to grant such money; but they refused on the ground that they had not sufficient power. The view of the Government has been carried ont out, and the Land Commissioners are without the necessary powers. The Government refuse to give the Land Commission Court the necessary legal powers that they (the Government) admit the Court ought to possess. The second point of difficulty is the limitation of time. That limitation of time was inserted in the Act contrary to our express wishes and in spite of our protests. We pointed out that it would in all probability diminish enormously the value of the Act; but it was inserted notwithstanding, and the result has been that many thousands of these poor families in Ireland will be utterly unable to obtain the benefit of the Act. The third point of difficulty is the question of costs. I did think the Government would have seen the justice and equity of extending the provision of the Act so as to enable the Court to relieve the tenant of costs where it is proved he is unable to pay. I have here some remarkable statistics as to the number of tenants who have been evicted in Ireland during the years that have elapsed since the Famine of 1879-80, which families are most of them utterly unable to obtain the restoration of their holdings, owing partly in some cases to the fact that they are not able to find a year's rent in respect of 1881, but chiefly to the fact that they are not able to pay the overwhelming costs that have been heaped on them, which in many cases exceeded the amount of rent they obtained remission upon. In 1879 the number of families evicted was 903, or 4,500 individuals. The number in 1880 was 2,110 families, or 10,657 persons. In 1881, 3,415 families, or 17,541 persons; and in the 10 months of this year, ending October, 4,249 families, or 21,225 persons, including 306 families, or rather over 1,500 persons in the month of October. This makes a total for the four years, or since the distress, of 10,677 families, or 53,723 persons evicted; and it must be remembered that the vast majority of these evicted families and persons have not been benefited or protected in the smallest degree by the Land Act of 1881. Seventy-five per cent of these families were evicted before that Act was passed, and the remaining 25 per cent have been evicted since, while the Land Courts were vainly struggling to hear the cases of the appealing tenants. You must recollect that in almost every case where the tenants have been able to bring their cases for adjudication for the fixing of a fair rent, the Court, more especially where the applicants were small tenants, have given a reduction averaging 30 per cent. Of these families it would be a liberal estimate to say that half had been restored to their homes. If we allow that—which I believe is far beyond the proper estimate—and admit or guess that they will receive the benefit of the Arrears Act, and will get clear back into their homes, we shall be speaking very liberally. You have still the remaining 5,000 families who appeal to you for protection—5,000 families whom you are going to permit to go through the terrible winter that is coming on us in Ireland with no food but Indian meal, the potatoes being all consumed, and with that meal now at 10 guineas per ton, as compared with six guineas per ton last year. These people receive no hope or comfort from the Government. These questions of distress and arrears are most intimately connected. The evicted families, and the others who have not yet been evicted, but over whom the sentence of death is hanging, and who will shortly be evicted—who are being evicted at the present moment, as we have heard, at the rate of 306 per month, are increasing. Every day, every week, every month, this horrible total of evicted families is being added to, and there is no use saying there is any attempt being made to induce them not to pay their rents. If by means of the Arrears Act it was possible to protect them, they would be prevented from going into the workhouse; and the scheme of emigration sanctioned this Session, under that Act, or of emigration which we hope to obtain the adoption of, would have some chance of coming into play, and would prevent the exasperation which must follow the tearing down of roof-trees and the turning on the road side of these poor people, who have been told by the Prime Minister of England that justice is being done to them. We look in vain for justice. The fate of the Irish people who rely on a British Parliament for the redress of their grievances has always been an unhappy one. I had hoped that this Arrears Bill would have been left untampered with; but it has been trammelled by the insertion of detrimental provisions that have rendered it a partial failure, and may probably bring about its total failure. We protested against the insertion of these provisions; but, owing to the unfortunate influence of "another place," and the landlord party in this House, these three provisions we objected to were inserted, and the result has been as you see.

MR. GIBSON: The changes in the Bill were all made in this House.

MR. PARNELL: I did not say they were not. I distinctly said I had hoped that this Bill might, at least, have passed without these detrimental alterations, thereby inferring that they had been made in this House. I have not had time to refer to the Journals of the House; but I have no doubt the alterations were made partly owing to a desire on the part of the Government to get the Bill through "another place." It was obvious that the Prime Minister had sufficient force at his disposal to carry the Bill through this House without any risk. The fate, I say, of the Irish people, who depend on this House, and who look with confidence on this House for remedial legislation, has always been an unhappy one. I was in hopes that the unhappy precedents that have been set in this matter would have been reversed, and that we should at least have been able to point to the Arrears Act of 1882 as an Act that was both just and generous to the long-suffering among the people of Ireland. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, he wished to say a few words in support of the necessity, if possible, of extending the time for payment of the arrears, or, at any rate, of amending the provision of the Arrears Act with respect to the hanging gale and the subject of distress in Ireland. As the hon. Member for the City of Cork had pointed out, the majority of the people who suffered either by the time of payment expiring, or by the construction of the clause respecting the hanging gale, came from the very poorest districts of Ireland, and were those who were in a state of the greatest poverty, there was every reason to fear that in the coming winter they would be, or they should be, recipients of relief. If a similar thing happened in any district of England, and it was likely that some hundreds of people would be devoid of food and employment, how would the case stand? The Local Government Board in England had the power, by an Order dated, he believed, 1852, entitled an "Order for Regulating Outdoor Relief," to authorize outdoor relief to be given to the able-bodied in any given Union. More than that, it had the power to require that labour should be given in return for such relief; and it had also the power to discontinue the relief when it thought fit. How did the case stand in Ireland? He had in the last few days vainly endeavoured to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the absolute inoperativeness of the Irish Local Government Board to deal with anything but the ordinary normal distress. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman had a great many other more important matters to attend to; but he believed he had entirely failed to grasp the difference that existed between the Poor Law in the two countries. There was this further difference—that the Local Government Board in Ireland had absolutely no power whatever to give one penny in relief to able-bodied men unless the workhouse be full or infected. His right hon. Friend, in answer to his Question that night, said that the Local Government Board was satisfied with the provision of indoor relief in the workhouse, and until that was exhausted there was no danger of exceptional distress. He appealed to the experience of the years 1879-80, and he did not believe that, with the exception of the South Dublin Union, there was a single workhouse in Ireland that was full; and yet they knew large numbers of people were receiving outdoor relief under the provisions of the Relief of Distress Act. He endeavoured to obtain the making of that power permanent, but it was not possible to do so, perhaps, at the time; and he did not know now what the Government could do, except boldly to confer upon the Local Government Board the power of issuing and regulating outdoor relief, trusting to Parliament for an indemnity. Whatever question there might be as to the Arrears Act, he did not believe there would be the slightest hesitation on the part of Parliament when it met again in February next to endorse any action that the Government might take. The illiberal provisions of the Irish Poor Law had an effect on the Local Government Board itself. It had an effect upon the Inspectors, gentlemen of the greatest humanity and intelligence, many of whom he personally knew, for when they went to a place like Tory Island, or to the poorest parts of Sligo, they only estimated the distress in its bearings upon the Poor Law which they administered. They did not look to the actual and narrow limits of the Poor Law, nor to the provision that until the workhouse was full, or infected, could able-bodied men get one penny in relief. He would, therefore, quite irrespective of the suggestions that had been made by other hon. Friends as to amending the Arrears Act, urge upon the Government, before it was too late, that they should take some steps to place the Local Government Board in Ireland in a position to deal effectively with distress should such distress ensue. He would second the Motion for Adjournment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he did not blame the hon. Member for the City of Cork for this interruption to the Business of the House; but, as an English county Member, it was his duty to urge that English Business should be proceeded with. But the present irregularity was incidental to the very nature of the Arrears Act. By it they had reverted to the feudal system, and the State had become the landlord-in-chief over all Ireland. The House could not escape from these interruptions unless it appointed a Standing Committee, whose exclusive duty should be to attend to the operation of the Arrears Act.

MR. SEXTON ventured to say that the sole irregularity on this occasion had been that committed by the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate.) For the first occasion, perhaps, in the history of the House, a Motion for the Adjournment of the House was a regular and legal Motion. It had been supported by the requisite quorum under the New Rules, by twice the requisite quorum of hon. Members; and therefore it did not lie in the power of any hon. Member to rise and question the regularity of the proceeding. [Mr. NEWDEGATE: Not for a moment.] This question of the administration of the Arrears Act was closely, was inextricably, connected with the question of distress, with the question of eviction, and with the question of crime; and he pitied the intelligence of the Gentlemen who put the claims of every-day English business before such an urgent question as that. He would like to consider the question by the light of two telegrams he had received, one of which he had already read to the House, from the parish priest of Columbkille, County Donegal, stating that widespread distress prevailed, that the Government had taken no action, and urging him (Mr. Sexton), for humanity's sake, to press the Government to save the people. The second telegram was from the Rev. Father Cosgrove, who said there was no Indian meal to be had in Sligo at any price, and asked what would the Government do while the people starved? He might be asked what was the connection between this widespread and threatening state of distress, and the question which was now before the House. He said it was quite plain that the persons who were unable to buy this Indian meal, the persons who were threatened with starvation, were in many cases, especially in the West of Ireland, the very persons who were suffering by the operation of the Arrears Act. In seven days more the time would have expired within which any tenant might satisfy his landlord in respect to the Act. The Prime Minister told them that he did not agree with *The Freeman's Journal* and other Irish papers that the Arrears Act had proved a total failure, and the right hon. Gentleman suggested that the time had not yet come when they were enabled to judge of the extent of the failure of the Act. He asked them to wait until December. He (Mr. Sexton) maintained with confidence that the moment had arrived when they could with perfect accuracy say that the Arrears Act had failed. How long was it since the Act was passed? It was passed some two or three months ago; and although the people of Ireland had for three years been passing through a critical period—a period of distress, a period of hunger, a period in which the earth did not bring forth the amount of rent due to the landlord; although they had this Arrears Act which the Prime Minister described as an act of policy, which being an act of policy should have been administered in a liberal spirit, they found that the total time allowed to the tenants to satisfy one of the essential conditions of the Act was only two or three months. He asked the House to remember that in the course of the debates on the Arrears Bill in that House the Prime Minister estimated the amount to be paid under the Act out of the public funds at over £2,000,000—he estimated that the Consolidated Fund would be charged that amount. [" No!"] At any rate, the charge upon the Church Fund and the Consolidated Fund together would be £2,000,000.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not intend to be inaccurate; but the case was this. I never gave that as my opinion, nor as the opinion of the Government, as the probable payment that would have to be made under the Act. In a case of the kind where the charge was one of great uncertainty the Government were obliged to take an outside estimate. It was the only course they could pursue in fulfilment of their duty; but I never expected the charge to reach that amount.

Mr. SEXTON said, the estimate given from the Government side of the House was for that amount, and on the Opposition of the House right hon. Gentlemen whom he now saw present contended that the charge would be considerably in excess of that amount. The next point to consider was as to how many tenants ought the Government to give relief to; and he quoted a speech which he very well remembered—a speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland—who said that the average payment by the State in respect to each tenant would be £7. If they divided that amount into the total of £2,000,000, which the Government estimated it would be necessary to spend, they would find that the Government estimated that 300,000 tenants, or one-half the total number in Ireland, would need assistance under the Act. When he called attention to the fact that the Government expected to be in a position to pay money to the landlords in respect to one-half of the total number of tenants, he said he was in a position to tell the House whether or not the Arrears Act had been a failure. Unless every tenant in Ireland who went in for the benefit of the Act satisfied his landlord in respect of the rent for the year 1881, he would be shut out finally and for ever from any benefit under the Act. Let the House bear that in mind, and follow him in a figure or two he proposed to state. He asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant a very few days ago how many tenants had made application for the benefits of the Arrears Act, and in how many of these cases had a favourable report been made, The total number of applications up to within a few days ago was 16,000—the population of one barony—16,000 out of 300,000 whom the Government hoped to help; and of the 16,000 in how many cases had favourable reports been made? In 1,200 cases. Upon the very verge of the practical expiration of the Arrears Act they were told that out of the 300,000 tenants whom the Government hoped to help by the Act, 1,200 cases, or one in 25,000, had been favourably reported upon. If that was not a deplorable failure, the meaning of the word "failure" was beyond his estimation. Why had the Act failed? He compared it with another Act which was passed by this House—the Prevention of Crime Act, under which, for the murder of relatives and for malicious injury to themselves, persons were entitled to present applications for compensation. That Act was administered in a very different spirit to the Arrears Act. They had their 3,000 police barracks all over Ireland, and the police in every district went to persons who had claims and informed them of their power to send in claims; and the consequence was that these ubiquitous police had not left a single person entitled to claim without having him well posted as to the nature of his claim and the mode to proceed. Did the Government follow any similar course under the Arrears Act? Did the police or Post Office officials of the Government, did any of the other State servants busy themselves, or were they directed to busy themselves, to inform the tenants in the wild districts of Ireland to take advantage of the Act? Not a single step was taken, and the poor tenants had no information, and were left to the fitful and desultory teaching of the Press. If they considered the state of the people as regarded education in the wild, remote mountainous districts of the West of Ireland, they could easily imagine that it was perfectly absurd to imagine that the great mass of the people—poor, ignorant, in many cases not knowing even the English tongue—could learn in the space of two or three months what benefit they might have and what course they ought to take to secure benefits under a complicated Statute such as this. Was it to be expected that an Act such as the Arrears Act could operate effectually in two or three months? Such a hope was from the very moment of its conception doomed to failure. What was one of the rules of the Land Commission under this Act? That a tenant who hoped to derive any benefit from this Act was obliged to serve a notice personally upon his landlord or his agent. There were thousands and tens of thousands of tenants in Ireland whose landlords lived within the sound of Big Ben, and who never went to Ireland. And the proposition coolly laid down by the Land Commissioners, and maintained until within 10 days ago, was that the poor tenant who wore straw about his legs instead of an ordinary garment, and brogues on his feet, should go and serve a notice personally on his landlord, a fashionable swell in London, or his agent in Dublin, that he intended to apply for benefit under the Arrears Act. That provision by which the tenant was obliged to serve notice was inserted by the magnates in "another place," and accepted by the Government. Not only had the tenants to serve this notice of intention; but after that, at the end of 10 days, they were pledged to serve a further notice personally upon the landlord or agent. Why, it came to this—that in order to obtain from the State a possible grant amounting to £7, according to the hon. and learned Solicitor General, a tenant might possibly have to make, or have made for him, two journeys from the wilds of Donegal to the heart of London. ["Oh!"] Well, it was quite possible. ["Oh!"] He recognized the groan of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). He might be mistaken. [Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that he had not groaned.] He (Mr. Sexton) apologized to the right hon. Gentleman—it was, perhaps, the hon. Member who sat next to him. To enable a tenant in a remote part of Ireland to personally serve the notices that he intended to apply for the benefits of the Arrears Act, it would be necessary for him, in the usual course, to make two personal journeys from this remote part to the heart of London or Dublin. The probable cost of these two journeys would be as much as the utmost grant he could obtain from the State. It was a sad thing that remedial measures—devised, he believed, honestly in the hour of a people's distress and hunger, and devised at times when the impulses of human nature were turned by want and desperation to crime—should, by the mode of its administration, be turned into a mockery and a farce. It was only 10 days ago that that rule which absolutely prohibited tenants taking advantage of the Act was relaxed. He wanted to ask the Prime Minister to reconsider his view that the period in which the tenant might satisfy the landlord in respect of the rent should be extended, considering it had been shown that regulations had been enforced which shut out the great body of the tenants from the Act. The demands of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) were as reasonable as could possibly be made to any Government. The first was that the period within which the tenants might satisfy the landlord in respect of the rent for 1881 should be extended until such time as the Court of the Land Commission should decide how much rent should be paid for that year. His hon. Friend simply asked that the time for payment of the rent for that year should be extended until the tenant knew, by a regular judicial decision, what was the amount of the rent he had to pay. The poor tenants of Ireland, if they managed to scrape together the amount, had a natural obstinate inclination to lodge that rent in one of the legal Courts. The regulation should be vested in the Land Commission itself, and it should be extended until the Land Commission said how much the poor man had to pay for the year. He should like to read extracts from one or two letters, to show the result the present course of uncertainty had produced. It was a marvellous thing that the Land Commission should have allowed two or three months to stand over, although the difficulty about the hanging gale clause was foreseen. All the Members of that Party, and all the strength and energy in them, opposed the introduction of that clause last Session. They knew perfectly well that rent was not paid in Ireland on any estate on the day on which it was due; and they knew that the landlords of Ireland, with that ingenuity, that unscrupulous disposition which they had always manifested in regard to every act for benefiting the tenants, would claim that whereas the rent was never paid upon the day on which it was actually due, that there was always some day of payment after, and that there was a hanging gale—they knew this claim would be put forward by the landlords. They knew that bewildering uncertainty preventing the tenant from taking any step, or doing anything which would arise in the people's minds all over Ireland; and they foresaw the moment this clause was introduced the wide and universal failure of the Act. Why did the Land Commissioners not give an authoritative decision? Why had they sent men all over Ireland—gentlemen selected by what secret extraordinary course he knew not—from various sections of society and different parts of the Kingdom? He had endeavoured to arrive at some understanding of the principle by which these investigators had been selected. He should have expected that they had had either some training in law, or that they had some knowledge of the relations between landlord and tenant. But what did he find from the reply of the right hon. Gentleman? That officers in the Army and Navy were deemed to be persons peculiarly fitted to inquire into this question of rent between landlord and tenant in Ireland. He was not aware that either the quarter-deck or the barrack-square gave a man any extraordinary ability for the purpose of inquiring into the questions raised under the Arrears Act. The Government sent General Tisdal, an ex-General in Her Majesty's Army, as he was presumed to be extraordinarily qualified to decipher the Chinese puzzle of the Hanging Gale Clause. He went down to Sligo, and a tenant proved that the rent for 1881 was paid, and he produced two receipts. According to common sense one would have expected that the poor fellow had a right to claim that he had satisfied the demands of the landlord for the rent of 1881. The agent stated that on that property it was not the custom to pay the rent for May till the 1st of September; that was five months after it was due. It might be supposed by a reasonable person that there would not be a hanging gale upon that property, inasmuch as one full gale did not intervene between the gale in respect of which payment was made and the other was due. In other words, suppose a gale fell due in May the tenant did not pay the gale till September. What did the gallant General decide? He decided that there was a five months' hanging gale, a proposition which in itself was a manifest absurdity, because the second gale did not intervene, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman rightly understood constituted the hanging gale. This General Tisdal was one of the corps, the battalion of 90 investigators, who had produced a perfectly paralyzed condition of chaos in the minds of the tenants of Ireland. They had no decision from the Land Court as to what the tenants had to pay, and they were within seven days of the last day on which a tenant could satisfy his landlord in respect of the rent of 1881. They found the Land Commission still declining to give a decision on the question, and they found 90 investigators drawn from the Army and the Navy giving all sorts of decisions. The tenants were left at sixes and sevens, and yet they were told the time could not be extended. He submitted the proposition to reason, and he asked the House was it not reasonable to ask that the Land Commission should first give a decision, and make it clear how much the tenant had to pay for 1881? After that decision had been given, a reasonable time should be allowed to elapse for the tenant to satisfy the demand. The second demand of his hon. Friend was that some provision should be made from the Church Fund for the payment of costs incurred to recover arrears of rent from people unable to pay. A number of tenants all over Ireland might be able to satisfy the landlord in respect to the rent of 1881; but they could not pay the costs that had been heaped upon them by legal proceedings in the course of the last three years. Why had these costs been heaped upon them? For two reasons. First, because the landlords saw the Government intended to propose a measure of reform, and they proceeded to worry their tenants by law and to evict. The costs had been piled up. The Court of the Land Commission had proved itself hitherto quite unable to meet the demands made upon it. The total applications made up to the present moment was 90,000; but the Court of the Land Commission had not yet had before it more than one-sixth or one-seventh of that number. Tenants who had applied to have their rents fixed had waited a full year, and their cases had not been heard, and they were still under the old rack rents. In the past year he was personally aware that many landlords in Ireland had availed themselves of the Land Court, and of its incapacity to meet the cases coming upon it, and had served notices of ejectment upon those poor tenants. The weakness, the incapability of the Land Court to deal with the business daily cast upon it was the reason why, if they had allowed the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to pursue his policy of test cases, and the Land Court to indicate generally to the landlords and tenants of Ireland what would be the average level of the reduction to be made, they would have had the landlords and the tenants asenting to the moral weight of those decisions; and he was able to say they would have had the process of pacification in Ireland advanced in one year to quite a remarkable extent. But they took their own course. They chose to imagine that all the statesmanship as well as all the knowledge of Ireland in the world existed on the Treasury Bench. They took their own course, and the result had been the stagnation of business in the Land Court. Landlords had said to their tenants if they dared to go into the Land Court they would pursue them for the arrears, and in many cases they had pursued them in the hope of receiving them before any law of reform could be passed. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had pointed out that there was a moral claim upon them to satisfy these costs as well as the rent of 1881. There was another aspect from which the matter might be viewed. The second quarter's rent had become due as well as the rent for 1881. Poor tenants in Ireland now found themselves in this position. They had satisfied the quarter's rent for 1881, and would satisfy it for 1882; but they must satisfy the law costs, which in many thousands of cases had been incurred. The Prime Minister's experience of human nature and knowledge of Ireland though secured at second-hand, were very considerable; and a moment's reflection must teach him that to present a proposition like that to the mass of the tenants of the West Coast of Ireland was to drive them from their homes. The Prime Minister opened his brief remarks that evening by felicitating the House prematurely, he thought, upon the decline of the number of evictions. Evictions had declined while the landlords were uncertain as to the course the right hon. Gentleman and the Government were to take. While the landlords thought it likely that they might be enabled to extract by reason of the juggling Hanging Gale Clause an additional half-year's rent from the tenants they held their hands; while the landlords thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister might find the law costs for them, and might enable them to arrive at a reasonable method of settlement with the tenancy, they were afraid to exercise the legal powers vested in them. But the right hon. Gentleman had spoken that night in no unmistakable tones—the tenants had nothing more to expect—the Government would not alter the conditions—they would not extend the time. Although the Land Commissioners had refrained from giving the tenants the necessary information in order to let them know their powers and rights, the Government would not make any allowance. They must settle with the landlords on the 30th November, or they could not settle at all. That was what the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman had amounted to; and his words had, he feared, set once more in motion that storm of notices to quit which, in his own words, once before fell like snow flakes on the plains of Ireland. He looked with fear—he looked with horror—on the record. It was not 300, but 3,000 families that they would have evicted before this year ran out, and they might exercise their Prevention of Crime Act—they might sweep the highways of strangers—they might break into the houses of the peasants in the middle of the night—they might flood the docks with criminals, and have them tried by their magistrates and Judges; but he told them no exercise of such statutes, no matter how drastic they might be, no recourse to these powers would restore peace and order to Ireland until they considered the necessities and the claims of the humblest and most abject classes in the land.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, upon the subject of distress in Ireland, he was very hopeful that the distress would not be so great as had been anticipated; but he was very glad to find that his right hon. Friend and Successor had determined to err on the safe side, and had investigated for himself what was likely to be the extent of the distress and the best mode of meeting it. His hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Colthurst) had taken the opportunity of doing what he had done before—namely, to call the attention of the Government to the difference between the Irish Poor Law and the English Poor Law; and he (Mr. W. E. Forster) should like to state to the House his own experience with regard to that question. In Ireland, the Boards of Guardians could not, without breaking the law—whatever might be their opinion as to the impossibility of otherwise relieving distress—grant outdoor relief. This could only be done by order of the Poor Law Board. During the former distress in Ireland the late Government, under the guidance of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, passed an Act giving power to the Guardians to grant outdoor relief, and the present Government had found it necessary to continue that power. But the House should remember that in the Act passed by the late Government there was a clause indemnifying the Boards of Guardians if they were forced to break the law and grant outdoor relief. He understood his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) to state that, if necessary, the House would, no doubt, allow a Bill of Indemnity to be passed again, and no doubt it would. He merely made these remarks as he thought they had come to a time when it did not tend to give respect to the law in Ireland that they should have to break the law in order to give outdoor relief. He hoped that there would be such an alteration in the law as, while it would not encourage a system of outdoor relief, still would make it possible that it should be given upon the responsibility of the Government, at their instigation, and with their sanction. He could not leave this subject without stating he understood his right hon. Friend to say that if necessary he would venture to give the order for outdoor relief, although it would be technically breaking the law. At the same time he hoped and believed that the distress would not be so severe as it had been supposed it would be by some hon. Members. With regard to the other portion of the Amendment, he must leave his right hon. Friend to state the details as to the action of the Commissioners; but he (Mr. W. E. Forster) wished to say that he thought that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had rather misconceived the statistics supplied at the time the Arrears Act was introduced. The calculations were not made with a view to giving the number of tenants, but in order that the House might be informed of the maximum amount required. When the hon. Member for Sligo said he thought the right hon. Gentleman meant to provide for 300,000 tenants, he must have been under a misapprehension.

Mr. SEXTON: The sum required was stated to be £2,000,000, and each tenant was to be allowed on an average £7.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he certainly never expected that 300,000 tenants would come under the Act, and that the amount was very much exaggerated. He was very much in favour of the Arrears Bill being passed, and he never believed it would apply to the larger number of cases. He had found that the payment of the actual amount of arrears was more general than was supposed. Rents were paid in numerous instances in March and April of last year. Then the limitation of £30 brought down the number of applications under the Act very considerably. Then the limitation introduced by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), that one year's rent should be paid, tended still further to diminish the number. As he had already stated on a former occasion, there were a great number of cases in which applications would not be made at all, because the tenants were too poor; and he was satisfied that nothing the House could do in the way of extension of time or in payment of costs would enable these poor tenants to pay that one year's rent. He knew that there were cases in the West of Ireland in which nothing would enable the people to go on with their tenancies but paying them money to help them in their miserable and hopeless position. There were some under £10 and some under £5; they could not make a living out of their small holdings; and it was impossible that their cases could be met by the Arrears Act or by any amendment of it. Detailed answers to detailed objections would, of course, be given by the right hon. Gentleman; but he confessed he was rather slow to believe that the tenants in Ireland who could take advantage and who wished to take advantage of that Act did not know of it. He did not think that was in accordance with the general interest in those matters that was taken by the tenantry. Although the matter of the hanging gale was a very complicated business, he did not imagine that any tenants who could pay the year's rent, and wished to do it, would be prevented by any difficulty of that kind, or, at least, they would be exceedingly few in number.

MR. PARNELL, interposing, said, that what he had wished to show was that a great many tenants who paid their rent last winter were not aware that it could be credited to the rent of 1881.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he understood that they really had paid a year's rent.

MR. PARNELL: Some part of it.

MR. W. E. FORSTER did not mean to say that every case could be met; no Bill could be made to meet every case. But he doubted whether there was any sufficient ground for a continuance of exceptional legislation; and unless there was a strong necessity for passing another Arrears Act, he believed it would be no true kindness to the tenants themselves to continue the course of exceptional legislation. Nothing was more for their real interest than to find that there was some finality on the Land Question, and that those who lived by agriculture could go on and get a fair return for their industry. Therefore he could not but think that the Government had done right in declining to make any fresh changes in regard to those Acts.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was astonished that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who had supported the Arrears Bill by vote and by speech, should now, when it was found that the Bill had failed to answer its objects, come down to the House and say—"Let the Bill remain as it is." The Prime Minister had calculated that the number of tenants who were liable for arrears and who could not pay them without the aid of the Arrears Act would be little short of 200,000, and that the maximum sum that would be required to meet the demands made under the Act would be £2,000,000. What, however, were the real facts? Out of the 200,000 anticipated applicants, only about 16,000 had actually demanded relief within a week of the time when their demands would become no longer possible; while, up to the present moment, only £500,000 sterling, at the outside, would be required to meet the applications of tenants who had already made demands. [An hon. MEMBER: £250,000.] Well, if it was only £250,000 his argument became all the stronger; for he maintained that these figures proved that the Arrears Act was as complete and disastrous a failure as the history of legislation by the House could show. If the Act had thus failed, ought there not to be some attempt immediately made to remedy the failure? In reference to some of the points which had been urged by his hon. Friends, it would not be necessary for him to say much. He would not say anything about the Hanging Gale Clause, nor would he say anything with regard to the question of costs; but there was a point he wished to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland. There never was a case which the right hon. Gentleman did not say was an exaggerated one, if it was put forward by the Irish Members. The right hon. Gentleman got up in his place and, taking a rose-coloured view of the situation, said, in vague general language, that the hon. Member's fears were not well founded—vagueness and generalities were all very fine; but they were standing face to face with the shadow of famine, and such language was the most unstatesmanlike and the most cruel that could be used in that House. The facts of the case should be faced, and at the very first moment that a statesman became aware of them. What he wanted to point out to the right hon. Gentleman was that there was an almost unparalleled failure of the staple produce of the people in some parts of the country, and a very considerable failure in other parts; and that, on the other side, there was the fact that the food by which the people supplied the want of the potato was dearer than it, perhaps, had ever been at this time of the year. Was it not a fact that the high price of Indian corn was almost unparalleled for this season of the year? If the right hon. Gentleman would study the figures of the importations into Ireland, he would find that the imports of Indian meal always showed by their dearness when a famine was approaching. In 1877 about 10,000 tons of maize were imported into Galway; in 1878, when the distress was beginning to appear, the quantity rose to 17,000 tons; and in 1879, when the distress was most severe, it further rose to 19,000 tons. Last year's price of Indian corn was £6 6*s*. per ton. This year it was £10 10*s*. per ton—in other words, the tenant's shilling of last year was now only worth 8*d*., so far as the substitution for their staple food was concerned. Under those circumstances, instead of breaking the law in regard to outdoor relief and then applying to Parliament for an indemnity, the Government ought to adopt the more straightforward course of at once asking the House for the legislation which the occasion demanded. A short Bill of three clauses would settle the whole question of arrears, and would meet the impending distress. He would undertake to say that such a Bill could be passed in three nights, and that even the Conservative Party, if they attended to the advice of their Irish Friends, would not oppose it. Let Her Majesty's Government, then, bring in such a Bill, and if it was rejected in "another place," let the responsibility rest with that "other place," and on those who, in the face of impending famine, did not hesitate to prevent the Irish tenants from reaping the advantage of beneficent legislation.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he agreed with the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) that the connection of the Arrears Act with the distress in Ireland was rather remote, because there was a large class of small tenants who were not in a position, and would not be in a position, to pay a year's rent, and whose condition would not be permanently benefited by any improvement of the Arrears Act. But he still thought that there was also a large class of tenants not so poor and impoverished, who, if a reasonable extension of time were granted for the payment of arrears, would be able, with advantage, to avail themselves of the benefit of the Act. It was to the case of such tenants he wished to direct the attention of the House. He quite agreed that exceptional legislation could only be justified by stern necessity; but inasmuch as Parliament had already declared exceptional legislation to be necessary, the question was—how ought they to frame that legislation in order to meet the necessities of the case? Parliament had already passed a measure; but had that measure answered the purposes for which it was intended, or had it failed? If it had failed, was it possible to amend it so as to adapt it to present necessities? With that question in view, he would remind the House of the grounds for passing the Arrears Act. These grounds were not merely the interests of the landlord or the tenant class as such; but the interests of the peace of the country, by stopping evictions, and assisting the operation of the Land Act just passed by Parliament. Because, so long as the question of arrears was not dealt with, large classes of tenants would be debarred from using that Act. No class of tenants could apply to the Court while they were saddled with arrears; and they were, practically, at the mercy of their landlords. These being the grounds on which Parliament justified the passing of the Arrears Act—the general good, the interests of peace, and the operation of the Land Act—the question was, had it served its purpose? Unless Parliament saw some reason to alter its view of the situation, no statesman would be justified in refraining from coming to Parliament to effect any necessary alterations if it were shown that such alterations were required to make the Act work. The amount of arrears supposed to exist in Ireland at the passing of the Bill was estimated from £2,000,000 to as high as £4,000,000 or £5,000,000. He would not stop to consider what was meant by those figures being the maximum amount, but would inquire how much had, in fact, been advanced. That sum was only £215,000. The Chief Secretary had informed them that out of 16,845 applications, 1,243 had been favourably reported on, making a total money expenditure of £5,062 3*s*. 1*d*.; 42 cases had been unfavourably reported on, and 3,119 were under investigation, while 6,535 still remained to be dealt with. Now, could any candid person say that that represented anything like a dealing with the enormous question of arrears in Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister stated that in the opinion of the Land Commissioners it was impossible to speak with any accuracy until the month of December; but was there any reasonable expectation that the figures he had mentioned would then be more than slightly increased? If the House were asked to render the Act more efficacious by enlarging the time of its operation, they would rightly expect to be furnished with some reason for the request; and he could give some reasons furnished to him by a gentleman of experience—one of the investigators in the county Mayo. They were contained in a letter, dated the 17th of November last, in which he said—

> "It was mentioned by a solicitor in court to-day that numbers of tenants would be unable to take advantage of the Arrears Act unless the time was extended. Many do not understand it yet, and some here in the remote parts of Mayo have not even heard of it. Lord Sligo's agent told me that it was only lately that their tenants had made up their minds to try to avail themselves of it, and here they must pay their rent by the sale of cattle, and the fairs at which they sell are many of them held in December. We have had some hard cases to-day. After service of notice to apply for payment of arrears, a landlord renewed execution under an old judgment for rent, and the wretched tenants borrowed a lot of money and paid it. There was only a small balance due to clear the rent of 1881, and the rest of the money which remains in the Sheriff's hands will, of course, go against last year's arrears. Of course, they (the tenants) might have applied to the Court to stay proceedings; but some of these people are very simple."

Now, he begged it to be remembered that the Arrears Bill was only passed last year, and that during its passage through that House the Prime Minister had been warned that the time fixed for its operations was too limited, and that he (Mr. C. Russell) and others had made attempts to get the time extended. They knew the difficulties the Prime Minister had to contend with were not confined to that House, nor were they greatest in that House; but they were entitled to point to the fact that the views they were expressing as to the insufficiency of the time allowed were not being expressed for the first time. The grounds upon which this application for an extension of time for the working of the Act was based were—first, that the tenants had not yet had sufficient time to gather up money for the payment of their rent; and, secondly, that the Arrears Bill had provided a most cumbrous and expensive machinery for carrying out the intentions of the Legislature—a provision which, in his judgment, was a high defect in the Bill. What was that machinery which the tenant had to avail himself of for the purpose of getting the benefit of the Act? There were two questions connected with that point—the first, that of joint application; and the second, that referring to the application of the tenant without the consent of his landlord. There were some landlords to be found who were fair enough to meet their tenants; but there were others who acted to the contrary under this Act, as under the Land Act, and would not come forward to assist their tenants. What was the machinery to be used by a tenant making an application without the consent of his landlord? He had, in the first instance, to give 10 days' notice that he was entitled to apply, and then he had to serve notice of his application on the landlord. Next, the Commissioners sent down notice to both landlord and tenant that the investigator would attend for the purpose of making an investigation. That, however, was only the initial step of the matter, because all the investigator had to do was to see that the preliminary conditions of the Act had been complied with. All these steps, however, meant, more or less, expense. The matter then came before the Land Commission, who made the order for payment; and subsequently, after other action, there was the power of appeal. Could more cumbersome machinery than this have been devised for dealing with the matter in which a great number of persons were interested, most of whom had neither the position, the education, or the means to go through all the necessary technical procedure? But in addition to all these difficulties there was that arising out of the hanging gale, which had been very properly likened to a Chinese puzzle by some hon. Gentlemen opposite. He tried to understand it some months ago, but he had failed, and he did not understand it now. He had, he might say, very honestly tried to master it, but had failed. It might, he thought, fairly be said that the investigators were in the same condition. Mark the result. The investigator might come to the conclusion that the tenant had paid the rent for 1881; but on appeal from the investigator the Land Commission might say—"That is not the right construction;" and so the tenant, having the ruling of the investigator in his favour, was told by the Land Commissioners that that view was wrong. In that manner the poor tenants had the door shut against them. Was it, therefore, unreasonable that when a difficulty of that kind had arisen, as to what was the amount the tenant had to pay for 1881, the time should be extended, so that he might have an opportunity given him for paying the money after a judicial decision had determined what was the amount to be paid? These were some of the obstacles in the way of the tenants enjoying the benefits of the Arrears Act. The resolution and the ability of the Prime Minister were fully able to remove them. Although he had stated that he could do nothing, he (Mr. Russell) hoped if it should turn out that the sanguine anticipations of the Land Commissioners should not be realized, he hoped not in the interest of the landlord or tenant, but in the interest of the general peace of the community, that the Act might be altered so as to enable it to effect its purpose.

Mr. LEAMY said, that there was a great difficulty among the tenants in being able to tell whether they were entitled to the benefits of the Land Act, and a large number of applicatioas were daily received by the Mansion House Committees making inquiries to that effect. He charged the Commissioners with having created a great deal of this difficulty with regard to the hanging gale. There was nothing in the Arrears Act which, in his opinion, raised the question at all. The only question raised was whether the rent due upon a certain gale day, the 1st of May or the 1st of November, had been usually paid on some other day? The tenants were quite unable to say whether they had paid sufficient rent under the Arrears Act or not, and would have to wait three weeks until the decision was made. What was to be done in the meantime? The tenant said the landlord demanded the half-year's rent, and if he did not pay he might lose the benefits of the Act, and if he did pay it, it might be thought that he ought not to have done so. With regard to the 10 days' notice, that was a simple thing to an intelligent man, but to the poor countrymen in the villages in Ireland it was a greater difficulty. They were told they must send their notices to the office of the landlords' solicitors, and they had the greatest difficulty in finding out where their offices were. Sometimes they got letters from Dublin, sometimes from Paris or elsewhere, telling them to lodge their rents at a certain bank, and that was all many of them knew about their landlords. He believed that if the tenants were allowed but one month extra in which to pay their 1881 rent, a large number would avail themselves of it and pay the rent. Surely no one could object to that. He did not believe the landlords would strongly object to it. Moreover, in the case of harsh landlords, tenants who wished to go into the Arrears Court were threatened with an ejectment notice. That had happened in many cases, and the matter should be considered. If the Government would bring in a Bill containing all the provisions which the hon. Member for the City of Cork suggested, they might extend the time in which the money was to be paid. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that night that when the workhouses were full then outdoor relief would be given—he meant to fill the workhouses first. A more bitter message than that had not been sent over to Ireland. There was nothing that the Irishman dreaded more than going into the workhouse. He would starve on a ditch-side first. They were receiving communications from all parts of Ireland, and from reliable sources; and he told the Government that the distress would be as bad this winter as it was in 1877, and yet there were no preparations being made for it. Did the Chief Secretary for Ireland mean to break the law and assist the people? The distress was great, and they knew more about it than the Government did. Why, then, did not the Government, during the present Session, ask Parliament for some powers? As the lives of a large number of people were at stake, surely a Bill might be brought in.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, he had meant to be a listener to the debate; and having in view the fact that the debate was more or less irregular, though legal, he should make his remarks short. His experience of the working of the

Arrears Act was different to that of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It appeared to him that there was very little interest taken in his county on the question of arrears, for he had not received more than two letters from his constituents upon the matter, while he had received many upon the subject of Court valuers. He believed that that was due either to the fact that the rent was better paid than was expected, or to the fact that the tenants hesitated to take the oath as to inability, knowing that they could pay if they would. He heard with great surprise that the applications under the Arrears Act only amounted to something like £250,000; and he could not account for that fact, except for the reasons given by hon. Gentlemen opposite, by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), and by the fact that there were tenants who demurred to taking the oath. He would have no objection, if Parliament saw its way, to lengthen the time and give another month. He would offer no objection to the proposition, but would vote in its favour; but still, even after another month, from the absence of promptitude which had existed, he could believe there would still be a vein of inertia which would prevent tenants from applying in time. At all events, it was a most important matter for the benefit of those poor people that, before the debate terminated, they should know exactly where they stood, and to know whether any extension of time was going to be made or not. From the Prime Minister's words he gathered there was not; but it was a matter of importance that the tenants' minds should be set at rest. Apparently, expectations had been raised which were not to be realized. He heard with pain and regret a remark fall from the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to the effect that the Irish people would look in vain to this House or to the Prime Minister for justice to Ireland.

MR. PARNELL: I asked the Prime Minister not to allow that to be said.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON said, if that was so, he would not make the remark he was about to make. On the contrary, he had always endeavoured to show that it was to that House and to the Prime Minister that Ireland should look for justice; and he thought the instance of the long Session of 1881, and the arduous labours of the Prime Minister in that Session for Ireland, was a proof of the truth of that statement.

MR. O'KELLY said, he could not share the view expressed by the hon. Member who had just sat down, because, unfortunately, he represented constituents in Roscommon who had need of the Arrears Act, many of them being sadly in need of its provisions; and it was his duty to urge upon the Government that they should give the people in that county more time, that they might have an opportunity of using the Act which was intended for their benefit. This Act was one of the few measures which Ireland had reason to thank the House for. The people were well disposed towards the Act. They desired to avail themselves of its benefits; and, certainly, in his own county (Roscommon) the poorer people were making very great sacrifices in order to bring themselves within its provisions. They were, unfortunately, suffering from distress owing to the many bad seasons which had afflicted the West of Ireland. The late Chief Secretary for Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), had undertaken to say that there was not so much danger of distress as had been represented from the Benches on which the Irish Members sat. So far from there being little danger of distress, the information which he (Mr. O'Kelly) now brought fresh from Roscommon was to the effect that there never had been, since 1846, a worse outlook for a large mass of poor people in Ireland than there was now. The common opinion of most respectable men in his county, not belonging to any one Party or class, but Conservative landlords, land agents, and business people, was that the failure of the potato crop in Roscommon had not been so bad in any year since 1846 as it was in the present year. This distress was further increased by the fact that many of the poor people were even selling out their little stock of oats in order to make the payment of rent that would bring them the benefits of the Arrears Act. This was increased by the fact that the poor tenants had no stock left. Dear bread and dear potatoes instituted the present famine. The really important point as to whether this Act ought or ought not to be extended as to time turned upon the question—had the poor people of Ireland had a fair chance of using the Act? Evidence had already been adduced that there were difficulties in the way of utilizing its provisions. So difficult was the procedure made under the rules by the Courts that it was practically only within the last 10 days that the Courts had been open to the people; and it was, he thought, necessary for them to give 10 days' notice to their landlords before they could be brought under the action of the measure at all. Considering these difficulties, he thought the claim might fairly be put forward on behalf of these poor people that the time should be extended; and he submitted that the demand for its further extension was one that had been completely justified by the evidence brought forward by his Colleagues. While he was in Roscommon he attended one of these Courts, and observed how complicated was the nature of the procedure adopted there. He found Major General Tisdal, who was evidently a very respectable and well-meaning man, but seemingly with no knowledge of law, acting as the legal representative of the landlord, and bullying most of the tenants, who were too poor to employ a lawyer, and were perfectly undefended. This man was completely in the hands of the lawyers, and he had to do what the lawyers told him. Under these circumstances, the difficulties of properly utilizing the Act were, of course, great so far as the poor tenants were concerned; and on their behalf, therefore, it seemed to him that a fair case had been made out for an extension of time. With regard to the present distress, the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had said it was probably not so severe as it had been represented; and a similar statement had been made by the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, based, no doubt, on one of the Reports of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. But it should be remembered that these Inspectors did not come very much in contact with the people; they spent most of their time in the company of the landlords or in the county clubs. They knew very little of what was going on in the country, except when ordered specially to go and inform themselves as to a certain state of facts, and then their examination was very superficial. But, on the other hand, what were the views of the Poor Law Guardians, of the tradesmen, of the agents, and of the people whose daily life brought them into almost hourly contact with these poor tenants. He held in his hand a resolution passed by the Board of Guardians of Boyle, and among them were the representatives of several of the local landlords. This was not a resolution passed by any mere section of the community, or by the followers of any political Party. It was a resolution passed unanimously to the following effect:—

> "That the Guardians of Boyle Union hereby call the attention of the Local Government Board and of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the serious and grave condition that the affairs in this Union have assumed, and to the starvation impending over thousands of householders in consequence of the total failure of the potato crop among the small farmers, the destruction of the oats crop to a great extent by the recent storm and bad weather, to the depreciation of the hay crop, and to the various householders that are without stock, and unless the Government come to their assistance they must die of want."

A resolution of that kind was much more valuable than the mere opinion of the right hon. Member for Bradford, who judged simply from a mere general idea. The Government would find that they were making a great mistake unless they faced this difficulty at once, and took measures to meet the danger that now confronted them.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, no one who has listened to this discussion can deny that it is an interesting result of a novel but very Constitutional process by which the attention of the House has been called to this subject; and whatever hon. Members' own feelings may be as regards this question, they will, at all events, allow that those who take the gloomy and anxious views of the Mover of the Motion are justified in setting an example which, however, I hope will not be followed except on occasions at least as momentous as the present. The fears which have prompted hon. Gentlemen to take this course are not shared to a very great extent by the Government. I have taken down the words of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) who stated, reproducing in substance what had been stated by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that the Arrears Act has failed, and he then talks as if all were over. But the hon. Member for Sligo and other hon. Members have not, in my opinion, brought to their minds the fact that the matter is not over, and that so far from there being only seven days in which tenants can take advantage of the Act, and that within a week the failure or success of the measure will be evident, there is still before them a space of more than five weeks. I shall try and show in a single sentence that there is confusion in the mind of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) on the subject that does not exist in the mind of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The hon. Member for Roscommon says that the poor people have had no chance given them of taking advantage of the Act, because they have been obliged to give 10 days' notice of their intention. That is quite true; but the notice has not to be given before the payment of the critical year's rent—the rent of 1881—but before application is made to the Court to come within the benefits of the Act, and that application may be made not only until November 30, but any time before the 31st December. Therefore, it was no argument why the Government should extend a date which has no reference whatever to this 10 days' notice. I do not for a moment say that I am capable of enlightening hon. Members who have spoken on this subject, nor have I detected anything in their arguments to show that they have any inaccuracy in their minds. But, in my opinion, they take too gloomy a view of the position. Their view, at all events, is not the view of the Land Commissioners. As long ago as October 21 the Land Commissioners prophesied that what is now happening would happen. They prophesied that the applications for admission to the benefits of the Act would come in at a very late date indeed, and that they would astonish and raise very great apprehension on the part of a Government anxious to see full advantage taken of the Act. The reason they gave for this remarkable prophecy was that the preparation of joint applications on large estates is a tedious operation, requiring that the tenant shall be seen personally by the agent who fills up the forms, and that most of the principal landlords were deferring communications with their tenants on the subject till the usual time for receiving rents after the November fairs; and they go on to say that experience abundantly proves that where a last day is fixed for making applications a large portion of the applications will be deferred till the eleventh hour. They draw that deduction from experience of the Land Law Act in Ireland, in which the making of applications as regarded what are called unfair leases was deferred in a great number of cases till the very last day; and under Section 59, which deals with arrears, more Notices were lodged in the last available week than in all the rest of the time during which they could have been lodged. Therefore, this remarkable, prophetic, and anticipatory statement of the Land Commissioners is in itself a source of comfort. Then comes the question whether the generous appeal of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and the hon. Member for Roscommon have been answered, and whether the poor people of Ireland have had a full chance of availing themselves of the Act. I cannot imagine that greater publicity could be given to any measure enacted with the honest intention of benefiting Ireland. On August the 22nd, three days after the passing of the Act, the rules and forms were published; and soon after the publication of the rules, which were first sold for 6*d*., the Land Commissioners caused leaflets, with copies of the rules upon them, to be circulated through the rural post offices at a charge of ½*d*. Of that edition of the rules more than 100,000 copies were distributed. In addition to all this the Commissioners, through the agency of the Constabulary, distributed among the clergy of all denominations a pamphlet giving advice to landlords and tenants; and as complaints began to be made of the difficulty of procuring forms, the Land Courts took care always to keep a very large stock at their office, and supplied them promptly and in such large numbers that if they were all used the Government might well hope that the Act would have a very extensive application. The opinion of the Commissioners to which I have referred is still unshaken, and they report to me this morning that they understand that upon some large estates the landlords and tenants are now engaged in filling up joint applications. That is a matter for congratulation, because they can be presented till December; or, if the Commissioners choose to extend the time, they can be presented till the end of

April. The general opinion of the Commissioners has, as far as I have had the opportunity of ascertaining, been borne out by the opinion of private persons who are well qualified to judge. Only this morning I got an unsolicited letter from a gentleman with whom I am not acquainted, but who is agent for a wealthy nobleman and for a considerable number of landed proprietors. He says—

> "There seems to be a general idea that because there has been but a comparatively small claim upon the Treasury under the Arrears Act up to the present time, therefore the number and amount of the applications will be trifling, but that it is necessary to bear to mind that the bulk of the claims will be made next month. The landlords of this county (Clare) almost invariably join with their tenants in their applications, and comparatively few of the joint applications are sent in as yet."

That opinion is likewise shared by the Under Secretary at Dublin Castle, Mr. Hamilton, who, as the result of his conversation with the people of all classes, official and non-official, says he has no doubt that a very large number of applications will be received before the 31st December. He says he does not see the object that tenants would have in applying before the last day fixed, even if they fulfilled the necessary preliminary of having paid a year's rent before the 30th of November. He adds that he has no reason to think the Act will be a failure, and that the cases in which tenants have failed in consequence of a difficulty connected with the gale to fulfil the conditions with which they must comply before obtaining the benefits of the Act are few. He expects, in fact, that the measure will be made use of largely, and that the £250,000 which has been spoken of by some Members will be very greatly exceeded by the amount of money which will eventually have to be paid. I believe the hon. Member for the City of Cork, if he consults the Records of the House, will find that the question of the date for the payment of the year's rent was not very prominently brought forward in the debates in Committee on the Bill. Persons holding Office should not insist too strongly upon their own opinions; and it may be that the amount of money required for carrying out the Arrears Act may fall below the estimate of the Government, though, as has been more than once said to-night, that estimate was a maximum. If the Act fulfilled the purpose for which it has been passed, a lower expenditure than was at one time anticipated will be more an advantage than a disadvantage. The original belief of the Government was that every tenant who could satisfy the conditions of the Act, conditions which any tenant who can hold his head above water ought to be able to satisfy, would be able to place himself in a position to reap the advantages of the Land Act. That was the belief of the Government when they introduced the measure, and up to this time they have seen no reason to alter their belief. The hon. Member for the City of Cork has discussed at some length the question of the hanging gale, and has criticized the decisions of the Commissioners with respect to it. Well, I am not here to criticize the Land Commission, and I am not here to defend them; but I nevertheless think it right to say that they have acted with great energy and promptitude, and with every desire to make the Act succeed. The hon. Member for the City of Cork said that a decision should have been given weeks or months ago. But they have evidently relied upon giving a decision as a Court of Appeal from the investigators upon this important question. That reliance has, however, been defeated, because no tenant or tenant's solicitor will come forward to dispute the decisions of the investigators. In my own opinion, the clause with regard to the hanging gale is as clear as the sun at noonday; and that, as far as I can gather, is the opinion of the Land Commissioners. It appears to be the opinion of the tenants and their solicitors also, otherwise how does the hon. Member for Cork account for the remarkable fact contained in a letter written by one of the Land Commissioners, in which, after stating that he considers Gallagher's case at an end, he says in cases where the construction of Sub-section 3 appeared to arise, the attention of the solicitors of tenants was called to the advisability of bringing the cases before the Court for judicial decision; but as yet none have done so, though they have been informed that every facility would be given for the purpose, and though the Commissioners even went so far as to indicate that if the question of costs stood in the way they would be prepared to make some arrangement to obviate the objection. The hon. Member for Cork thinks that very definite instructions should be given to the investigators. On that point I do not join issue with the hon. Gentleman or otherwise; but the Land Commissioners take a different view. They consider that they are a judicial body, and that the investigators are so likewise, and that the only way in which they can give instructions to the investigators as a Court of First Instance is by judicial decision on a case of appeal. Whether that is or is not the best way of going to work, it is certainly a most defensible and intelligible method; and the curious fact that not a single appeal has been lodged makes me think that landlords, tenants, investigators, Land Commissioners, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland, take exactly the same view of the case. Her Majesty's Government agree thoroughly with the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. Richardson) that it is most important that it should be known clearly and thoroughly whether or not the date in the Act is to be kept. The next six or seven days and the next five or six weeks are very critical, and it is most important that the tenants should be assured from what is passing in the House to-night that whatever arrangements the tenants may make to bring them within the scope of the Act should be made within the time. It would be a cruel kindness to offer any hopes which could not be realized. Then the hon. Member for the City of Cork said that large numbers of tenants are excluded from the benefit of the Act —some from inability to pay their rent, and some from inability to pay previous costs. No doubt, with regard to the payment of costs, if it had been originally included in the Act, it would have been very easy to argue in favour of that inclusion. But there is a great difference between the case of arrears and the case of costs, and I think the hon. Member for the City of Cork greatly exaggerates the practical importance of the question. The cases in which costs have been incurred may be divided into four classes. The first was where the landlord has brought an ejectment and evicted the tenant. In such cases the costs incurred are very light, unless they have been increased presumably by the tenant's own act, and, in some cases, by his fault. The actual costs of ejectments in the Civil Bill Court ranged between 10*s.* and 30*s.* in undefended cases. But only where the tenant defended the case, in some instances from natural litigiousness, in others owing to bad advice, would the costs be so large as to form a real bar to his taking the benefit of the Act.

MR. PARNELL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman included the sheriff's costs in his statement?

MR. TREVELYAN: I do not. Then comes the cases where the landlord has recovered judgment, but has not brought an ejectment. In such a case the costs would be less, because the costs of ejectments are a large factor in the matter.

MR. SEXTON remarked that evictions were usually taken in the Superior Courts, where the costs would be greater.

MR. TREVELYAN: I have heard that there is a considerable desire manifested, in the case were a landlord has recovered judgment, to induce the tenant to sell his interest in order to satisfy the judgment. In these cases the tenants are far outside the scope of the Act, and money given by legislation for the purpose of restoring them would be a proceeding not contemplated by the Arrears Act, which is a most exceptional benefit to a particular class of distressed persons; and if Parliament were to extend it they would be making a demand which they have no right to make upon the surplus of the Irish Church Fund, which was intended for the benefit of the whole of the people of Ireland, and perhaps also upon the British taxpayer. The hon. Member spoke of evictions, and quoted figures of a most painful and deplorable kind. The evictions this year down to October are 4,249; last year they were 3,415, and the year before 2,110. These figures are very painful; but no more powerful machinery was ever set up to prevent evictions than has been provided by Parliament in the beginning of this Session, in the shape of the Arrears Act, and last Session in the shape of the Land Act. I think that Parliament has done as much as it is called upon to do in order to prevent this very painful process of eviction; and it may be a question whether those eviction Returns are not greater arguments against the hon. Gentleman's belief, the holding of which proceeds from his anxiety for the welfare of Ireland, that a great number of tenants are being left out in the cold.

In August the evictions were 753; in September they had fallen to 349; in October they were 306; and down to the 22nd of this month of November they were only 131—that is to say, hardly more than half the number in any previous month of the year. I cannot help hoping that this is a proof that the Arrears Act has already begun to work in the direction of stopping evictions. I believe I need say no more as to the main contention of the hon. Member for the City of Cork; but so much has been said of the coming distress that if I were wholly silent on the subject, it might give rise to the very serious apprehension that the Government are not alive to the gravity of the situation. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), arguing in favour of the proposals of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, has said that the Irish people are face to face with famine. Now, I cannot admit that the questions of famine and the Arrears Act are as nearly allied as some hon. Members suppose, nor do I believe that famine could be averted by enabling a very few more poor people to meet the mild, the indulgent, and, as some thought, the lax conditions of that measure. But, though I do not see the bearing of one of these questions on the other, none the less do I regard the distress on the West Coast of Ireland as one of the most trying difficulties that has occurred since my official connection with the country. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has asked what the Government will do while the people starve, and another hon. Member has feared that both the late and the present Chief Secretaries for Ireland take too rose-coloured a view of the situation. But, considering the part played by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) during a former famine, he cannot be expected to underrate the gravity of the recurrence of such a disaster; while, for my own part, I can assure the hon. Member that I am not very likely to take a rose-coloured view of Irish distress, for when I was a lad almost the first recollections I have were of living in a house where two years' work was done in connection with famine, which was generally believed to be the hardest work ever any man did in the records of English officialism. What has the Government done? They have left no stone unturned to get information. Inspectors have been sent all over the country, and with regard to the districts where there was distress they have been sent again and again, and information other than that from Inspectors has also been obtained. Now that the Government is anxious to be informed by a more minute system of channels of information than the Inspectors constitute, in seven counties in Ireland—namely, in Sligo, Roscommon, Mayo, Leitrim, Kerry, Galway, and West Cork, a Circular has been issued to the Resident Magistrates which is to be distributed all over their districts, so that a most minute account shall be given of the prospects of the people in every separate village and district; and every one of these which I have hitherto seen shows that, at any rate, the examination will be most thorough. These Circulars will be answered without any fear of shocking official ears or delicate susceptibilities. Then comes the question of what the Government propose to do. Resolutions have been passed calling upon the Government to advance money for public works. Now, that is not the policy which the Government intend to adopt. The Government consider that the question of public money is one apart from that of relieving distress. They consider that this should not be made an occasion for giving money for public works which would not otherwise be given. The experience of the great Famine has convinced the Government that that is not the most efficient or satisfactory way of relieving distress, and I cannot say that the experience of the last distress has brought forward any consideration which would induce them to alter that opinion. The truth is, that spending money on public works does not insure the relief of the right people, for the sick and the starving stay at home, and men come to labour who do not want the wages, and would have been better employed on their every day work. In the great Famine of which I spoke just now, people gave up all their ordinary rural occupations and trades, till at last they were withdrawn to a dangerous degree from the work of agriculture. This method is also a most extravagant form of relief, as it makes the people far too eager for their share of the profit, and, while it affords no real test of distress whatever, is only a sort of bounty for work done. What can be more striking than the fact that in the great Famine 3,000,000 of people were supported by public works, and cost in one month more than £1,000,000, and in one week as much as £259,000? The enormous extravagance of that system has induced the Treasury to adopt a plan founded on the principle of the Poor Law, and to give relief in the most direct form of food, to be provided by funds locally raised, and assisted, if necessary, out of the Exchequer. By this kind of relief 3,000,000 of people were fed for six months at a cost of £1,500,000 of public money, a sum which, under the extravagant system of relief by public works, would have fed them for only six weeks.

Mr. PARNELL: Where was that, and when?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That was done all over Ireland in the year 1847.

Mr. O'KELLY: On what diet?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The diet could not have been unsatisfactory, for the physical results of that kind of relief were considered better than those of the other system. The Government now have made preparations to give assistance through the Poor Law. They have issued a Circular on November 18 to the Boards of Guardians, giving them all the necessary warnings and information, and the Circular is so plainly worded that the most unlettered persons cannot make a mistake. They have also in preparation another Circular, which will be issued, if necessary, enabling Boards of Guardians, where the rates absolutely fail, to make applications to the proper authorities, and encouraging them to do so in case of need. I am happy to think that the Government intend to work this system of relief with a degree of supervision and a strength of public money, which will give the most positive assurance that the apprehensions of the hon. Member will not be realized, and that the people will not be allowed to starve. The hon. Member asks whether the Government will shrink from any step that may be necessary; but I venture to say that that will not be the case, and those who have followed the administration of the Irish Government since the beginning of the Session will be able to judge whether they have displayed timidity in the various difficulties they have encountered. The Government have quite determined to rest all title to respect and toleration on the fact of preserving the people of Ireland from the severest consequences of the threatened distress. The method which they have adopted for that purpose is that which they believe will best effect that object, without at the same time doing anything to demoralize the people or waste the public money.

Mr. GIBSON: Sir, it is only natural that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland should desire to indicate that he has carefully and fully considered the importance of the matters to which he has referred, and it is only natural and to be expected that the Government should desire to explain that the Arrears Bill has not failed in the short period it has been law. Whether it is right to describe it as a failure or not, I think few can deny that it has not achieved the exact purpose which it was expected to accomplish. To say the least, it has fallen, I may say, rather flat. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, however, indicates that he has grounds for the hope that it may yet succeed, and bases that hope upon the fact that the Land Commissioners, in addition to their other important duties, have recently adopted the *rôle* of prophets, and that in the seven days that have yet to elapse before the end of the month there will be such a rush of applications that it may yet succeed. There are five weeks yet before the earlier operations can be examined into. Now, I do not think it is a very profitable inquiry to examine too closely into why it is that the Act should not have accomplished the results expected from it. The hon. Member for the City of Cork has said that one of the reasons may be found in the existence of that curious clause which contains a provision about the hanging gale. I am bound to say that my conscience is absolutely free on that subject, for I pointed out that Sub-section 3 of Clause 1 was open to a variety of complications. I set myself the task of endeavouring to cut the Gordian knot by suggesting that the whole of that sub-section should be omitted, in order that the tenants might have a clear and precise proposition submitted to them as to which there should be no doubt. That proposal of mine was, however, rejected. The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken said that, to his mind, its construction is as clear as crystal; but he did not state what his construction was. When the right hon. Gentleman was pressed by the argument of the hon. Member for the City of Cork that it would have been reasonable for the Land Commissioners to have informed their investigators what was their own view on the subject, the right hon. Gentleman's only answer was that he would not say whether it was right or wrong for the Land Commission to give an authoritative instruction on the subject, as it was not his function to defend the Commission. Looking at the matter impartially, however, I think the hon. Member for the City of Cork has somewhat exaggerated this as the ground of the failure of the Act. No doubt, there have been difficulties and confusion as to the interpretation of that section, and it may be that that confusion has led to hesitation and uncertainty, the result of which may have been to exclude people from applying to get the benefit of the Act; but I do not think myself it will be found to prevail to a very large extent. Another reason suggested is the limitation of time that has been put into the Act in its progress through this House, and has had some effect in the matter. Then the hon. Member for the City of Cork said that the House of Lords was to blame for some of the hitches of the Act. Well, if this Act has failed, it has not been owing to a solitary syllable introduced into it in the House of Lords. It has been owing to Amendments suggested in this House, and deliberately adopted without a solitary syllable of objection. I say the House of Lords are not in the slightest degree to blame in the matter. They have not contributed to the extent of half a quarter of a syllable to anything of the kind. Indeed, the hon. Member for the City of Cork, too, when pressed on the subject, withdrew the charge. As to the question of the limitation of time, I am disposed to agree with what has been said on that point by the Chief Secretary for Ireland —namely, that the matter passed through this House as a matter not of first-class importance. The Amendment was moved in a few words, and the attention of hon. Members was not directed to the objection now sought to be attached to it. Another matter I desire to notice is this —that, notwithstanding the fact that the charge is so freely used against the Irish landlords, no one who has a true understanding of what has occurred in Ireland since the passing of this Act can suggest that the landlords are in the least to blame for the failure—if failure there be —in its administration. It will be found that in the 16,000 applications that have been made up to the last dates, in the vast majority of cases the applications have been joint applications between landlords and tenants. Nay, the right hon. Gentleman himself stated, as a ground for expecting that the Act would not fail, that he had been told that on some of the largest estates in Ireland the landlords were seeking to co-operate with their tenants. So I am entitled to say that the landlords can no more be pointed to as a party to the shortcomings or failure of this Act than the House of Commons itself. In my opinion, the paucity of applications on the part of tenants to get the benefit of the Act will be found, if we want some cause, in the fact that a tenant to get the benefit of the Act has to pay one year's rent down, or show that he has done so. A great many tenants, we know, are heavily in arrear, owing either to poverty or want of method, and are not able to face that great primary condition. If, therefore, there is to be a division of praise and blame, and a calculation of the chances of what has been and what might have been, I should say that the chief grounds of this paucity of applications is to be found in the rejection of the loan plan. The gift plan requires this preliminary paying down of one year's rent, a very difficult condition to comply with in many instances; whereas the loan scheme would have been satisfied by the tenant incurring merely a liability to repay a loan on certain specified easy terms, spread over a number of years. That system a tenant could have understood without the slightest trouble. The evictions, which I am bound to say have not been referred to at any great length in the course of this debate, have been represented, and not unfairly, by the right hon. Gentleman as having been steadily diminishing for months. One thing makes this debate of importance and very great interest to Ireland. In Ireland, on this subject, as upon many others, there are wide, vague, fluctuating, and uncertain hopes; and it is essentially necessary that whatever may be the decision of the Government, it should be expressed in the clearest and most distinct language, and with the most unfaltering purpose. If this debate should do nothing else than indicate to the tenantry of Ireland that a decision has been arrived at distinctly and clear, then I say it will have accomplished a good deal. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) points out, one of the most important factors for the pacification and satisfaction of Ireland is knowing finality. Keeping her in a state of suspense, unrealized hope, constant hot water, and vague uncertainty, is to preach to her a life-long period of wretched agitation. To speak with hesitation of the Land Bill and the Arrears Bill is merely to aid in preventing and retarding that prosperity we all desire so much to see. The right hon. Gentleman at the close of his speech spoke in a way which showed that he recognized fully the necessity of observing the symptoms of distress in Ireland. The Arrears Bill was not intended to be a Distress Bill, and no one has put that more clearly before us than the Prime Minister himself. But this does not, in the slightest degree, diminish the responsibilities of the Government. On the contrary, it rather adds to the grave responsibility of watching the progress and bearings of the distress. I was in Ireland myself on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, and made all the inquiries I could in reference to the general state of the country and the distress; and, so far as I could gather, there is much real distress in the West of Ireland and Donegal. It may be that the distress will seriously and substantially increase during the winter months; but as yet I do not think we have reason to dread anything that can be designated a famine, and I would fain hope that there is nothing that cannot be satisfactorily grasped by a somewhat liberal and generous administration of the Poor Laws. It must be recognized, and it cannot be too clearly or strongly impressed upon the public mind, that in the extreme West of Ireland and in Donegal, distress is, unfortunately, if I may say it, almost chronic. Every second or third year there is very acute distress. That circumstance, although it ought not in the slightest degree to influence us in slackening vigorous measures, is yet one to be borne largely in mind. I am glad to hear that the Government have issued a Circular desiring information on the subject. Parliament will, I assume, meet about the usual time next year. ["No, no!" "Later."]

MR. GLADSTONE: Earlier.

MR. GIBSON: I shall be ready to meet earlier, or later, as may suit the Government; but I wish to point out that meantime the responsibility of taking all those steps with regard to the present position of Ireland that may be necessary rests with the Irish Executive; and I am bound to say that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman indicates that he is quite alive to the responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman has had his attention specially called to the fact that there is distress in Ireland, and that that distress requires to be closely, anxiously, and vigilantly looked after, and I hope that he may be able to cope with that distress by the existing machinery at his disposal until Parliament again assembles. If the Executive vigorously do their work, Parliament will, I feel confident, when it reassembles, if it should be found necessary to assist in the loyal discharge of the painful duties of the Executive, not hesitate to do its share in the work if, unfortunately, it should be found requisite.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, no one had the least doubt of the sympathies of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and if the question of dealing with the distress were left to him, he should feel certain that his own sympathy and his own intelligence would prompt his action in every case. But he would warn the right hon. Gentleman against trusting too much to subordinate officials of all kinds. He perfectly well remembered the Famine of 1847. At the earlier period, when the Famine was growing, the officials were making favourable reports, and it was not until the newspaper correspondents went down to the distressed districts and drew such a picture of the condition of things there that the mind of the country was satisfied of the existence of distress, and that much good might have been done had measures been taken in time. He, therefore, strongly warned the right hon. Gentleman against paying too much attention to the answers to his Circular, and recommended him to made inquiries from persons in the districts where the distress existed. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of relief by means of public works in times of emergency; but in 1847 the system of public works was found to be not of the least use in the relief of genuine distress, for the various posts on the works were filled by undeserving persons, who were thus pensioned at the public expense. They might, however, be of advantage provided they were adapted to the needs of the various districts. There was one question to which he would like an answer, and that was, whether the Government were determined to allow outdoor relief in Ireland before the distress had become acute, and before the homes were broken up? Were they prepared to relax the restrictions under which relief could now only be given in case of sickness, and grant relief before the sickness arrived? Then, upon the question of the Arrears Act, he greatly regretted the kind of answer the Government had given that evening. No difficulty had arisen which was not predicted at the time the Bill was before the House. What was good in the Bill was due to the Irish Members; what was defective in it came from sources over which the Irish Members had no control. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the costs connected with ejectment which were thrown upon poor tenants as if they were next to nothing; but in many instances they were extremely heavy and even ruinous, preventing the tenant from being able to take advantage of the Arrears Act, and causing him to lose everything. Several striking cases of this kind had come under his own knowledge. The Chief Secretary had reminded them that the Land Court was a Court of Appeal to which those who were embarrassed by the difficulties of the hanging gale might resort; but it should be noticed that in Ireland they had had a tribunal of first instance, composed of military officers and gentlemen who had had no legal training whatever, and who seemed to be put there in order that they might learn something about the Arrears Act and the rudiments of the law. If the Arrears Act was in any sense a failure, the Government certainly could not say they had been forewarned not merely of of what would be the result, but of the precise points of weakness to which its failure might be traced.

Colonel NOLAN said, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had told them that forms of application for the benefit of the Arrears Act could be sent in up to the 31st of December. He knew that to be so. [Mr. Synan: They could be sent in even later by consent of the Court.] The important point, however, was whether the tenant would be able to pay the year's rent before the 30th of November; and that vital matter the Chief Secretary had skimmed over very lightly. It should be remembered that the weather had been very wet and injurious to farming operations, so that the tenants had not been able to send their produce to market in time to find the money with which to pay their arrears; and that circumstance, he thought, might supply a reason for extending the period for paying the year's rent to the 31st of December. Again, there were many fairs in December, at which the small tenants habitually sold their cattle; and it would, therefore, be a great point to extend the time for payment of their arrears by another month. He knew that a large number of tenants were making every exertion to take advantage of the Act, and he had no doubt that a large number of applications would come in before the end of November; but he believed that 30 or 40 per cent more, and those, too, the most necessitous cases, would come in if the time were prolonged for another month. The Act expired, so far as payments went, next Wednesday; and they now only had that most unfortunate decision of the Government near the last moment. The Chief Secretary for Ireland ought to see that that decision was telegraphed to the most remote parts of Ireland. With regard to the apprehended distress in that country, he did not think there would be famine; but he believed that there would be very considerable distress, and that it would arise mainly from two causes. In the first place, there would be a great want of employment for the people; and, in the next place, the price of potatoes would be high. As compared with last year, the price was at present more than doubled; and, owing to the partial failure of the crops, he believed that in some localities there would be great distress. They must remember, also, if they relied upon the rates to support the poor, that they could not expect to raise them to any very unusual amount without the fear of swamping the small farmers and precluding them from sowing their land. He would like the Government also to change their system of lending money. By the present method of making advances they could not lend more than £50, and he desired to see that sum very considerably raised, so as to render the expense less in proportion to the amount raised. He was sorry to see that so little hope was held out in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; it was one of the worst speeches he had ever heard—indeed, he might almost call it a dangerous speech. It told them in a word that they were to be left to their own resources, much in the same way as the horse who was locked up in the stable was told to feed himself by his resources. His resources were his teeth and his heels, and he only required his liberty to use them; but so long as that liberty was denied him, it was impossible for him to make his own resources available.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, that the importance of the subject amply justified the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. He felt that the Prime Minister's language was wanting in that sympathy he had often before shown to Irish distress, and he was struck with the fact that no allusion was made to the approaching distress, reports of which must have reached him. The Motion was also founded upon the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and it was a curious fact that while in England, where famines never happened, provision was made in spite of economic laws for the advance of money from the rates; in Ireland, where famines occurred every two or three years, no such power existed. He shared with the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Galway (Colonel Nolan) a strong feeling of dissatisfaction at that speech. That speech was the old familiar echo of the policy and the spirit which had always actuated Irish functionaries in Dublin Castle. Nothing else could have induced him to suppose that Irishmen who crossed the Channel to obtain work, in order to take the proceeds home to their families, could not be trusted to spend money in the same way when they had to go 10 or 12 miles for it. If he desired a refutation of such narrow views, he would refer him to the Report of the Society of Friends of what took place at the time of the great Famine. It was strange, indeed, that in Ireland, where it was so much needed, the law did not permit them to efficiently relieve distress. The right hon. Gentleman said that if necessary they would violate the law; but surely that was a most extraordinary doctrine for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to advocate in that House. Then the right hon. Gentleman admitted that public bodies in various parts of Ireland had already felt it to be their duty to call attention to the distress which was impending. He would refer to a resolution passed by the Swinford Board of Guardians expressing the desire of the people of that district to obtain a loan of public money for the purpose of permanently improving their holdings and farms. That was a desire which ought to receive the sympathy of Her Majesty's Government; and he complained that after Parliament had enabled the Irish Government to assist in the development of Irish resources, there was always some piece of red tape tied round the provisions of the Act of Parliament which prevented them from coming into active operation. He need only refer to the Rule framed by the Treasury in regard to loans for the improvement of farms under the Land Act. That Rule declared that £100 should be the minimum sum lent to tenant farmers, and that it should be lent only to tenants of £20 valuation and upwards. How long did it take the hon. Member for the County of Cork to "peg away" at the Irish Government before he induced them to reduce the amount to £50 and the valuation to £10? The Treasury was therefore responsible for having defeated the intention of Parliament by framing that rule in the first instance. He agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the County of Galway that the limit of £50 was far too high, as the great bulk of the tenant farmers wanted only a little capital to permanently improve their holdings. With respect to the impending distress, he trusted the Chief Secretary would not be content with sending out official Circulars, which was just what his Predecessors had done on former occasions. Resident Magistrates and others to whom these official Circulars were sent had no sympathy with the masses of the people. They would sneer at Irish distress, and it was not till famine was strewing their course with those who had been starved to death that they would recognize the distress. Benevolent emigration would not cure the evil since the wretched patches of land vacated in this way were at once occupied by others in quite as large numbers. It was by a system of migration and not one of emigration that they could meet the difficulty, and until the Government had grappled with the difficulty, the story of Irish discontent would continue to arise to the shame and humiliation of the Irish people. In reply to the Chief Secretary, he told the right hon. Gentleman that they were ready to fall back upon their own resources if they would give them the control of their own resources. The present Irish Government was a mockery of Irish hopes and aspirations. Various causes had been assigned to explain the fact that only some 16,000 tenant farmers had availed themselves of the Arrears Act. He had received a communication in which there was a statement to the effect that, although only a year's rent was required to be paid before obtaining the benefits of the Act, the agents exacted a half-year's rent in addition before the cases were put into the Court. That occurred in districts where there was no hanging gale; and, of course, the effect of such proceedings was to prevent tenants from getting the benefit which they would otherwise enjoy from the Act. Although they had then the most Liberal Executive the Irish people had seen this century, they were as powerless as ever to control the administration of Irish affairs. He strongly commended the action of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork in bringing that matter before the House; and he hoped that he would persist in doing so until ample justice had been done to the impoverished people whose cause they were sent there to represent.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, the hon. Member who had just spoken was quite accurate when he spoke of the unanimity of Irish Members on the question. It was said that the Arrears Act and the Land Act were both humbugs before they were passed. He had ventured to say that that was not the case, and he held that opinion still; but he joined with those who had that night called on the Government to give the Act a further chance. He did so, not because he thought it was a humbug, but that he believed it was in the interests of the Irish tenants and landlords. He thought they had a right to ask the Government to give that extension—he did not care what time it was, so long as it was sufficient for the purpose. He remembered the terrible scenes in 1847, which were caused by the unfortunate position of the people in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, &c. He asked the earnest attention of the Government to the present distress, and he hoped no miserable consideration about money would stand in the way, considering we spent millions in Egypt, Afghanistan, and Zululand. He was convinced that the hon. Member for Cork was fully justified in bringing that matter under the notice of the House.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the Prime Minister had observed in this debate a studied silence, which was more creditable to his prudence than his humanity. He supposed that, under the laurels of Tel-el-Kebir, the Government could now afford to treat with disdain the demands of the Irish people. He hoped the result of that obduracy would be to convince the people of Ireland that conciliation at any rate was played out, and they now knew that the moderate Whig was what O'Connell described him. He maintained that the Government had been misinformed by the Local Government Board Inspectors as to the distress that was likely to occur in Ireland. That was notably the case with regard to Tory Island, Donegal. The Rev. Father O'Donnell, the curate in charge, had written to him to say that the Inspector, Mr. Macfarlane, had not made a single inquiry of him, or, indeed, of any person of weight or authority on the Island, nor had he entered the huts of those among whom the distress was existing. Yet on the day of the inspection the heads of two families came to Father O'Donnell requesting to be sent out of the Island to save themselves and families from starvation, and the next day seven more came with a like request. With regard to the Arrears Act, he thought that enough had been said to show that the measure was already a practical failure, and the poorest of the Irish people were exposed to all the horrors of famine, aggravated by the horrors of eviction during the coming winter months, because the Government declined to give it a fair chance to come into operation.

Mr. LEA said, he thought that the Reports of the Local Government Inspector were often, and perhaps necessarily, very cursory, and suggested that further steps should be taken to ascertain whether any distress was likely to occur. He was sorry that the Government had not seen their way to extending the time for applications under the Arrears Act two or three months, because he considered it desirable that legislation like that relating to arrears, when once in force, should be effective; but if they had decided not to do so it was best at once to let the tenants know that there was no chance of a prolongation of the period.

MR. BLAKE said, he concurred with the Chief Secretary for Ireland that some of the labour works in Ireland had been of a useless character; but there were others of a reproductive nature, and he would suggest that the best and most useful means for relieving distress in Ireland was by expending money on harbour works. The Fishery Inspectors had recommended that works should be undertaken at 40 harbours; and if that were done the fishermen on those coasts would be able to exercise their vocations to a much greater extent than at present. Tory Island, to which so much allusion had been made that night, was a very good example of the places which would be benefited by the formation of harbours. The position of the inhabitants, whose chief characteristics were their primitiveness and their virtue, would be greatly improved if new harbours were erected, the one which already existed in the Island being quite inadequate for fishery purposes. He regretted greatly that the annual grant of £5,000 formerly made in aid of local efforts in connection with the erection of harbours had been withdrawn since the sum of £45,000 had been advanced for that purpose; and he had been much surprised at the hesitation of the Secretary to the Treasury to receive a deputation of Irish Members, who had intended waiting upon him in the hope of obtaining a renewal of the annual grant. The renewal of the small grant would lead to a considerably larger amount being contributed by local effort, and much good would be given by the employment thus afforded.

MR. PARNELL said, he would ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion. He did not think anything could be added to the great usefulness of the discussion, or to the impression which he hoped had been made upon the Government, by putting the House to the trouble of dividing. He trusted that the Government would reconsider the question of the relief of the distress, and that they would be able to see their way clear to ask Parliament to vote the power to enable them to give out poor relief in Ireland extensively. They had evidence in the progress of this debate of the existence of serious distress in Ireland; and he trusted that the people would not be left until they were half-starved and enfeebled before relief was granted.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that this Act was the last of a series of measures which had distinguished the Liberal Party, and especially the Prime Minister, and which had proved a complete fiasco. He would refer to the Church Act of 1861, to the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881, and other measures of the Government, which he pronounced a miserable failure.

MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the Question before the House was the Motion for the adjournment of the House, which the hon. Member for Cork asked leave to withdraw. The hon. Member was bound to confine himself to that subject.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he wished merely to observe that the position of affairs in Ireland proved that the remedial measures of the Government had turned out a complete failure.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

[The following is the Entry in the Votes.]

Mr. Parnell, Member for the City of Cork, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported that Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen in their places:—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn:"—(*Mr. Parnell:*) —Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. PARNELL, M.P., &c. (RELEASE FROM KILMAINHAM).

MR. J. R. YORKE asked the Prime Minister, whether, considering the lateness of the hour at which the Irish debate had closed—11.15—he would postpone the resumption of the discussion on Procedure, in order to afford an opportunity for a decision on his Motion with reference to the release of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his fellow Members from Kilmainham?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had nothing to add to what he had stated before. It was now only a quarter-past 11, and they would do well to proceed with the Resolutions.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to give any facilities for his hon. Friend's Motion?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that he had nothing to add to what he had already stated.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—TENTH RULE (DEBATES ON MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT).

[TWENTY-EIGHTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had now to propose the 10th Resolution. It had no connection with the length nor the interruption of debate, nor would it prevent any Gentleman from making any speech on the subject of reporting Progress or moving the Chairman out of the Chair in Committee which he could otherwise regularly make. But it enabled the Presiding Officer to save the House trouble if he chose to take upon himself the responsibility of determining that the Question should be put, which he would only do if strongly convinced that the Motion was made with the view of obstructing the Business of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Mr. J. R. Yorke

MR. CHAPLIN said, that they had been told upon an Amendment moved by his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), on the 1st Resolution, that it was not possible, or at all events desirable, to cast upon the Speaker or Chairman the duty of diving into the motives of hon. Gentlemen. That was exactly what it was now proposed to do, and they were entitled to ask from the Government some explanation of the inconsistency.

MR. GLADSTONE remarked that he was not in a position to answer the hon. Gentleman's question unless he proposed an Amendment.

MR. GORST said, he did not propose to move the first Amendment which stood in the name of his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill), because he understood that the Government intended to propose some change in the status of the Chairman of Committees. But he wished to move in line 2, after the word "opinion," the following words, "that it is the evident sense of the House at large." The effect of the Amendment would be to make the action of the Speaker or Chairman depend not upon his own view, but upon the evident sense of the House at large. This was one of the most severe Resolutions the Government had proposed. Every Motion for reporting Progress or for Adjournment was in a certain sense obstructive; but it would occur to every hon. Member that such Motions were often not only justified, but also even demanded, by the circumstances of the case. He begged to move the Amendment on the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, after the word "opinion," to insert the words "that it is the evident sense of the House at large."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, he must oppose the Amendment. The power which it would confer on the Presiding Officer was not, in his opinion, excessive; and, according to several of the earlier Resolutions, the Presiding Officer already possessed summary powers without reference to the evident sense of the House. In the present case, if the Speaker or Chairman put the Question to the House immediately, the House would have an opportunity of dealing with the question by the vote it would give. If the House thought the Motion was reasonable, it would vote accordingly.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he thought that this was one of the most objectionable of all the Resolutions. Nothing was more likely to bring into disrepute the Offices of the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means than the arbitrary power which the Presiding Officer would possess under this Rule of deciding on his mere *ipse dixit* whether or not a Member was guilty of Obstruction. He should, therefore, oppose the Resolution.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK, in supporting the Amendment, urged that the Speaker or the Chairman could hardly be justified in enforcing this Rule in the small hours of the morning, or against a small knot of Members who desired to prevent the passing of a Bill like the Cornwall Sunday Closing Bill at an unreasonable hour, and at the fag end of the Session. There was no proper definition of Obstruction, and the Presiding Officer was left to exercise an arbitrary power in the dark. He, therefore, thought that some such instruction as that proposed in the Amendment should be given for his guidance.

MR. SCLATER - BOOTH said, it seemed to him that not only was there a great objection to this Resolution, but it was also quite unnecessary; because all that was aimed at was already provided for by Resolution 4, which provided that a Motion for Adjournment might be met by the Speaker calling upon hon. Members to stand up in their places. When, not long ago, he had proposed to place some limitation upon this power, by providing that it should be put in force when Obstruction was evident, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister objected to such a course, because he said it would be offensive to require the Chair to say that a Motion submitted by an hon. Member was obstructive. Now, it seemed to him still more objectionable in this case, because there was no definition at all in regard to what was to happen when the Speaker *ex cathedra* put the Resolution into force. When was the Speaker to put the Question? That was left entirely undecided by the language of the Resolution. The general objection he had to it was that it was proposed, by a second process, to give the Speaker two lines of action in precisely similar circumstances. He hoped the Government would see fit to withdraw the Resolution. In the meanwhile, he would be disposed to vote for the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend, because he thought it was unfair to cast the responsibility on the Chair of saying that a Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction. His chief objection to the Resolution was that it proposed an alternative line of action and would lead to confusion.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, it was scarcely convenient to discuss the whole matter of the Resolution upon a single Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had not, until his concluding sentence, said one word about the Amendment moved by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst). He did not propose to follow the example of the right hon. Gentleman; but he wished to point out that Resolution 3, to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred——

MR. WARTON: It was the 4th Resolution, not the 3rd.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Well, then, Resolution 4 did not apply to this matter, because Resolution 4 provided that after the House had entered into the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion, and the House had been cleared for a division, when a Motion for the adjournment of a debate or of the House should have been made, the Speaker might call upon the Members challenging his decision to rise in their places. The Resolution they were now discussing enabled the Speaker, if he was of opinion that a Motion for the adjournment of a debate, or of the House during any debate, or that the Chairman should report Progress or leave the Chair, was made for the purpose of Obstruction, he might forthwith put the Question from the Chair. The Speaker in such a case could put a stop to the debate and insist upon a division being taken at once. He failed to see what relevancy the remarks of the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had to the Resolution at all. The Speaker or Chairman, in the exercise of his powers, could only put to the House at once the Question whether the debate was to be adjourned or not, or whether the Chairman should report Progress; and if a majority of the House did not support him, it would be evident to the Speaker or the Chairman that he had misinterpreted the opinion of the House. That was a penalty which would not be lightly incurred. It was said that the Resolution was an insult to the House; but hon. Members who made that assertion seemed to forget that the Resolution was one of those which were framed by the Speaker for Urgency; and he thought that when hon. Members recalled that fact, they would hardly be of opinion that it was intended by the Government as an insult to the House. When they came to discuss the Resolution as a whole, ample reason could be given why it should be adopted. In the meantime, no substantial reason had been given for the insertion of these words, and it was undesirable at that stage that they should discuss the whole of the Resolution. It would be far better to confine themselves to the Amendment before the House.

Colonel STANLEY said, the House was now getting familiar with the argument which had just been used by the noble Marquess. On the first occasion when the principle of a Resolution was challenged, they were told to wait until all the Amendments were disposed of, when it would be regular to discuss the Resolution as a whole. But, on the other hand, when all the Amendments to a Resolution were disposed of, they were told that the time was past for discussing the Resolution as a whole, and that they were altogether too late. Therefore, the Government must excuse hon. Members on that side of the House if they took the present opportunity of moving and discussing such Amendments as they found necessary. [*Ironical Liberal cheers.*] Hon. Members cheered that. He was glad to hear that they assented to the proposal. The fault which had been found with this Resolution was, that it appeared to hon. Members on that side of the House to be in conflict with the Resolution which had already been passed—namely, the 4th Resolution, to which the noble Marquess had just referred. The noble Marquess, in the slight reference he made to it, said that it concerned a matter of Procedure. That was quite true; but this Resolution dealt with a question of adjournment also, and having defined upon the question of Procedure in the 4th Resolution what they were to do, it appeared to him that this Resolution conflicted in a great measure with the Procedure which was laid down in Resolution number 4. As regarded the immediate Amendment before the House, which imported into the Resolution "the evident sense of the House at large," it appeared to him, whether these precise words were chosen or not—and there was good reason why they should be—that it was most desirable that the opinion of the House should be clearly and distinctly ascertained in reference to the question. The Speaker or Chairman had placed in his hands—granting always that there was the appeal, of which the noble Marquess had spoken—a very arbitrary power, and the remedy which the noble Marquess suggested was one which he took leave to remind the House was extremely deprecated by the Government in the early part of their discussions. The noble Marquess said that if, after all, the Speaker or the Chairman found that the opinion of the House differed from his own, then there would be an end of the matter. But the House was told in the early part of the debates that no Speaker or Chairman could bear having his decision challenged, and that it would be fatal to him to find that his view of the "evident sense of the House" was not sustained on a division. He hoped before the discussion on the Amendment closed that the House would have some further explanation from the Government than they had yet received. There was another thing which he should hardly have thought it necessary to call attention to, except for the purpose of elucidation. He thought that the "Question" referred to in the last line of the Resolution should be made perfectly clear. He trusted that the House would accept some Amendment in the sense of that which had been moved by his hon. and learned Friend.

Mr. SYNAN said, it appeared to him that the Amendment was altogether inconsistent, not with the 4th, but with the 2nd Resolution. The Amendment, as he understood it, required that the Speaker or Chairman should be of opinion that it was "the evident sense of the House" the Motion for Adjournment was made for the purpose of Obstruction; but, by the 2nd Resolution, 40 Members rising in their places to support a Motion for Adjournment would be sufficient to warrant such a Motion being proceeded with. Now, 40 Members rising in their places might not represent the "evident sense of the House;" and the Amendment, therefore, was inconsistent with the 2nd Resolution. Then the question arose upon the Resolution itself whether the Speaker or Chairman should have power to put a stop to debate or to discussion, and order the House to divide at once, although there should be 40 Members prepared to support the Motion for Adjournment, and although a decision should be called on the 4th Rule. The Amendment would make the Resolution substantially an exception from the 2nd and 4th Rules, and the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman was altogether at variance with what had been decided by the 2nd Resolution.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he could not see how any hon. Member could argue that this Resolution was in conflict with the 4th Resolution. The 4th Resolution said that after the House had been cleared for a division such and such a course should be taken. How was it possible that this Resolution, which referred to the putting of the Question, could be in conflict with the Resolution, which applied only to the exercise of power when the House was cleared for a division. It appeared to him that that objection must fall to the ground, and that it could not be urged for a moment. This was a Resolution which was to be put in force, not when the House had been cleared for a division, but at a different stage of the proceedings. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for the County of Limerick (Mr. Synan), it did not seem to him that the Resolution was in conflict with Resolution No. 2, and for this reason—Resolution No. 2 spoke of a Motion for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and leave for the Motion to be proceeded with was only to be given on 40 Members rising in their places to support the Motion. Was it conceivable that in such a case the Speaker would, under the present Rule, declare that the Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction? It appeared to him to be a totally different case, and this Resolution was not in any way in conflict with Resolution No. 2. In regard to the objection that the House would be overruled by the Speaker in the matter, the observations of the Prime Minister showed that all the Speaker would do would be to refer the matter to the judgment of the House. All that was to take place was this. There was to be no debate until the House itself had voted whether the Motion was made for the purposes of Obstruction or not.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had thrown much light upon the matter. There was one particular point upon which the House was anxious to hear some explanation from the Government. The Resolution proposed—

> "That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is made for the purpose of obstruction, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair."

Now, the words that were proposed to be inserted in the Resolution were to the effect that Mr. Speaker should come to the conclusion that it was the "evident sense of the House at large" that the Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction. The question he wanted to put to the Government and to the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was this. Was the Speaker to put the Question unless he was convinced that it was the "evident sense of the House at large" that the Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction, or was he not? Was the Speaker, before he put the Question forthwith, to be of opinion that the House at large had come to the conclusion that the Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction. He concluded that Mr. Speaker, in acting upon these Rules, only represented the feeling of the House, and that his whole action was to be guided by the feeling of the House. The Amendment proposed exactly what he thought ought to guide the Speaker in his action—namely, that when he had come to the conclusion that it was the "evident sense of the House" that the Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction, he would then act upon the Resolution, but not otherwise. If that were so, and the Speaker was really only to put the Rule in force when the

House had come to a conclusion, and he was expressing the "evident sense of the House at large" that it was a Motion intended for purposes of Obstruction, what harm could be done by the insertion of these words? They could not expect the Speaker, if he was convinced that the Motion was not made for purposes of Obstruction, as the organ of the House, would ever put the Rule in force. He would only act because he was convinced that the House itself was of opinion that the Motion was made for purposes of Obstruction; and, therefore, he would never act under the Rule unless he thought that he was giving effect to the "evident sense of the House at large." He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) hoped that he had made himself clear upon that point. If he were correct, and that was the only case in which the Speaker could act, what possible harm could arise from adopting the Amendment? He would ask this plain question of the House—Did they believe that the Speaker would ever act on the Rule unless it was the "evident sense of the House at large?" The Speaker was the organ of the House. He only acted in this way as the Minister of the House, and unless he had arrived at a clear conclusion that it was the opinion of the House, he would never attempt to put the Resolution in force. Then, what objection could there be against putting these words into the Rule? The Question was to be decided without debate, and that made it all the more reasonable that the Speaker should only act when he thought it was the sense of the House that he should act; and if he could only act when it was the sense of the House that he ought to act, and the sense of the House meant that the Motion was made for the purposes of Obstruction, he could not imagine what harm the insertion of these words in the Resolution could do. If the House rejected these words, they must mean something by which the Rules were to be put in force without consulting the House in any form or shape, and without any kind of debate. If the "evident sense of the House" could only be shown by a vote, and if that vote was against the Speaker, it would be a great pity that the Speaker should have been drawn into a position in which he was liable to make a mistake.

Mr. BRYCE said, the right hon. Gentleman had asked what harm could be done by putting in these words. He (Mr. Bryce) would ask, on the other hand, what good would their insertion do? He could only conceive one object that could be gained, and that was that as soon as these words were inserted in the Resolution, the right hon. Gentleman, or the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst), would be able to rise and say that if the Speaker were the exponent of the "evident sense of the House," there ought to be an appeal to the House to express its evident sense. The result of that would be another Motion. That would be the natural corollary of adopting the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman. He, therefore, submitted that there were good reasons why the House should not adopt the Amendment. The reason why, in the 1st Resolution, it was provided that the Speaker or Chairman should act only when he believed it was the "evident sense of the House" was because they ascribed to the Speaker or Chairman, and to the House at large, the possession of the same common sense, and it was believed that naturally and necessarily the opinion of the House would coincide with that of the Speaker and Chairman. In regard to the remarks which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), having reference to the 2nd Resolution, this Resolution applied only to what took place during a debate; whereas the 2nd Resolution referred to what took place immediately after the Questions on the Notice Paper had been disposed of, and before the Orders of the Day were reached, so that there was no possibility of a collision between the two.

Mr. LABOUCHERE remarked that Amendments moved by right hon. Gentlemen opposite were seldom moved without having some elements of harm in them; and he thought it was very clear that there was something more than met the eye in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gorst). He (Mr. Labouchere) disliked very much the words "at large." They had already had an explanation of what they meant from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck).

The right hon. and learned Gentleman explained to them that if there 40 Members in the House, and 33 were against a Motion for Adjournment and seven in its favour, by this Amendment the Speaker would not be able to say that the Motion, although supported only by seven Members, was intended for purposes of Obstruction. That was to say that the "evident sense of the House at large" did not mean 33 Members against seven. That was the outcome of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech, and according to the "evident sense of the House at large" the seven were to set aside the wishes of the 33. Now, as he understood the Resolution, it was the majority who were to decide whether a small minority were to go on moving adjournments. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to complain that the "evident sense of the House" did not mean the sense of the majority of the House, but of a very small minority. He hoped, therefore, that the Government would distinctly say that they did not intend to consent to the insertion of these pernicious Amendments.

MR. WARTON said, the Prime Minister had criticized the language of the Amendment and wished to excise therefrom the words "at large." No doubt those words were very disagreeable to the Prime Minister, because when a declaration was made by the Speaker the other day as to the light in which he regarded them, that declaration came like a thunderclap upon the Liberal Party opposite, who had put a far more illiberal construction upon the term "evident sense of the House." The Speaker, however, had ruled upon the 1st Resolution that, in his opinion, the "evident sense of the House" meant the "evident sense of the House at large," and he regretted very much that those words had not been incorporated in the 1st Resolution. But taking it upon the ruling of the Speaker that the "evident sense of the House" was the "evident sense of the House at large," there could be no objection to including in the Resolution the words in the Amendment. Let them consider what the actual position of the House was now according to the Resolutions they had already passed. There were two Rules before the present one which contained words exactly similar—namely, the Rule in regard to Motions on adjournment of debate and upon divisions. By putting those two Resolutions together the House might get some kind of notion as to how completely the liberties of the House were to be abridged by these Resolutions. He would give an instance. Suppose a minority of that House had a very good case indeed—suppose that they had a case about which they felt as conscientious as the Prime Minister felt when he opposed the Divorce Bill—and that they were anxious to bring their views before the House, what could they do? First of all, if they moved the adjournment of the debate, they could say little or nothing upon it; because their mouths were almost shut by the language of the 3rd Resolution, and they had had an example before them only a few days ago, when the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) ventured to sit upon the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), when the right hon. and learned Gentleman was trying, as well as he could, within the terms of the Resolution, to give a reason why the debate should be adjourned. Upon that occasion the right hon. and learned Gentleman felt himself completely suppressed by the Rule, and he found himself unable to give adequate reasons in support of the proposal on account of the stringency of that Rule and the tightness with which it was tied round his neck. Therefore, in future, an hon. Member would not be allowed to say what his reasons were, and the Government now refused to accept even the moderate Amendment to the Resolution proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). The Prime Minister clearly laid it down that in future nothing should be said in support of Motions for Adjournment. Then, what was the next step? The next step was supplied by the present Resolution, which declared that if the Speaker or Chairman was of opinion that a Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction, not wilful or persistent Obstruction, but simple Obstruction, then he was authorized to put the Question at once. Now, he (Mr. Warton) thought there was not much chance of the Speaker coming to this conclusion; but, on the other hand, he thought there was a very great chance of the Chairman of Committees doing so—a very great chance indeed. ["Oh!"]

He (Mr. Warton) intended to speak the truth, and to speak his mind while he could; and he firmly believed that the Chairman of Committees was not a fit and proper person to determine the question of Obstruction. He did not think it would be well to leave to the Chairman of Committees the determination whether a Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction or not. That was the second point. In the next place, when the Question was put the 4th Resolution would come in, and they were not to have a division upon it unless 20 Members of a House of 40 Members or upwards happened to rise in support of it. Those three steps were established. The Prime Minister said it would depend upon the vote of the majority, and that the House would know whether a Motion was made for the purpose of Obstruction or not. Let them see how that would act. The House would pardon him if he referred to an important incident which occurred during the present Parliament. He should never forget, and he thought the Tory Party would never forget, what happened on that very Bill which they had been discussing that evening—the Arrears of Rent Bill. It was read for the first time on a Friday, and only distributed amongst Members on the Saturday morning. It was then hurried on to a second reading on the Monday, and they were told that the matter had been adequately discussed, and that they ought to come to a decision upon it; and when they repeated one Motion for Adjournment after another they were characterized as Obstructives. One Member no less respectable than the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) said it was their duty to yield to the overwhelming majority of about 200 against 140. He was perfectly certain that with such a precedent the Chairman of Committees would put the Rule in force against any minority, if its action was calculated in the slightest degree to interfere with the views of the Government. It appeared perfectly clear to him that the Government, having already obtained the 3rd and 4th Resolutions—for the 2nd had really nothing to do with the question—they had obtained power enough, and it was not necessary that they should obtain more. Already they had placed hon. Members in this position—that they were unable to give any reason at all for moving a Motion for Adjournment; and it was now proposed to give additional powers to the Chairman of Committees to put the Question at once from the Chair, without even requiring him to ascertain if it was the "evident sense of the House" that a Motion was made for purposes of Obstruction.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he had no wish to follow up the arguments of the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken (Mr. Warton). He only wished to say that as the Speaker had declared that he would only act upon the opinion of the House at large, the right hon. Gentleman's reading of his duty should be recorded for the guidance of future occupants of the Chair. The Prime Minister was present at the time the Speaker gave that memorable assurance to the House as to his interpretation of the Rule, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take some steps to have it duly recorded. It must be remembered that they were not legislating for the present Speaker only. They had perfect confidence in his discretion and in the manner in which he had ever conducted the Business of the House; but they were legislating for others, and, by urging the introduction of the Speaker's declarations into the Records of the House, they hoped to secure in his Successors the equity which he had always manifested. What they had most to avoid in these matters was the abuse of Party feeling. The First Lord of the Treasury had expressed a wish that these Resolutions might be considered apart from Party feeling. He (Mr. Newdegate) had from the first so considered them; and he said that the great security for the just and sound action of the House lay in this—that its Procedure should not be determined by the will of one Party, but by the decision of both Parties—by men on both sides of the House expressing the determination of that House of Parliament.

Mr. GREGORY said, he wished to point out that there must evidently be an alteration of the Amendment proposed by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), because it would not apply as it stood at present to the Chairman of Committees. Probably it had been framed with a view to the Chairman of Committees being omitted from the Resolution altogether. It said, "the evident sense of the House at large," and it would not, therefore, apply to Committees; and it would be necessary to amend the Amendment by inserting after the word "House," "or of the Committee, as the case may be." He thought it would be better to omit the words "at large" altogether, and to say, "the evident sense of the House or of the Committee, as the case may be." He thought the House should have a voice in the matter, and the only question was, how that voice should be ascertained. It was considered, on the other hand, that, on a Question being put from the Chair, there would be an occasion for expressing the sense of the House. He confessed that he thought there ought to be some indication of the sense of the House before the Question was put from the Chair; but, personally, he should prefer an Amendment to be proposed subsequently by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), which contemplated that the sense of the House should be taken by a division before the Question was put for stopping the Motion for Adjournment. That would be a more proper way of proceeding than leaving the decision of the Question to the opinion of the Speaker or Chairman, as the case might be. In his view that would not carry the matter very much further than the Resolution itself. The point to decide was, whether the Motion was made for purposes of Obstruction, or whether, in the "evident sense of the House," it was made for purposes of Obstruction; and, by taking a division as to whether it was obstructive or not, they would practically ascertain the feeling of the House. That would be the proper way of meeting the question. As regarded the Amendment itself, he would venture to move the omission of the words "at large," and the insertion of the words "or of the Committee, as the case may be."

MR. SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. Member moves that as an Amendment to the Amendment?

MR. GREGORY: Yes; I will move that Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out the words "at large," and insert the words "or of the Committee, as the case may be,"—(*Mr. Gregory,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'at large' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought that the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) was an improvement on the original Amendment. It supplied an obvious omission. That the Amendment which stood in the name of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not refer to the Chairman of Committees was attributable, he assumed, to the fact that the noble Lord proposed to eliminate that official altogether from the operation of the Rule; but he presumed that, as the House had decided otherwise, there would be no objection to the insertion of the words proposed by the hon. Member. Although he quite sympathized with the object of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in inserting in his Amendment the words "at large," yet, having regard to the fact that the House, at the invitation of the Government, omitted them in the 1st Rule, it would, to some extent, militate against the Rule they on that side of the House took with regard to that far more important Rule to insert them now. He thought the decision of the Speaker, which carried with it, he thought he might venture to say, the feeling of the great mass of the House of Commons, would be, to a great extent, undermined if words were put into the present Amendment which ran counter to the declaration which the right hon. Gentleman had already made.

MR. GORST said, he should be happy to accept the Amendment moved by his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory). The Amendment he (Mr. Gorst) had moved was based on the idea that the Chairman of Committees would be eliminated from the Resolution, and it had not been included in the Amendment from mere inadvertence.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Question proposed, "That the words 'that it is the evident sense of the House and the Committee, as the case may be,' be there inserted."

MR. WARTON objected to the words "as the case may be." They were not inserted anywhere else, and did not agree with the 1st Resolution, which said, "the evident sense of the House or of the Committee." He would therefore suggest that the Amendment to the Amendment should be amended by omitting the words "as the case may be."

Mr. DODSON said, he only wished to explain to the House that the Government still remained of opinion that it would be better to keep the Rule in the form in which it stood, and which was the form in which it was framed by Mr. Speaker himself as part of the Urgency Procedure.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, the remark which had been made by the President of the Local Government Board was an additional reason why they ought to accept the Amendment. Were the House to understand that they were to be permanently under the Rules of Urgency? He did not think the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that the Amendment should be rejected because it was not to be found in the Rules of Urgency was entitled to much weight.

Mr. DODSON said, he hoped the noble Lord would allow him to explain. When he spoke of leaving the Rule in the form of words as it stood in the Urgency Procedure, he was speaking strictly to the Amendment before the House, and not to the Resolution as a whole.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 37; Noes 103: Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 394.)

Mr. GORST said, he hoped the Government would consent to some modification of the words "for the purpose of obstruction;" and with the object of effecting this he would move the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff).

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, to leave out the words "made for the purpose of obstruction," and insert the words "an abuse of the Rules of the House."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Amendment *agreed to*.

Mr. GORST said, the Amendment he was about to move had been, to a great extent, discussed in connection with former Amendments. The proposal was, although the House had decided that the Presiding Officer should take the initiative, that he should not put the Question without having first obtained the sanction of the House or of the Committee. This was quite in accordance with the 1st Resolution, under which, although the Speaker or Chairman might come to the conclusion that the debate ought to terminate, he did not put an end to it before getting the sanction of the Committee or of the House to the conclusion at which he had arrived. It seemed an entirely new principle to introduce into the Procedure of the House that the Presiding Officer should interfere with the proceedings of the House on his own mere motion. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had referred, in the course of a discussion which took place some time ago, to the power given to the Presiding Officer under Rule 5, where action was taken without the concurrence or support of the House. But it must be remembered that, under the Resolution referred to, the Presiding Officer only silenced a Member—he did not take the proceedings of the House out of the hands of the House itself—whereas in the present Resolution it was proposed that the Presiding Officer should have the strange power of controlling the Business of the House or the Committee, without obtaining the sanction of either. The right hon. Gentleman's argument with reference to Resolution 5 was, therefore, inapplicable to the present proposal; and for the reasons given he begged to move the Amendment standing in his name, with the object of providing that when the Speaker or the Chairman had come to the conclusion that a Motion was made in abuse of the Rules of the House he should then ask for the sanction of the House or Committee before taking upon himself to stop the debate.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words "he may so inform the House, and if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' he shall forthwith put such Question, and if the same be decided in the affirmative."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GLADSTONE said, the House had already decided against the principle of the Amendment as applicable to that part of the Resolution which had been passed; the hon. and learned Gentleman, however, held with tenacity to the remainder. He had truly said, referring to Resolution 5, that there the interference of the Speaker or Chairman was for the purpose of silencing an individual Member without asking the sanction of the House or the Committee; but here the contention of the Government was that the intervention of the Presiding Officers of the House would be finally decided upon by the division which followed. Again, the adoption of the Amendment now proposed would have the effect of exposing the House to the delay of two divisions instead of one. For these reasons Her Majesty's Government could not adopt the Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he was about to move that the Rule should not apply to any Motion for Adjournment made after half-past 12 o'clock. His proposal would only take effect when a considerable number of Members deemed themselves entitled to avail themselves of the Forms of the House to prevent any Motions or Bills being passed at an hour when the House was not in a position to discuss them properly. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would accept the principle of the Amendment, even if he substituted another hour for that specified.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided, That this Rule shall not apply to any Motion of Adjournment which may be made after half-past Twelve at night."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he rose to move the rejection of the Resolution, which he regarded as the most unsatisfactory of all the Government proposals in connection with the Procedure of the House, inasmuch as it placed the character of every Member of the House, so to speak, in the hands of the occupant of the Chair. He considered it very objectionable that the Gentleman who happened to be presiding in Committee of the Whole House, for instance, should, on his own Motion, decide that an hon. Member was an Obstructionist, and that without hearing an explanation of the views or motives of the Member in question. In the other Resolutions it was laid down that the Speaker or the Chairman should do no more than Name a Member, and call the attention of the House to the question as to whether he had been guilty or not of obstructing the Business of the House; but here the Presiding Officer, who after all was but a Member of the House, was to decide at once, in so many words, that a Member was abusing the Rules; and this, he contended, was too large a power to place in his hands. As long as he was a Member of that House he should strongly object to any other Member being placed in a position to rule him an Obstructionist against his knowledge to the contrary. Yet that was what the Resolution meant, and he was sure that if the same attention were given to it as had been bestowed upon the previous Resolutions, hon. Members would agree that this view was correct.

MR. WARTON said, he was rather surprised that hon. Members did not perceive what was the real force of this Resolution. After having been discussing the question of *clôture* for two or three weeks—*clôture* by the "evident sense of the House"—they were now passing a *clôture* of the worst description —a *clôture* without the "evident sense of the House."

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, at the risk of incurring the censure of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), he must repeat his opinion that the Government, in this Resolution, seemed to be adopting an unnecessary second process for arriving at the result already achieved by Resolution 4. Anyone who had witnessed the scenes which had occurred when alternative Motions for the adjournment of the House and of the debate had been made knew that they would have been stopped absolutely by the power now given to the Speaker of calling upon Members to rise in their places. The Government having adopted that mode of procedure, there was no need for this much more offensive process. It seemed to him to be entirely inconsistent with what had taken place in former debates; but he should say no more than that if his hon. and gallant Friend went to a division he should vote with him.

Main Question, as amended, put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 82; Noes 26: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 395.)

(10.) *Resolved*, That if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair.

Further Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure *deferred* till *Tomorrow.*

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXXIV.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1882.

Explanation of the Abbreviations.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—*1st. Div.*, *2nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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1. Moved, "That the Thanks of this House be given to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, G.C.B. for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the attack on the Fortifications of Alexandria, and the Naval operations in the Suez Canal, which aided materially in the suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive" (*Mr. Gladstone*); Moved, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Sir Wilfrid Lawson*); after debate, Question put; A. 354, N. 17; M. 337 (D. L. 345)

Original Question put, and agreed to

2. Moved, "That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the Military operations in Egypt which resulted in the Victory of Tel-el-Kebir, the occupation of Cairo, and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive" (*Mr. Gladstone*), 206

Amendt. to leave out the words "and the complete suppression of the Military rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive" (*Mr. Molloy*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 230, N. 25; M. 205 (D. L. 346)

Main Question put, and agreed to

3. Resolved, Nemine Contradicente, That the thanks of this House be given to,—
   - General Sir John Miller Adye, K.C.B.;
   - Vice-Admiral William Montagu Dowell, C.B.;
   - Lieutenant-General George Harry Smith Willis, C.B.;
   - Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.M.G., C.B.;
   - Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B.;
   - Rear-Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, V.C., K.C.B.;
   - Rear-Admiral Sir Francis William Sullivan, K.C.B., C.M.G.;
   - Rear-Admiral Anthony Hiley Hoskins, C.B.;
   - Major-General His Royal Highness Arthur, Duke of Connaught, K.G., K.T., K.P., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.;
   - Major-General William Earle, C.S.I.;
   - Major-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.;

[*cont.*

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Major-General Gerald Graham, V.C., C.B.;
Major-General George Byng Harman, C.B.;
Major-General Drury Curzon Drury-Lowe, C.B.;
Major-General Sir Herbert Taylor Macpherson, V.C., K.C.B.;
and to the other Officers and Warrant Officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including Her Majesty's Indian Forces, both European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services they have been called upon to perform
4. Resolved, Nemine Contradicente, That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the gallantry, discipline, and good conduct displayed by the Petty Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, and of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native, and also the cordial good feeling which animated the United Force
5. Ordered, That the said Resolutions be transmitted by Mr. Speaker to Admiral Sir Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, and General Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley; and that they be requested to communicate the same to the several officers and to the men referred to therein

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Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), Communication to the House; short debate thereon *Nov* 13, 1327; Question, Viscount Sandon; Answer, Mr. Labouchere *Nov* 14, 1418;—*Notices of Motion,* Observations, Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker; Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; [No answer] *Nov* 20, 1726; Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Labouchere *Nov* 21, 1793

Adjournment—The Appropriation Act—Constitutional Practice, Observations, Lord Randolph Churchill *Oct* 24, 3; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Lord Randolph Churchill*); after debate, Question put; A. 142, N. 209; M. 67 (D. L. 341.)

Adjournment, Observations, Mr. Parnell; Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Nov* 23, 1936; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Parnell*); after long debate, Motion withdrawn

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure

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Application of the First Rule (Putting the Question), Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 13, 1327; Personal Explanation, Sir William Hart Dyke *Nov* 16, 1556

The Chairman of Committees, Personal Explanation, Mr. Lyon Playfair; short debate thereon *Nov* 22, 1859

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure

Moved, "That the Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on every day for which they may be set down" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Oct* 24, 45; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Chaplin*); after further short debate, Question put, and negatived

Original Question again proposed, 67

Amendt. to leave out "and Notices of Motions" (*Mr. Raikes*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 96, N. 46; M. 50 (D. L. 342)

Main Question put; A. 98, N. 47; M. 51 (D. L. 343)

Ordered, That the Consideration of the New Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on every day for which they may be set down;" Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Gladstone*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

The New Rules of Procedure—First Rule (Putting the Question)

Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th February] resumed

Main Question again proposed; Debate resumed [Seventh Night] *Oct* 25, 74

Adjourned Debate resumed [Eighth Night] *Oct* 26, 213

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Debate resumed [Thirteenth Night] *Nov* 2, 674

Debate resumed [Fourteenth Night] *Nov* 3, 768

Debate resumed [Fifteenth Night] *Nov* 6, 867

Debate resumed [Sixteenth Night] *Nov* 7, 958

Debate resumed [Seventeenth Night] *Nov* 8 1028

Debate resumed [Eighteenth Night] *Nov* 9, 1130

Debate resumed [Nineteenth Night] *Nov* 10, 1206; after long debate, main Question, as amended, put; A. 304, N. 260; M. 44

Div. List, A. and N., 1283

Second Rule (Motions for Adjournment before Public Business)

Further Consideration of New Rules resumed [Twentieth Night] *Nov* 13, 1329

Debate resumed [Twenty-first Night] *Nov* 14, 1418

Debate resumed [Twenty-second Night] *Nov* 15, 1487; after short debate, main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Third Rule (Debates on Motions for Adjournment)

Debate resumed [Twenty-third Night] *Nov* 16, 1559; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Fourth Rule (Divisions)

After debate, main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Fifth Rule (Irrelevance or Repetition)

After debate, main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—cont.

Sixth Rule (*Postponement of Preamble*)

Further Consideration of New Rules resumed [Twenty-fourth Night] *Nov* 17, 1646; after short debate, main Question put, and agreed to, without Amendment

Seventh Rule (*Chairman to leave the Chair without Question*)

After short debate, Question put; A. 137, N. 69; M. 68 (D. L. 376)

Eighth Rule (*Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule*)

Standing Order 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882, read, 1651

Standing Order (Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule) 18 February 1879, amended 9 May 1882 further considered [Twenty-fifth Night] *Nov* 20, 1728; after further long debate, Question put; A. 100, N. 12; M. 88 (D. L. 385)

Ninth Rule (*Order in Debate*)

Standing Order of 28 February 1880 read, 1753

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, further considered [Twenty-sixth Night] *Nov* 21, 1798

Standing Order (Order in Debate) 28 February 1880, further considered [Twenty-seventh Night] *Nov* 22, 1864; after long debate, Question put, "That the Standing Order, as amended, be agreed to;" A. 161, N. 19; M. 142 (D. L. 393)

Tenth Rule (*Debates on Motions for Adjournment*)

Further Consideration of New Rules resumed [Twenty-eighth Night] *Nov* 23, 1991; after short debate, main Question, as amended, put; A. 82, N. 26; M. 56 (D. L. 395)

Parliament — Privilege (*Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, M.P.*)

Moved, "That the Letter of the 16th August, 1882, from the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson to Mr. Speaker, informing the House of the commitment of Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, a Member of this House for contempt of Court, be referred to a Select Committee for the purpose of considering and reporting whether any of the matters referred to therein demand the further attention of the House" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Oct* 24, 34; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Letter of the Right Hon. Mr. Justice Lawson read

After short debate, Moved, "That the said Communication be referred to the Select Committee to which the letter of the 16th August 1882, from the Right Honourable Mr. Justice Lawson to Mr. Speaker, was referred" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Oct* 25, 71; Motion agreed to

Nomination of Select Committee, Moved, "That the Select Committee do consist of the following Members:—Mr. Gladstone, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Whitbread, Sir John Mowbray, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Attorney General, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr.

[*cont.*

Parliament — Privilege (*Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, M.P.*)—cont.

Plunket, Mr. Parnell, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Dillwyn, and Mr. Healy; Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Oct* 27, 284

Moved, "That Mr. Healy be omitted" (*Sir Herbert Maxwell*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question put, and agreed to

Ordered, That the Select Committee do consist of Seventeen Members; That Admiral Sir John Hay and Sir Edward Colebrooke be added to the Committee (*Sir Herbert Maxwell*) *Oct* 30, 385

Report of Select Committee, Report from the Select Committee on Privilege (Mr. Gray), with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read *Nov* 14, 1485; after short debate, Moved, "That the Report do lie upon the Table" (*Mr. Attorney General*); Debate adjourned

Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 16, 1555; Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 17, 1641

Debate resumed *Nov* 17, 1700

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "the Report and Minutes of the proceedings be re-committed to the Select Committee, so far as they relate to a paragraph referring to the Law of Contempt proposed to be added to the Report by Mr. Sexton" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Parliament—Wigan New Writ

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void" (*Mr. Winn*) *Nov* 23, 1897; after short debate, Motion agreed to

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

Oct. 27—*For* Edinburgh City, *v.* James Cowan, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

Nov. 2—*For* the Borough of Ennis, *v.* James Lysaght Finigan, esquire, Manor of Northstead

Nov. 13—*For* the City of New Sarum, *v.* William Henry Grenfell, esquire, one of the Grooms in Waiting on Her Majesty

Nov. 16—*For* University of Cambridge, *v.* Right hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole, Manor of Northstead

For Preston, *v.* Right Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, Chiltern Hundreds

Nov. 23—*For* the Borough of Wigan, *v.* Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—cont.

New Members Sworn

Oct. 24—Thomas Shaw, esquire, *Halifax*
Alexander Craig Sellar, esquire, *Haddington District of Burghs*
Nov. 6—Samuel Danks Waddy, esquire, *City of Edinburgh*
Nov. 17—Matthew Joseph Kenny, esquire, *Ennis Borough*
Nov. 21—Coleridge John Kennard, esquire, *City of New Sarum*

Parnell, Mr., M.P., &c. (Release from Kilmainham)
Notice of Motion, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Captain Aylmer, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Bourke, Colonel Stanley, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Salt; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 14, 1411; Notice, Observations, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Reply, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 16, 1557; Questions, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. Labouchere, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Lowther, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 17, 1637; Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 20, 1727; Questions, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 21, 1796; *Nov* 23, 1990

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PEEL, Mr. A. W., *Warwick Bo.*
Parliament—Business of the House—New Rules of Procedure—Fourth Rule (Divisions), 1565; Ninth Rule (Order in Debate), Amendt. 1882
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PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
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PERCY, Lord Algernon, *Westminster*
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PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
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PHIPPS, Mr. C. P., *Westbury*
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PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Mr. Lyon (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Parliament — Business of the House — New Rules of Procedure—Chairman of Committees, Personal Explanation, 1859

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Parliament — Privilege (Mr. E. D. Gray, M.P.), Motion for a Select Committee, 44; Report of, 1702

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